

Inception Workshop

27-30 June 2016

Fada N'gourma, Burkina Faso

Event report

SITAM

Sustainable Intensification: Trade- offs for Agricultural Management

Supporting smallholder farmers' decision making: Managing trade-offs and synergies for sustainable intensification



University for Development
Studies



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About the event

For more information about the SITAM project, or IIED's work on sustainable agriculture, visit www.iied.org/exploring-sustainable-intensification, or contact: Barbara Adolph, IIED, barbara.adolph@iied.org

Coordinating organisation

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) is a policy and action research organisation. We promote sustainable development to improve livelihoods and protect the environments on which these livelihoods are built. We specialise in linking local priorities to global challenges. IIED is based in London and works in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific, with some of the world's most vulnerable people. We work with them to strengthen their voice in the decision-making arenas that affect them - from village councils to international conventions.

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Cover photo: Burkinabe woman implementing farmer-managed natural regeneration in Gayeri, Burkina Faso (Credit: ANSD)

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The SAIRLA programme seeks to generate evidence and design tools to enable governments, investors and other key actors to deliver more effective policies and investments in sustainable agricultural intensification that strengthen the capacity of poorer farmers, especially women and youth, to access and benefit from sustainable intensification in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia.

We would like to thank our donors for making the project possible; and all the workshop participants for making the meeting a success. In particular, we would like to thank our partners at ANSD (Association Nourrir Sans Détruire) for their help in organising and hosting the workshop in Fada N'gourma, Burkina Faso.

The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the donors or contributory organisations.

Introduction and workshop objectives

The inception workshop of the project “Sustainable Intensification: Trade-offs for Agricultural Management” (SITAM) was hosted by ANSD (Association Nourrir Sans Détruire) in Fada N’gourma, Burkina Faso, between 27 and 30 June 2016.

The SITAM project is one of eight contracted under the DFID funded programme “Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning in Africa” (SAIRLA). It is led by IIED (International Institute for Environment and Development), United Kingdom and includes a further nine partners: ANSD (Association Nourrir sans Détruire), Burkina Faso; CIKOD (Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational Development), Ghana; Groundswell International, USA; INERA (Institut de l’Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles), Burkina Faso; LUANAR (Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources), Malawi; Practical Action Consulting, Senegal and Malawi; TLC (Total LandCare), Malawi; UDS (University for Development Studies), Ghana; and Wageningen University (Farming systems ecology group), The Netherlands.

The project addresses the challenges and opportunities of smallholder farmers, in particular poor farmers and women farmers, in managing the trade-offs between production, sustainability, and other socioeconomic and environmental factors. With climate change, population growth and changing diets increasing the pressure on the natural resource base, smallholder farmers are faced with difficult choices about how they allocate their assets (land, labour, capital, knowledge and so on) to achieve multiple household objectives. Programmes aiming at increasing agricultural productivity often do not consider farmers’ perceptions of trade-offs and synergies, and many interventions have not reached some of the poorest and most vulnerable farmers, including women. However, these farmers are able to ‘produce more with less’ by intensifying their production in a sustainable way that also increases their resilience to shocks and stresses, for example by using agroecological approaches to intensification that build on farmers’ knowledge and make use of locally available resources.

The project will work with communities and local stakeholders in eastern Burkina Faso, northwest Ghana and central Malawi, and will engage with other national level stakeholders via National Learning Alliances. It will co-generate research findings with these communities and decision makers at different levels, based on rigorous and inclusive methods. It will gain understanding of the functioning and resilience of current farming and livelihoods systems in the study areas, household types and sustainable intensification of agriculture (SIA) indicators, levels of SIA by household type, and influences of the enabling environment. It will analyse household, intra-household and community-level decision making processes on SIA and how they are influenced by the enabling environment. It will engage with decision makers and other stakeholders via the learning alliances throughout the research process to ensure uptake of the research findings. Exploring how poorer farmers perceive trade-offs between different livelihood strategy options, and how the enabling environment influences these choices, will provide valuable insights for the design of agricultural policies, programmes and investments.

The project aims to bring about changes in the knowledge, awareness, attitudes and capacity of decision makers and other actors at local and national level, in support of proven pro-poor approaches for scaling up SIA that recognises farmers’ perceptions of synergies and trade-offs. This is expected to contribute to more effective policies and investments that are better targeted to the needs of poorer farmers and women — policies that support these farmers to adopt and adapt SIA via enabling environments that facilitate the management of trade-offs and synergies for resilience, sustainability and productivity.

The goals of the inception workshop were to initiate the SITAM project by:

- (a) Ensuring the project partners had the same understanding of key terms and issues behind the project
- (b) Giving partners a good overview of the objectives and structure of the project
- (c) Developing partners’ understanding of the methodology and concepts to be used in the research
- (d) Beginning to develop detailed work plans for the first year, and

- (e) Getting to know each other and establishing productive working relationships between the partners.

The workshop was attended by representatives of all partner organisations, with the exception of Wageningen University (who have a technical advisory role rather than an operational one).

This report documents the various workshop sessions, following largely the workshop agenda chronologically (see also Annex 1). It is largely meant as a reference document for SITAM project partners, but is also a project deliverable in its own right.

Day 1: Monday 27 June

Session 1: Welcome & introductions

Tsuamba Bourgou (ANSD) opened the workshop by welcoming all participants and thanking them for making the journey to Fada N'gourma. He then gave a brief summary of the project's aims and the goals of the inception meeting.

Participants introduced themselves to each other and to the group in pairs, giving their expectations of the workshop, summarised below.

Box 1 Participants' expectations of the workshop

- Define the project objectives
- Better understand the project activities
- Understand the methodology and tools to be used
- Develop a standard approach for the project
- Develop a clear understanding of our roles and how to best support the project
- Develop a detailed work plan
- Learn about the outcomes we hope to achieve through the project, and expected results
- Learn how to communicate project results at the community level
- Get to know each other better and share experiences
- Bring together researchers and NGOs to learn from each other
- Understand more about smallholder farmers' knowledge, how they manage their expectations, and household perceptions of climate change

Mary Allen (Practical Action Consulting) took participants through the planned workshop programme for the week.

Session 2: What is sustainable intensification of agriculture (SIA)?

Barbara Adolph (IIED) outlined why SIA is a difficult and complex subject. Although it is an increasingly popular topic and talked about a lot, people can have quite different understandings of what it means. As we begin work on the project, it is important that all project partners share a common understanding of SIA.

The global challenges created by climate change, land degradation, population growth and increased pressure on food security have made SIA an important topic for research and development. Producers want to find solutions to increase their resilience against climate change, to improve land production and sustain populations, but without damaging the environment or increasing land area.

Box 2 Outcome of brainstorming on sustainable intensification of agriculture

Part of SIA & solutions

Producing more with less

- ✓ Producing more with less (less land and other resources)
- ✓ Producing more while protecting the environment and without extending the area farmed

Environmental aspects / natural resources management

- ✓ Sustainable production systems
- ✓ Soil fertility management using natural resources
- ✓ Using land without degrading it; continuity; using practices that don't damage the soil in the long term
- ✓ Positive environmental trends

Social / cultural / empowerment aspects; equity; local control

- ✓ Local knowledge and culture
- ✓ Two-way feeding system (man feeding the land, and the land feeding man)
- ✓ Control over production inputs
- ✓ Gender and empowerment consideration
- ✓ Affordable solutions — pro-poor; socially just / social equity; economic viability for all, including the poorest farmers and women
- ✓ Local resources; local innovation and adaptation
- ✓ Farmers empowered to make and influence decisions; capacity building; nutrition-sensitive production; positive food security and nutritional outcomes
- ✓ Modelled on individual decision making

Economic aspects

- ✓ Increased efforts in profitability and efficiency
- ✓ Linkage with traders / customers / commercialisation
- ✓ Producing for the family and for the marketplace

Resilience

- ✓ Increased resilience to climatic and other shocks
- ✓ Adaptability
- ✓ Improved seeds

Technologies

- ✓ Adoption of appropriate technologies; innovative solutions; adaptive agricultural practices

Enabling environment / others

- ✓ Economic, environmental and social sustainability; finding a balance between all three (trade-offs necessary); difficult choices
- ✓ Integrated actions together on one platform — policy makers, farmers, researchers, consumers all working together to achieve SIA
- ✓ Land security
- ✓ Diversity of approaches and solutions; many needed for different contexts
- ✓ Systemic; integrated management
- ✓ Supportive policies and institutions

Participants worked in groups to brainstorm terms and concepts they believe to be a part of SIA and SIA solutions; and concepts which are *not* a part of SIA. The results of the group work are summarised in Box 2.

Box 2 – continued

Not a part of SIA

Technologies

- × Excessive use of agrochemicals and inorganic fertilisers
- × Large areas of land
- × Soil tillage practices
- × Slash & burn
- × Monocultures / high-yielding varieties / hybrids only
- × Large scale mechanisation
- × GMOs

Approaches

- × Pushing individual technologies as a 'silver bullet' / one size fits all solutions
- × Approaches excluding smallholder farmers
- × 'Business as usual'
- × Focusing on agribusiness / production / profitability rather than environment / sustainability
- × Solutions giving more power to national or international agribusiness / commercial vs family farming

Discussion

Participants agreed that all three dimensions of sustainability are important. What specific technologies and approaches are appropriate depends on a given context, but in order to ensure social sustainability and equity, it is key that farmers have control over resources and are able to make an informed decision that takes into account both short and longer term objectives.

Photo 1 Brainstorming sustainable intensification of agriculture



(Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)

Session 3: Country presentations

Burkina Faso

Hamadé Sigué (INERA) presented the agricultural characteristics of Burkina Faso and the proposed study sites for the project. The project will work in two municipalities in eastern Burkina Faso — Bilanga in the North, and Tibiga, across the central region (including Fada).

Annual rainfall in Bilanga is 700–800mm; in Tibiga it is 800–900mm. Staple crops are millet, sorghum, maize and rice; cash crops include peanuts, sesame, soya; plus groundnuts and sweet potato. The average size of a farm is 2.5ha, each with an average 4–5 active household members who are able to farm (overall household size will be larger than this as it includes children and elderly people not farming). Cereal yields in Bilanga are 500–650kg/ha, and 750–800kg/ha in Tibiga, the difference being attributed to the difference in rainfall, soil productivity, use of inputs and technologies between the two areas.

Livestock farming is mainly traditional, with cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, pigs and poultry; and characterised by movement of livestock herds — within the area as well as passing through.

There are a number of non-farming activities, but the low income of households indicates poor socio-economic performance of those activities.

Main challenges faced in both zones include land tenure insecurity, poverty, soil degradation, pressure on natural resources and soil fertility. Bilanga faces pastoral pressures on production, degradation of farmland and grasslands; Tibiga faces conflicts around natural resource usage due to colonisation of farms and fields on pastoral space, and migratory corridors.

The policy environment of the country was presented, outlining current agricultural policies, strategies and support structures for the rural sector.

Agricultural techniques adopted in the two zones include stone lines for erosion control and soil protection; using organic compost to restore the soil; planting holes with compost in it ("Zai"); improved short duration seed varieties; half-moons for water retention; intercropping and crop rotation; natural regeneration; grass bunds along the field boundary to improve soil and water conservation. Local farmers perceive climate change and are therefore adopting these technologies — but not without problems.

Issues faced currently include the large number of projects in the area that are implemented with little synergy or cohesion between them — promoting different approaches and methods which are often conflicting and confusing to farmers.

Although SIA techniques can be seen, the level of adoption is still relatively low. Capacity building is needed to provide technical training and skills sharing.

Discussion

Hamadé clarified some of the figures. The area of land per farm has remained fairly static in recent years, but the overall cultivated area has increased due to population growth. Farmers are having to feed a greater number of people using the same area of land in a village, resulting in shorter fallow periods. Figures have been extrapolated from a 2006 census. Agricultural policies are currently in a transition period, in the process of renewal, which presents a good opportunity for the project to influence the new policies.

The area in the east of the country was chosen by ANSD for the SAIRLA project study site, as ANSD has worked there before and already has a good understanding of the farming and livelihood systems in the area. New technologies have already been introduced in the area so the project can build on an existing foundation rather than starting from scratch in a new area. The two zones were selected for the difference in rainfall and different ethnic groups.

Malawi

John Paul from Total LandCare (TLC) presented for Malawi. Malawi is largely dependent on agriculture for livelihoods — most of the population works on the land, and 90% of those are smallholders. Farming activities are affected by climate related events, largely prolonged dry spells and floods.

The study area is in the central region of Malawi, Nkhotakota District, close to Lake Malawi. Within the district, the extension planning area of Mwansambo has been selected since TLC have been working there for over 10 years and already have projects established which can be built upon.

Average annual rainfall is 600–800mm. Average landholding area is 0.3–0.4ha, therefore much smaller than in Burkina Faso for a similar amount of rainfall.

Farming systems include rain-fed conservation agriculture and conventional tillage, which is less resilient to extreme weather events such as prolonged dry spells. Continuous mono-cropping of maize is practised in the study area. Small scale irrigation is practised after the rainy season.

Main crops include maize and groundnuts, as well as cotton, soya, cassava, sweet potato and paprika.

Some households venture into livestock production, or livestock and crops as a diversification strategy to cushion the impact of failure of one activity. Others diversify within crop farming, or practise small-scale fisheries under dams or in Lake Nyasa.

Challenges faced include high input costs and low produce income; poor infrastructure and transportation — long distances to markets and poor roads increase costs further and make it harder to compete with producers closer to the main markets.

There is, however, strong local leadership at the community level. Local policies are implemented by community heads.

Discussion

Participants were struck by the differences in land area between Malawi and Burkina Faso, and the ability of farmers in Malawi to survive / produce as much with significantly less land. One can expect ~3 tonnes per hectare for maize in Malawi. The area is small due to population pressure and the landscape (hilly/rocky terrain, for example), as well as large swathes of the country devoted to commercial farming, leaving less land for smallholders. However, farmers in Malawi cultivate continuously and degrade the soil, with very little crop rotation; the country is food-insecure. SIA can be seen as a pathway, and each site will be starting from different points on the pathway. SIA will mean different things in each context.

Ghana

Daniel Banuoku (CIKOD) presented for Ghana. The project will focus on two districts in Upper West Region of Ghana: Lawra and Nandom. CIKOD already has activities established in both areas, particularly with Lawra communities.

Smallholder production systems are prevalent. The majority of the population are smallholder farmers. Average family size is 3–5 people, with an average farm size of 3–5 acres (1.2–2 ha). Some multicropping is practised with farmers planting a number of crops on the same planting 'hills'. Main crops include maize, groundnut, beans, yam, millet, sweet potato, and other crops on a smaller scale.

Families are facing a reduction in family size/workforce, as children are sent away for education and fail to return to the farm. Many are dependent on tractors to maintain production.

Ghana has a rich diversity of ecosystems and natural resources, but is facing land degradation and desertification. Climatic patterns are changing and are unpredictable. Rapid population growth is affecting availability of land for production. 65–70% of the population depend directly on rain-fed agriculture. Agriculture and market prices are highly sensitive to changes in climate.

There is a good perception of SIA as a win-win situation for productivity, ecosystems and livelihoods. Upscaling of SIA techniques is needed, as well as awareness raising of the importance of knowledge management and decision support mechanisms.

Techniques in use currently include composting, bunding (earth), tied ridges, farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR), and farmer-to-farmer training.

Discussion

The presenter explained the trees being used in the fields for FMNR are native species already adapted to the local environment, which do not need protection from local pests or wildfires. Farmers have a list of tree species which contribute to soil fertility without placing undue demand on crop resources; the farmers decide which trees are suitable or important to use.

The importance of local knowledge was especially emphasised — farmers managing and controlling their land themselves using local and traditional knowledge.

Session 4: Project objectives and Theory of Change

Barbara Adolph led a session reviewing the main objectives and planned outcomes of the project, and the pathway the project will take to reach them using a theory of change model (see Figure 1).

The planned long term impact of the project activities is increased productivity, sustainability and resilience of smallholder farmers. The project itself cannot achieve this within the 3.5 year time frame, but will aim to lay the foundations to contribute towards achieving this longer term goal.

The medium term impact will be effective policies and investments targeted to meet the needs of poor farmers; taking into account farmers' priorities and perceptions. Our goal is not to roll out a programme on agricultural techniques and intensification. Our entry point is instead through policies and investments. This, again, is too ambitious a goal to achieve outright within 3.5 years, but the project will make significant contributions towards this impact by achieving the outcome.

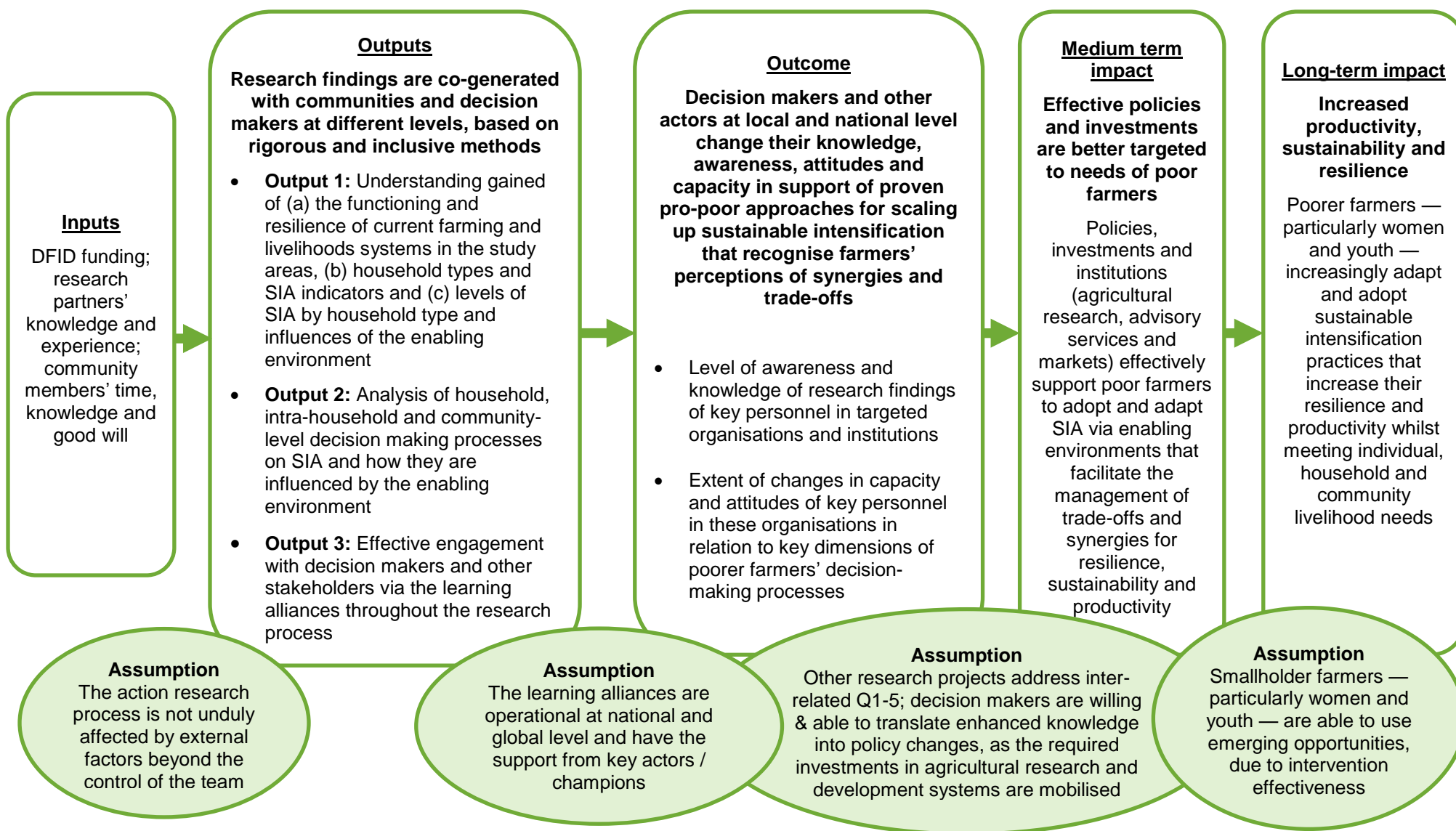
The outcome of the project is a change in knowledge, awareness and attitudes of decision makers. The underlying assumption is that, if decision makers have a greater understanding of the relevant issues, they will be more likely to implement appropriate policies. However, we realise that policies are not always evidence based and therefore we will need to engage with decision makers in a dialogue to understand their perspectives. We want to promote pro-poor approaches with a focus on the poorest farmers and women, and SIA policies which recognise the trade-offs and synergies that farmers are faced with. Decision makers at local and national levels need to be aware of farmers' decision-making processes — how do they view sustainability? What are their motivations? What are the limiting factors to the choices they are making?

Identifying new approaches and technologies for SIA is *not* our project's objective.

On our pathway towards the project outcome, we will be generating specific project outputs. We will be co-generating research findings with communities and decision makers based on rigorous and inclusive methods. Working together with decision makers from the outset will be key to achieving the outcome. The stakeholder analysis is critical for this reason, to increase our understanding of who we need to work with and their level of understanding of SIA.

Project inputs include our time, energy, operational and financial resources, as well as farmer and community input through meetings, workshops and interviews.

Figure 1 Theory of Change



Group work

Participants were divided into four groups, to focus on Output 1, Output 2, Output 3 and the Overall Outcome, respectively. Each group discussed what the output means, what is currently not clear, what detail would be needed, and what the research component would entail.

Discussion points included:

- How can project teams involve farmers and their networks in the research design; what methods and tools will be needed to maximise engagement?
- Assumptions: inputs will only lead to the planned outputs if the action research process is not unduly affected by external factors beyond the control of the team, for example, natural disasters.
- National Learning Alliances (NLAs): the NLAs are a platform for people to come together, share experiences and learn from each other; how will we use this mechanism to engage with decision makers?
- The other SAIRLA projects: we need to find out what/who the other projects are so we can work together where appropriate and avoid duplication and unnecessary cross-over with communities.
- *Output 1* focuses on understanding the context: farming and livelihood systems, types of households, contextual information to frame where people currently are with SIA; and what makes a good measure/indicator for SIA.
- *Output 2* focuses on understanding how decisions are made at household and community level; longitudinal case studies of individual households (including different members of the same household — household head, spouses and youths).
- *Output 3* focuses on engagement with stakeholders and decision makers; understanding what they are interested in and what motivates them.
- In Ghana, there is a strong presence at government level of international companies with large financial support working through NGOs in communities with the interest of maintaining “business as usual”. It is very difficult to find champions of SIA practices within the mainstream system, and a recent report lists NGOs such as CIKOD and Action Aid as being barriers to the more commercial systems.
- Our approach needs to focus on our strength, which is involving the communities and building knowledge from the ground up. Burkina Faso recently rejected GMOs because farmers were able to voice their concerns.
- We may not have the power to directly influence policy ourselves, but we can identify key people who do and can act as our champions; for example, we can use NGO networks to propel our recommendations upward.

Session 5: Field visit preparation

The fieldwork on Day 2 will be based in two villages in Tibiga, 45km from Fada. Participants will have the opportunity to speak to different types of farmers about their decision-making processes in relation to agriculture. In the first village, two groups will work with men and women, respectively. In the second village, two groups will work with older people and youth, respectively.

Participants divided into their four groups to plan what questions they would ask the communities.

The field visit will act as a ‘reality check’ for the workshop, providing real-life context of what challenges smallholder farmers are facing and the kind of trade-offs and decisions they have to make.

Day 2: Tuesday 28 June

Session 6: Field visit feedback

Feedback from each of the four groups is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Feedback from field work groups

Group 1: Men of different ages

- Households have an average of 10–15 acres of land, but only farm ~3 acres, because they do not have enough labour to cultivate the whole area, or enough resources (compost / organic matter) to apply. Some areas are too degraded to farm.
- Techniques practised include ridges, half-moons and composting pits (the latter two introduced by ANSD in recent years), stone bunding, use of improved seeds, crop rotation. Farmers have an understanding of how these techniques help make their system more resilient to climate change.
- Most farmers also keep animals which they can sell during periods of drought / poor crop production in order to buy food to sustain the family.
- If a severe, long period of drought hits, the group said they would be reliant on NGOs and governments to support them or else they would be forced to migrate.
- The group reported most decisions were made by the head of the family (the senior man). The family could contribute ideas but the head of household would have the final decision over which techniques to implement and how to manage their stock, including telling their wives how much grain they are allowed to cook with in order to prevent waste.
- Former times of abundance were spoken of, when food stock needed less control and biodiversity in the area was much richer.

Group 2: Women of different ages

- In trying to understand the social organisation of the village: One elder in each compound rules the family; there may be several households in one compound; there is a women's association in each neighbourhood, each with a collective farm. Pregnant women and women with children aged 1–3 years benefited from NGO support for gardening.
- There are social and economic advantages of the women's associations: women come together to help each other in times of struggle; and they are able to sell produce from the collective farm to earn their own income.
- The group mentioned a lack of rainfall in recent years, and that crop varieties which used to perform well are no longer producing. Therefore farmers are forced to grow varieties which are less popular (in terms of food quality).
- The group reported that decisions are made first by the compound chief (a compound may include a senior man and the families of his grown-up sons), then the household chief (the man), and lastly the woman of the household. Women have their own small plot of land which they have autonomy over. For the family farm, the woman can voice her opinion but the decision rests with the man. At compound level, the woman can give her opinion via her husband, but not directly to the compound chief.
- The priority is to work on the compound farm, then the family farm, then the woman's own plot. Time and tools are allocated according to these priorities. However, this has resulted in the women's plots often demonstrating more SIA techniques because they are working with even fewer resources.

- The group mentioned a desire to buy chemical fertilisers to help production, although one woman said that this would increase yield for one year and then damage fertility in the longer term.

Group 3: Youth (both men and women)

- With the exception of one young man, all of the young adults in the group were working on their parents' or husband's farm.
- They understood the need to keep trees on the field, and were also practising stone bunds, composting and animal ploughing. They claimed the innovations had improved soil fertility but not enough — productivity was still insufficient and they wanted to obtain chemical fertiliser to help or to increase production of organic compost.
- Decisions over techniques are made based on cost and amount of effort needed; but they also understood that some techniques are necessary first before others would work (e.g. stone bunding require a lot of physical effort, but is necessary before applying compost, or else the compost would be washed off the plot with heavy rains and be wasted). Decisions are also influenced heavily by whatever NGO projects are currently in the area.
- Decisions are made together as a family. Everyone in the family can make suggestions. Parents are more likely to agree to a new technique if another household has already shown success with it.
- The group understood that all the new technologies are redundant if there is no rain. They face shortage of water for drinking, composting and irrigation.



Minata Coulibaly (Practical Action, Ouagadougou) interviews a young woman (Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)



Youth group assembled under tree for group discussion (Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)

Group 4: Older adults (both men and women)

- The group perceive threats from climate change including lower soil fertility and food insecurity.

- Techniques in use include half-moons, zaï, stone and grass bunds.
- New crop varieties are needed to withstand the drought.
- The group was interested to hear about zero tillage farming. They currently use it as a last resort coping strategy but they do not perceive it as 'good farming'.
- There was concern that young people need to be persuaded to continue to farm; and they also understand that without rain, all the techniques would be useless.
- The group discussed how land is divided and given to family members and people from outside.

Day 3: Wednesday 29 June

Session 7: Trade-offs, synergies and pareto-optimisation

Sam Barrett (IIED) led a session to explain the theory behind our research methodology. At the core of understanding SIA and farmer decision making are the three pillars of sustainability (social, environmental and economic) and recognition that we cannot understand any one factor independent of the other two. We need instead to consider the holistic framework as an integrated system, but one that still requires measurement at farm, household and individual level and within each of the three country contexts.

Instead of aggregating all indicators — such as when using a composite index methodology — the in-country teams will often understand the issue of SIA through constructing a series of competing bivariate relationships, meaning many simultaneous comparisons of two indicators. Such a framing is known as “trade-offs” and this session was designed to develop this framework for each of the country-specific contexts.

The economic concept of ‘opportunity costs’ states that you cannot gain one thing without giving up something else — i.e. trade-offs — and rests on the assumption that resources are scarce.

In most situations you will aim to reach some compromise between two outcomes. In-country teams will use this principle to understand the relationship between factors of SIA and farmer decision making.

Some examples were given to demonstrate the kind of trade-offs and compromises farmers are making and the short- vs. long-term effects these decisions might have.

The limit to what can be achieved is represented by the ‘production-possibility frontier’. We are constrained by our human desires, intellectual abilities and energy levels, as well as what technologies and resources are available at the time. However, the objective of the research is to change the knowledge levels of smallholders, so that synergies are possible through the development of simultaneously improving outcomes, and thus increasing the frontier outwards.

Historically, in SIA research and practice, greater emphasis has been placed on environmental and economic factors. But all three dimensions of sustainability have equal weighting in the holistic framework, so social factors are also crucial, albeit more difficult to measure and therefore often neglected.

Following the presentation, there was discussion about the realities on the ground. Appropriate farming techniques will differ depending on the context. We need, as a project, to understand that different farmers will have different pathways of achieving the same objective, and we should not be dogmatic about which pathway and decisions they choose. Also, there is a need to understand these relationships in order to inform the baseline survey design. SIA indicators must be contextualised before constructing a baseline survey. The result of the baseline survey will be a hierarchy / map of where farmers are currently in relation to SIA.

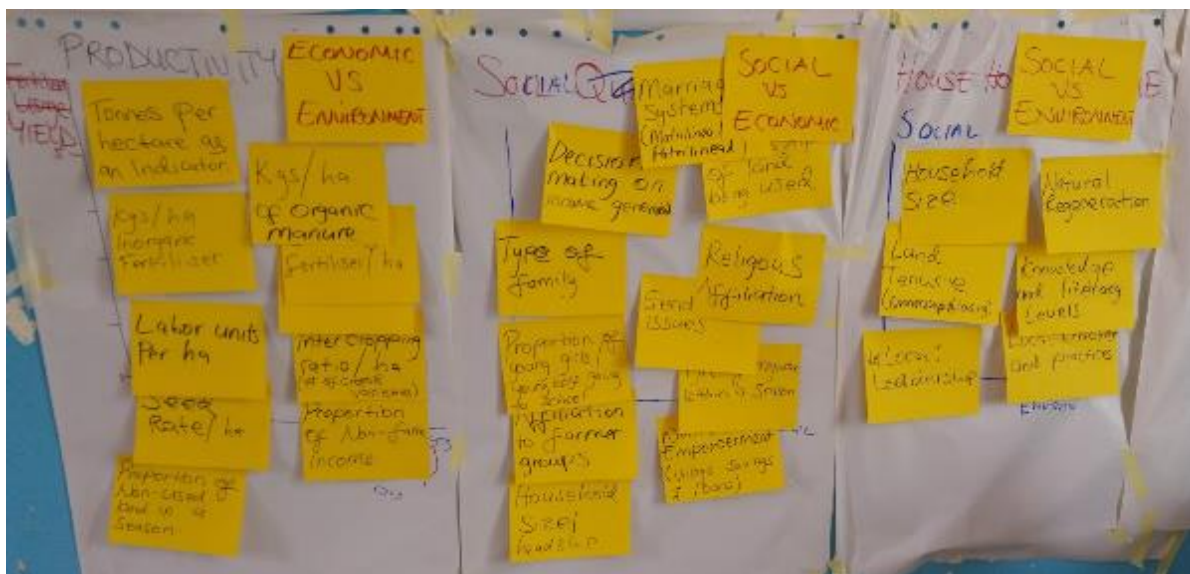
Group work

Participants divided into their three country groups to discuss what the framework looks like in each of the country contexts.

Each group brainstormed on key indicators and bivariate relationships/trade-offs between key factors. The results are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 Feedback from group work – SIA indicators and trade-offs		
Malawi: Brainstorming indicators for the three parent relationships / trade-offs		
Economic vs Environment	Social vs Economic	Social vs Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tonnes per hectare as an indicator • Kgs/ha inorganic fertiliser • Labour units per ha • Seed rate per ha • Proportion of non-cultivated land in a season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage systems (matrilineal / patrilineal) • Decision making on income generated • Ownership of land being used • Type of family • Proportion of young girls / young boys going to school • Affiliation to farmer groups • Household size / headship • Religious affiliation • Gender issues • Type of migration within a season • Women's empowerment (village savings and loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household size • Land tenure (ownership and leasing) • Local leadership • Natural regeneration • Knowledge and literacy levels • Local knowledge and practices

Photo 2 Potential indicators, Malawi group



(Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)

Ghana: Brainstorming indicators and key relationships

Production

- Food / nutrients produced per household head
- Yield
- Household income
- Access to labour
- Choice of crops and crop varieties

Sustainability

- Climate change — impacts on tractor use for faster cultivation

Key relationships: Trade-offs / synergies

- Use of crop residues: Soil fertility vs. Feed & fuel
- Concentration / intensification of production: Small plot & intensive use vs. Large farm, less intensive use
→ *Choice influenced by tenure security in long term (especially women)*
- Scale of production: Labour (manual) vs. Mechanisation (animal or tractor)
→ *Choice influenced by farm family size, social obligations, migration*
- FMNR vs. Mechanisation
- Area under indigenous crops vs. Area under “new” crops
→ *Influenced by cultural dimensions and social obligations*
- External input (inorganic fertiliser & herbicides) vs. Local inputs / practices (manure & agroecology)
→ *Influenced by price, availability, labour, knowledge / skills, farm size*
- Social obligations / social capital vs. Household food security
→ *Influenced by choice of crops and volume of food consumption*
- Collective good vs. Individual good
→ *But also: collective good can increase resilience and support individual households*
- Trade-off and synergy: Crops vs. Livestock
→ *Influenced by consumption, sales, investment – sales / security*
- Long term sustainability: Investment in SWC etc. without immediate benefit
vs.
Short term productivity / use all resources for production
- Stay at home and produce food
vs.
Migrate to earn money and buy food

Photo 3 Key relationships, Ghana group



(Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)

Burkina Faso: Brainstorming key relationship pairs

Mécanisation ⇔ Dégradation / destruction des arbres, couvert végétale
 (Mechanisation ⇔ Degradation / destruction of trees, vegetative cover)

Acquérir (suivre) la formation nécessaire ⇔ Payer les frais de formation, laisser mon activité économique

(Acquire the necessary training ⇔ Pay the training fees, abandon my economic activity)

Mettre la fumure organique ⇔ Temps ou / et argent pour produire la fumure (aussi eau, transport)
 (Apply organic manure ⇔ Time and / or money to produce manure (also water and transport))

Temps pour les activités sociales (femmes) ⇔ Gains – engagement sociale, entraide, solidarité, revenu, information, statut sociale

(Time for social activities (women) ⇔ Gains – social engagement, mutual help, solidarity, income, information, social status)

Main d'œuvre / temps pour les activités du ménage, orpaillage etc. ⇔ Main d'œuvre pour les activités agricole

(Labour / time for household activities, artisanal mining etc ⇔ Labour for agricultural activities)

Coût de l'utilisation des herbicides ⇔ Pollution d'eau, coûts / temps et effort pour contrôler les mauvaises herbes

(Costs of using herbicides ⇔ Water pollution, costs / time and effort to control weeds)

Produire pour le marché ⇔ Produire pour la consommation et l'alimentation de la famille

(Produce for the market ⇔ Produce for the consumption and nutrition of the family)

Poids de la tradition (sésame) et religion (porc) ⇔ Adoption des nouvelles techniques et activités

(Weight of tradition (sesame) and religion (pork) ⇔ Adoption of new techniques and activities)

Coûts et risques d'innover et adapter ⇔ Gains économiques et social d'innover

(Costs and risks from innovating and adapting ⇔ Economic and social gains from innovating)

Partage de l'effort entre les parcelles / spéculations différentes (terres hautes, bas-fonds) ⇔ Gains sur les terres / spéculations selon la pluviométrie

(Sharing of effort between plots and different enterprises (uplands, valley bottoms) ⇔ Gains made on the land / enterprises depending on the rainfall)

Temps et effort pour appliquer un technique ⇔ Gain en production, gains en récupération des terres dégradés

(Time and effort for applying a technique ⇔ Gains in production, gains in recuperation of degraded lands)

Gain en production avec les semences améliorés ⇔ Préférence socio-culturelle pour variétés traditionnelles

(Gain in production from improved varieties ⇔ Socio-cultural preference for traditional varieties)

Aménagement – coûts / bénéfiques ⇔ Sécurité foncière (risque de perdre le champ)

Land management – costs and benefits ⇔ Tenure security (risk of losing the field)

Effets des subventions => plus d'adoption ⇔ Durabilité de l'adoption

(Effects of subsidies => leading to more adoption ⇔ Sustainability of adoption)

Disponibilité de main d'œuvre ⇔ Payer le main d'œuvre pour appliquer un technique

(Availability of labour ⇔ Paying labour to apply a technique)

Scolariser les enfants ⇔ Disponibilité de la main d'œuvre familiale

(Sending children to school ⇔ Availability of family labour)

Photo 4 Relationship pairs, Burkina Faso group



(Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)

Session 8: Stages of the research

Barbara Adolph presented the overall project timeline and work plan.

All activities are organised into quarterly milestones. Year 1 will focus on producing background data / baseline, which will enable us to look in detail during years 2–3 at farmer decision making. The initial stages in year 1 will be important in understanding the context.

We had originally envisaged to complement the secondary literature review in year one with a short quantitative survey to characterise farm households and identify indicators for SIA. However, after discussions with the SITAM project advisor from Wageningen University it was agreed that a qualitative approach would be more appropriate, using focus group discussions in the communities to understand the visions of SIA of different types of farmers. Hence SIA indicators will be developed through a combination of secondary data analysis, expert judgement (by project country teams and key informants) and focus group discussions.

We already have information on some indicators, for example from previous studies on use of manure in the study area. We can also use the NLA platform to look at secondary data and obtain feedback from the NLAs.

Year 2 will begin with in-depth household analysis, involving a series of interviews with members of the same households on a range of topics.

Table 3 Work plan for year one

IIED to lead	Output 1				
NGO to lead	Output 2				
Researchers to lead	Output 3				
ACTIVITIES (as per proposal)	DELIVERABLES (as per proposal)	Quarter 1 June - Aug	Quarter 2 Sept - Nov	Quarter 3 Dec - Feb	Quarter 4 March - May
YEAR 1					
Output 1, ACTIVITY 1: Inception phase	Grant agreements signed, inception meeting held, inception report submitted, updated M&E plan submitted				
Output 3, ACTIVITY 1: Stakeholder and audience analysis carried out and used to inform engagement with decision makers and baseline values for outcome indicators	3 stakeholder analysis produced and documented (one per country)				
Output 3, ACTIVITY 1: Stakeholder and audience analysis carried out and used to inform engagement with decision makers and baseline values for outcome indicators	Audience analysis carried out and documented, communications strategy produced				
Output 1, ACTIVITY 2: Participatory livelihoods systems and resilience assessment	Assessment planned, information collected and analysed Findings validated, reports written				
Output 1, ACTIVITY 4: Selection of SI indicators	SI indicators selected				
Output 2, ACTIVITY 1: Study of past and current interventions and enabling environment	Study designed, information collected, report written and validated by NLA				
Output 3, ACTIVITY 1: Stakeholder and audience analysis carried out and used to inform engagement with decision makers and baseline values for outcome indicators	Baseline values for outcome level indicators defined through stakeholder engagement				
Output 1, ACTIVITY 5: Baseline survey	Survey planned, methods pre-tested, enumerators trained				
Output 1, ACTIVITY 5: Baseline survey	Data collected				
Output 3, ACTIVITY 2: Engagement with stakeholders at local, district and national level	Organisation of field days, village meetings and similar to enable exchange between communities and stakeholders				
Output 3, ACTIVITY 4: Participation in NLA and global LA	Participation in and contribution to national learning alliance activities				
Output 3, ACTIVITY 3: Production of tailored knowledge and communication products and processes	Ongoing activity throughout, depending on outcome of stakeholder and audience analysis				

Discussion

- For Activity 2.1, the suggestion was made to use as much literature as possible.
- We need to define what the definition of ‘the past’ is — for example, 1 year ago? 20 years ago? We need to establish a framework to define and contextualise the questions.
- Activity 2.1 is largely about understanding the drivers behind farmers’ decision making. We can use hypothetical situations to explore enabling and disabling factors, and what choices the farmers might make in response to particular events or threats.
- Our immediate goal is to develop a standard approach for selecting indicators in each research group / country. The indicators themselves may not be the same for each group, but the method of selection should be.

Session 9: Stakeholder engagement & learning alliances

Dr Issa Sawadogo (INERA and Burkina Faso NLA strategy development team member) presented the current strategy for the learning alliances.

The strategy is a work in progress and is currently still under review with the SAIRLA management team.

The vision is for rural sector actors in Burkina Faso to be knowledgeable of the value of SIA and to practise SIA techniques in an efficient, collaborative, autonomous and socially inclusive manner. The mission of the NLA is to influence actors to deliver SIA through inclusive social learning approaches, by catalysing other actors’ efforts.

Their objective is to impact governments, investors and other key actors to provide more effective policies and investments in SIA which enhance the abilities of the poorest farmers, especially women and youth, to access and benefit from SIA in Burkina Faso; and to promote good SIA practices in rural Burkina Faso.

Strategic areas of action identified are:

1. Improving governance of social learning frameworks (Strategic Outcome # 1: Actors use inclusive decision making processes for access to productive resources in rural areas)
2. Knowledge management to influence policy makers and investors (Strategic Outcome # 2: Relevant and evidence-based knowledge to influence policy makers and investors in SIA are managed efficiently)
3. Capacity development of actors (Strategic Outcome # 3: Actors improve their knowledge, attitudes and practices and contribute to improving the performance of SIA learning devices in Burkina Faso)
4. Advocacy and support for enabling policies and appropriate investments (Strategic Outcome # 4: National and decentralised policies, plans and investment programmes recognise and further integrate SIA)
5. Equity and inclusiveness of social learning on SIA

The NLA’s general approach will be through capacity development, action research, networking, communication and knowledge management, and evidence-based advocacy with decision makers.

Dr Sawadogo described the organisational arrangements of the NLAs, although membership is still being formed.

Discussion

There were many questions from participants, as much of the detail is still under review and has yet to be finalised. Main points of discussion included:

- How will the NLA ensure continuity after the SAIRLA programme has ended?
 - One of the NLA's tasks is to find a solution for continuity of the network beyond SAIRLA.
- What is the NLA's definition of SIA? Does it match our own, discussed during this workshop?
 - The NLA's basic definition is "producing more on less land, without damaging the environment". Social aspects are not mentioned explicitly, although the role of gender and social issues are mentioned elsewhere in the draft strategy.
- How will the NLA engage with stakeholders with opposing views on SIA? Will those people be included in membership, and if not, how can we engage with them?
 - The aim is for alliance members to represent a range of views. The projects could be represented in the general assembly of the NLA.
- What is the added value of the NLA, compared with existing networks and agricultural groups (such as the agroecology network of Burkina Faso)?
 - The NLA tries to have a broader spectrum of members and perspectives of SIA than existing networks.
- How can our project influence the NLA membership using our research process?
 - Project staff would be members of the general assembly and could share lessons learned with the alliance through the general meetings, although there is no explicit mechanism for this currently.
- Is the Burkina Faso NLA required to link up with the other country NLAs as part of their terms of reference?
 - The NLA terms of reference has not explicitly required this, although project teams had been informed this would be the case.

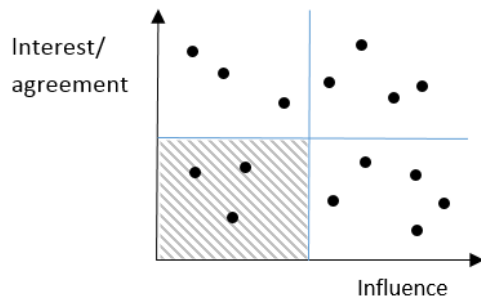
There are still many elements of the NLAs to define and questions still to answer, but we should see this as an opportunity to influence how the alliances are formed in order to maximise our engagement with key stakeholders.

Session 10: Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy

Barbara Adolph re-iterated that the project outcome is about changing knowledge, perceptions and attitudes of SIA actors. The M&E framework therefore needs to measure the extent to which actors' knowledge is changing.

To measure change, we first need to take a baseline of what actors' current knowledge and perceptions are. This will be done by interviewing these actors. At the end of the study, we will interview them again and compare the results with the baseline data.

The stakeholder analysis that the three country teams have already started use the level of influence and level of interest/agreement with what we are promoting in terms of SIA, placing each stakeholder on a graph like the one shown below:



Grouping stakeholders in these categories will allow us to identify which stakeholders we should concentrate on engaging with. Actors in the lower left quadrant can be left out — we have limited resources and this group is the least important to try to influence. The most important people to focus on will be those in the right hand quadrants as they are the most influential. We must not neglect to engage with people with opposing views, in the lower right quadrant. Those in the top two quadrants are the ones who can be champions for our project because they largely agree with what we are trying to do.

Group work

Participants were asked to consider in their country groups what measures they would use to assess stakeholders' level of knowledge about SIA and trade-offs, i.e. what questions they would need to ask at baseline and at the end of the project. Considering their own country stakeholder analysis, participants were asked to list questions to ask their stakeholders to assess their understanding of SIA and of trade-offs.

Day 4: Thursday 30 June

Session 11: M&E continued

Barbara Adolph led the continuation of the M&E session.

Our project outcome will be decision makers and other actors changing their knowledge, awareness, attitudes and capacity in support of proven pro-poor approaches for scaling up SIA, recognising farmers' perceptions of synergies and trade-offs.

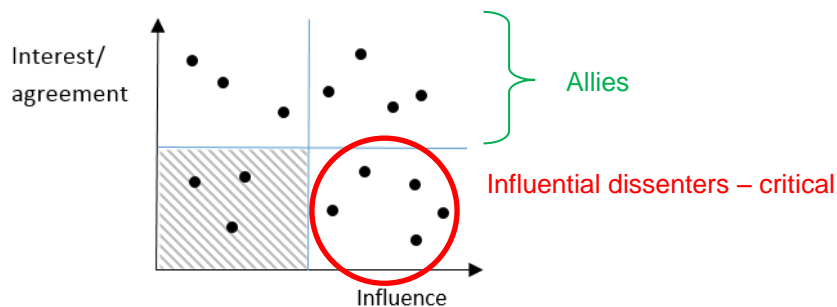
Actors will be at local and national level, and identified by the stakeholder analysis.

Success will be measured by two indicators:

1. Level of knowledge of the research findings
2. Extent of changes in attitudes and capacity in relation to key dimensions of poorer farmers' decision-making processes.

Project teams have developed a list of questions for stakeholders, including questions on how they understand SIA; what people are doing about SIA; perceived challenges and difficulties of SIA; practices and adoption of them; and on policies, hindering or supporting SIA. Barbara will take those questions and create a uniform checklist to use in all three countries (to be reviewed by partners before being finalised). Key stakeholders can then be interviewed using the checklist.

We will identify potential ‘allies’ – actors who are interested in SIA / in agreement with the project, whether they are influential or not. Allies may have some understanding of SIA, but it is important to ensure they have a full, holistic understanding of it.



Actors who are influential but have a narrow perception of SIA, whose thinking might be based largely on productivity rather than environmental or social factors, will be important to involve in the project. We may be less comfortable engaging with these people, but can consider using our allies and networks to help us communicate with this group.

Project teams will list individuals and organisations they need to engage with, and individuals who will be interviewed using the list of questions. The results from those interviews will be analysed in terms of people’s perceptions of trade-offs in SIA, and will be formed into categories / rubriques. We will return to the same questions and categories at the end of the project and assess how perceptions have changed.

Discussion

Questions/discussion points included:

- How do we factor in organisational mobility – that is, if an individual moves to a new role or organisation before the end of the project? We need to consider individuals and organisations and the various levels in between. We are looking at a shift in attitudes, which are held by the individual and not the organisation. We could consider interviewing more than one person for each key organisation, for example the director and a department head.
- The questions need to be very short and concise, capturing 2–3 key aspects rather than being too detail-heavy and cumbersome to administer.
- The stakeholder analyses are not complete, as they depend partly on knowing who is involved in each NLA. Analysis will need to be completed in the next two months as the NLAs are finalised.
- Looking at community-level organisations may be the key to making sustained changes and having real influence over local attitudes and policies.
- Community/local voices must be linked with the NLAs. Farmers need to be given a voice at policy/decision maker levels.

See Annex 4 for a compilation of the questions, which will be further developed after the workshop.

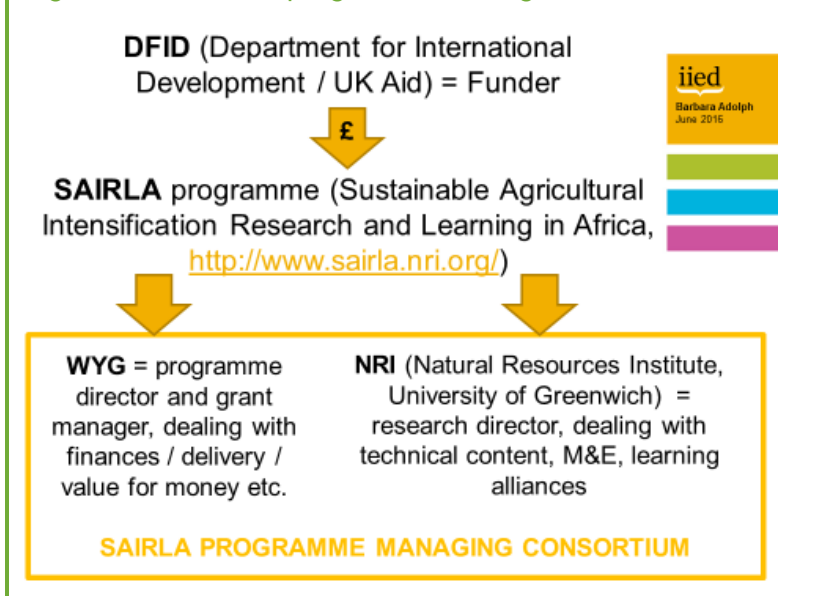
Session 12: Programme architecture, contracts, finance & administration

(Programme architecture was presented on day 1 between sessions 4 and 5, but for reporting purposes it better ‘fits’ here under session 12.)

“SAIRLA” refers to the whole research programme, including 8 funded projects – one of which is SITAM.

Barbara presented an overview of how the SAIRLA programme is managed (see Figure 2). Funding for the programme is donated by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The programme is managed by two organisations: WYG International, who have been contracted by DFID to manage the contractual and financial aspects and overall delivery of the projects; and the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) at the University of Greenwich who will manage the technical aspects, monitoring and evaluation, and the learning alliances.

Figure 2 SAIRLA programme management



Beth Downe (IIED) presented key points regarding project contracts, finance and administration. The overall structure of the contracts and funding pathway was described. Key legal clauses were summarised, mainly focusing on sound accounting and management systems required.

Some points from the contract need clarification from the funder:

- That we are required to notify the funder if a public official becomes an employee on the project
- That we are required to notify the funder if we obtain any co-funding for the project

The project must end by 31 December 2019, therefore no extensions beyond this date will be permitted. Similarly, no overall extension in the budget will be granted. Amendments within the budget should be requested for variances over 10%; and amendments can be requested for technical changes or revisions to milestones.

The project will undergo an annual audit. Supporting documentation for expenditure must be retained for audit and kept on file for a further 6 years after close of the project.

The structure of the budget was described, being divided into Cost Categories and Line Items, and then further divided by quarterly Milestones.

Per diems are eligible travel costs, but our travel costs are limited and will not stretch to cover most full institutional per diem rates. This was discussed at length and will be a key issue to clarify over the next few weeks. All partners had reviewed the proposed budget before submission to the funder and have authorised the contracts. All partners will need to work within their allocated funds. There may be scope to reallocate between line items in order to increase travel budgets, but the activities and deliverables must still be achieved within the total budgets.

Participants were requested to inform Beth if they need to spend against a line item not listed in their budget, and if they expect any variances in expenditure above 10%. Accurate forecasting of the

following quarter's expenditure and deliverables will also be critical, as we are required to inform the funder if a milestone payment is likely to vary by more than 2%. Beth will clarify the flexibility with the funder in the next few weeks.

The payments and reporting schedules were outlined, emphasising that payments will be made based on whether the deliverables have been met for each milestone.

The draft reporting templates were introduced, both for the technical narrative report and financial expenditure report. Both reports will be needed each quarter to tie in with the quarterly milestones.

Beth will be following up with clarifications from the funder, revised reporting templates and further instructions, with all partners in the next few weeks.

Session 13: SIA indicators and framework

Sam Barrett continued the session on methodology and SIA indicators, asking each country team to prioritise them in terms of high, medium or low importance for SIA within their study areas.

Discussion:

- There is a difference between processes and indicators: for example, *mechanisation* is a process, *money spent on tractor hire* or *proportion of land that is ploughed by tractor* are indicators.
- Scale is important, beyond individual households. Different levels: Individual plot, family farm, extended household, community and landscape level.
- Social factors have a strong influence on decision making. This depends on how communities are organised, what the population density is, and so on. We need to make sure that our methods can capture local by-laws, the impacts of social obligations, etc. For all indicators, we need to consider the scale at which they are relevant.
- Equity is important both at intra-household level and at intra-community level.

Group work

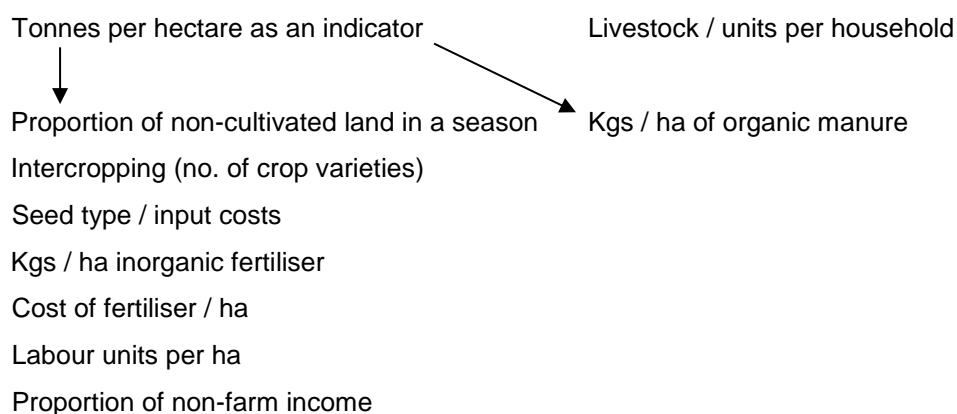
Participants divided into their three country groups to prioritise the relationship pairs / indicators generated from the previous group session (Session 7). The resource and time constraints on the questionnaires mean that only the most important components of SIA can be surveyed in the country areas; therefore this session was used to place relevant indicators into a hierarchy, so as to begin the lengthy process of reducing the focus of the study.

Table 4 Feedback from group work

Malawi: Prioritisation of indicators

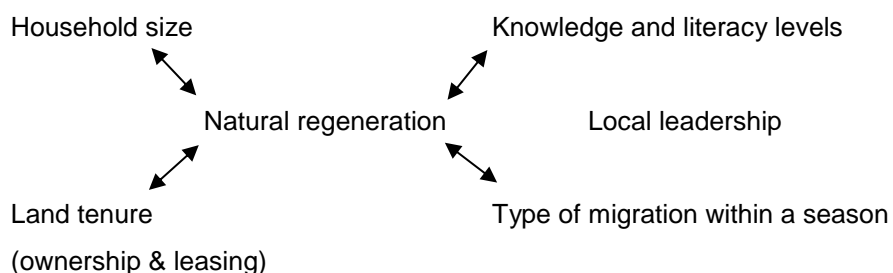
Dimension Priority 1: Economic vs. Environment

Issues within this dimension:



Dimension Priority 2: Social vs Environment

Issues within this dimension:



Dimension Priority 3: Social vs Economic

Issues within this dimension:

- Religious affiliation
- Affiliation to farmer groups
- Women's empowerment (village savings / loans)
- Gender issues
- Type of family
- Proportion of young girls / young boys going to school
- Decision making on income generated
- Local knowledge and practices

Photo 5 Prioritisation of relationship pairs, Malawi group



(Photo: Barbara Adolph, IIED)

Ghana: Prioritisation of relationship pairs

Recognition that all aspects are interrelated — but access to land is a key starting point.

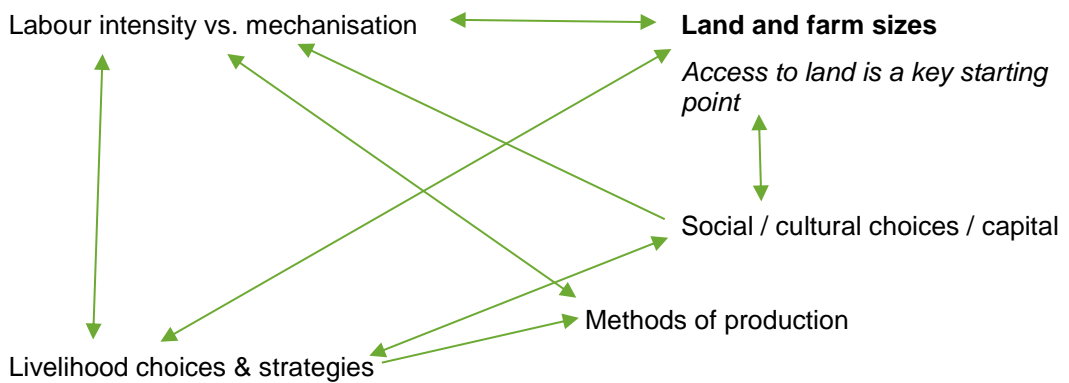


Photo 6 Prioritisation of relationship pairs, Ghana group



(Photo: Barbara Adolph, IIED)

Burkina Faso: Prioritisation of relationship pairs

+++ (most important)

- Apply organic manure ⇔ Time and / or money to produce manure (also water and transport)
- Labour / time for household activities, artisanal mining etc. ⇔ Labour for agricultural activities
- Time and effort for applying a technique ⇔ Gains in production, gains in recuperation of degraded lands)
- Land management – costs and benefits ⇔ Tenure security (risk of losing the field)
- Tenure security ⇔ Sustainability of adoption

++ (medium importance)

- Mechanisation ⇔ Degradation / destruction of trees, vegetative cover
- Produce for the market ⇔ Produce for the consumption and nutrition of the family
- Costs of using herbicides ⇔ Water pollution, costs / time and effort to control weeds
- Availability of labour ⇔ Paying labour to apply a technique
- Sending children to school ⇔ Availability of family labour
- Sharing of effort between plots and different enterprises (uplands, valley bottoms) ⇔ Gains made on the land / enterprises depending on the rainfall

Time for social activities (women) ⇔ Gains — social engagement, mutual help, solidarity, income, information, social status

Gain in production from improved varieties ⇔ Socio-cultural preference for traditional varieties

+ (not so important)

Use of herbicides ⇔ Water pollution

Acquire the necessary training ⇔ Pay the training fees, abandon my economic activity

Costs and risks from innovating and adapting ⇔ Economic and social gains from innovating

Weight of tradition (sesame) and religion (pork) ⇔ Adoption of new techniques and activities

Photo 7 Prioritisation of relationship pairs, Burkina Faso group



(Photo: Barbara Adolph, IIED)

Session 14: Work plans

Barbara Adolph took participants through the proposed work plan and timeline for the project, focusing on Year 1.

Milestones are structured each quarter, therefore we have four milestones to achieve in the first year. We are requesting realignment of the milestones from the funder, to account for the delayed start, bearing in mind we will need to 'catch up' with the original timeline in order to complete everything by December 2019.

Each milestone is made up of a number of specific deliverables, which we need to achieve in order to receive the next payment from the funder.

Partners need to consider carefully what they can realistically achieve in each quarter, and inform IIED if what we are meant to deliver is not feasible. The milestone payment may therefore be less, but we must inform the funder of this variance in advance, so realistic and accurate planning is critical. See Annex 5 for the generic work plan (sent to participants during the week after the workshop), which explains the timing and deliverables in more detail, as well as the process to achieve them.

All activities and deliverables lead into the next, in a critical pathway. The project is an iterative process so all steps are important. Once we have completed Year 1 activities, we will know more to be able to inform our Year 2 and 3 activities, including how to select households for the longitudinal studies.

Each activity will be made up of several sub-activities. Within each country team, it will be important to divide the work up and consider who is best placed to accomplish which tasks. Certain tasks will be NGO-led, others researcher-led, but all will require input from the whole team.

Photo 8 Main steps of year one work plan



(Photo: Beth Downe, IIED)

Group work

In the country teams, groups spent some time setting out the first year's activities and deciding who will be responsible for which tasks.

Discussion

- We can begin to engage with stakeholders already to get them thinking about the topic.
- We should take advantage of existing contacts, platforms and networks, and use other meetings to engage with people on SIA, for example, Global Resilience Partnership; BRICKS programme; regional DFID offices/projects.

Session 15: Communication

Beth Downe and Barbara Adolph took participants through a few points for project communications, external and internal.

Beth will clarify with the funder what their requirements are in terms of prior review of project outputs. She will check what type of outputs they would like to review prior to publishing (whether it includes only formal reports or also web based communications such as blogs, social media posts, and so on).

IIED will have a page about the project on their website, and encourages other partners to do the same where appropriate.

Barbara and Beth will design a leaflet to help introduce the project to stakeholders. Participants viewed an example from a previous project, and made suggestions about what to include, for example, less text and more visual diagrams.

IIED will set up a Dropbox / Google group or similar cloud-based system for sharing key documents between all partners. The research team can use this to share key reference documents, templates, logos, presentations, reports and team contact details.

It was discussed and agreed that project newsletters would *not* be necessary, but the quarterly collated narrative reports that are sent to SAIRLA management would be circulated to all partners.

Team meetings and communication methods were discussed at length. There will be key groups who will need to meet regularly (either face to face or virtually), for example, in-country teams, country leads, researchers, administrators/accountants. However, it was agreed that we would develop meeting schedules ad hoc to begin with. Most communication will be by email.

Partners agreed to look out for funding opportunities to enable the group to get together at least once more (for example, towards the end of year one) or possibly twice, as the SAIRLA grant only covers one project team meeting (i.e. the current inception meeting).

Finally, a short name for the project was discussed. Participants put forward suggestions for acronyms, and then voted for their preference. The final nominated acronym for the project was SITAM for

Sustainable Intensification: Trade-offs for Agricultural Management

Next steps – follow-up / action points

Technical

- Partners to send work plans and photos (for flyers and DFID summary) to IIED
- Partners to confirm village enumeration figures and community consent
- IIED to comment on stakeholder analyses
- IIED to circulate list of questions for stakeholders, for review by partners
- Partners to make list of key stakeholders to interview
- IIED to provide format for livelihood systems work — circulate framework for selection of indicators, for partner comments
- IIED to develop format for qualitative studies checklist

Communications

- IIED to design project leaflet and circulate for partner review
- IIED to design project PowerPoint and circulate for partner review
- IIED to set up Dropbox/documents sharing system, and project shared calendar

Finance & Administration

- IIED to confirm milestone realignment and clarify other financial issues (e.g. budget flexibility) with funder
- IIED to circulate revised reporting templates to partners
- IIED to develop French versions of the reporting templates

Annex 1 Workshop agenda

Day 1:

- Welcome & introductions; participant expectations
- What is Sustainable Intensification of Agriculture (SIA)?
- Country presentations
 - Presentations from Burkina Faso, Malawi and Ghana to introduce the study site characteristics and frame the context of the studies
- Project objectives and Theory of Change
- Preparation for field visit

Day 2:

- Field visit to ANSD intervention villages close to Fada

Day 3:

- Stages of the research; project timeline
- Methodology and data requirements
- Stakeholder analysis
- Engagement with the national learning alliances (NLA)
- Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

Day 4:

- M&E continued
- Project contracts, finances and administration
- Methodology continued (SIA indicators and framework)
- Work plans and immediate next steps
- Roles and responsibilities
- Workshop evaluation

Annex 2 Participants

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Annex 3 Presentations made (PowerPoint files)

Note: These files are available on the SITAM project shared drive, or on request from beth.downe@iied.org or barbara.adolph@iied.org.

Title of presentation and session	Presenter	File name
Elaboré sur base documentaire: rapports des acteurs, structures techniques, Projet, Programmes, ONG, Associations (Session 3)	Hamadé Sigué (INERA)	Burkina Faso country presentation_Hamade Sigué (Day 1).pdf
Description of the Study Site in Malawi (Session 3)	John Paul Mussa (TLC)	Malawi country presentation_John Paul (Day 1).pdf
Ghana SAIRLA Program (Session 3)	Daniel Banuoku (CIKOD)	Ghana country presentation_Daniel Banuoku (Day 1).pdf
Methodology of Activities 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 (Session 7)	Sam Barrett (IIED)	Methodology presentation_Sam Barrett (Day 3 & 4).pdf
Strategic Plan of the National Learning Alliance on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification in Burkina Faso (NLA-SAI) (Session 9) <i>Please note the strategy presented was in draft form and will undergo revisions</i>	Issa Sawadogo (INERA/NLA)	Learning alliance presentation_Issa Sawadogo (Day 3).pdf
Financial and administration details (Session 12) (including Communications, Session 14)	Beth Downe (IIED)	Finance & Admin presentation_Beth Downe (Day 4).pdf
<i>Supporting documents:</i>		
Workplan for Year 1 (Session 8)	Barbara Adolph (IIED)	SITAM work plan year one template draft 050716.xlsx
SAIRLA programme architecture (Session 12)	Barbara Adolph (IIED)	SAIRLA programme architecture.pptx
“Annex 2”, Contracted budgets & workplan (Session 12)	Beth Downe (IIED)	Annex 2 – SAIRLA Budgets & Workplan Master.xlsx
Financial Expenditure Report – Draft Example Template (Session 12)	Beth Downe (IIED)	Partner Financial Expenditure Report_TEMPLATE.xlsx
Technical Report – Draft Template (Session 12)	Beth Downe (IIED)	NARRATIVE REPORT TEMPLATE.docx

Annex 4 Summary of questions on SIA proposed for outcome level baseline (M&E)

Note: This is the output from the brainstorming session. The questions will need further refinement.

Outcome: Decision makers and other actors at local and national level change their **knowledge, awareness, attitudes and capacity** in support of **proven pro-poor approaches** for scaling up sustainable intensification that recognise **farmers' perceptions of synergies and trade-offs**.

Indicators:

1. **Level of knowledge of research findings** of key personnel in targeted organisations and institutions/ Number of organisations and institutions achieving satisfactory scores or higher
2. Extent of changes in **attitudes and capacity of key personnel** in these organisations in relation to key dimensions of poorer farmers decision making processes

Malawi	Ghana	Burkina
What does SIA mean to you?	Have you heard about sustainable intensification? What is your understanding of SIA? In your view, what are the attributes of SIA? - Scale of production - Resources / inputs	Quelle est votre perception de l'intensification durable de l'agriculture ?
What are your investment priorities in agriculture?	Do you support SIA (yes / no)? Why / Why not?	Quelles actions mener vous dans le cadre de l'IDA ?
Do you consider SI as a priority in future investments?	How will you assess efforts / progress in SIA in Ghana?	
What projects are currently being implemented that have components of SIA?		
Any local level projects being implemented on SIA?		
What experiences do you have with SIA?		
Consideration of environmental impacts when receiving projects at local level?		Y a-t-il une prise en compte suffisante du genre et de l'équité sociale dans vos actions en faveur des populations ?
What are the key barriers to sustainable intensification in Malawi / the district?		Quelles difficultés rencontrez-vous dans la mise en œuvre de ces actions ?
		Quelles sont les contraintes qui limitent l'IDA ?
		Quelles sont les conditions de mise en œuvre de l'IDA ?
Common SIA practices being implemented on the farm?	In your view, what practices of smallholder farmers are in variance with SIA?	Quels sont les moyens nécessaires pour une effectivité de l'IDA ?
What influences the decisions to take up these practices?	In your view, what are the ways smallholder farmers practice SIA?	
What are the levels of adoption of the SIA interventions?		
What are key policy issues coming out of the interventions or projects?	Are you aware of policies that support SIA? If yes, list some	Es ce que les politiques agricoles actuelles prennent suffisamment en compte la notion d'IDA ?

Malawi	Ghana	Burkina
	What policies in your view are at variance with SIA?	Connaissez-vous la politique agraire et foncière du Burkina ?
	Which institutions drive / support these policies in favour of SIA?	Pensez-vous que cette politique est favorable à l'IDA ?
Any initiatives to influence policy change?	Which institutions promote policies at variance with SIA?	Quelles sont les actions que vous pourrez poser pour influencer les politiques en faveur de l'IDA ?
		Quelles conditions sont nécessaires pour assurer la synergie d'action entre les acteurs ?
		Quelle est la solution pour nourrir la population burkinabé ?
		Pensez-vous que l'IDA pourrait constituer la solution pour assurer la sécurité alimentaire de nos ménages ?

Annex 5 General template for year one work plan, showing process for each stage

ACTIVITIES (as per proposal)	DELIVERABLES (as per proposal)	Quarter 1 June - Aug	Quarter 2 Sept - Nov	Quarter 3 Dec - Feb	Quarter 4 March - May	Process
YEAR 1						
Output 1, ACTIVITY 1: Inception phase	Grant agreements signed, inception meeting held, inception report submitted, updated M&E plan submitted					Inception report: - IIED to produce draft by - partners to comment by - IIED to finalise and send to funder by M&E plan: - partners to let Barbara know about key stakeholders to interview - Barbara to do list of questions for partners to comment on - partners to comment - Barbara to finalise in form of M&E plan
Output 3, ACTIVITY 1: Stakeholder and audience analysis carried out and used to inform engagement with decision makers and baseline values for outcome indicators	3 stakeholder analysis produced and documented (one per country)					- Partners to submit analysis - Barbara / Sam / Peter to comment - Partners to finalise - Barbara to send to funder
Output 3, ACTIVITY 1: Stakeholder and audience analysis carried out and used to inform engagement with decision makers and baseline values for outcome indicators	Audience analysis carried out and documented, communications strategy produced					- Barbara to try and obtain information about NLA members for Malawi and Ghana (we already have the list for Burkina) - Partners to let Barbara know the priority stakeholders to influence - Barbara to develop format / template for communication strategy and propose activities - partners to fill in template and return to Barbara - Barbara to finalise and send to funders
Output 1, ACTIVITY 2: Participatory livelihoods systems and resilience assessment	Assessment planned, information collected and analysed Findings validated, reports written					- Process to be developed by Sam and Jeroen; Sam to share guidance with partners - will include validation at community level and with NLA
Output 1, ACTIVITY 4: Selection of SI indicators	SI indicators selected					
Output 2, ACTIVITY 1: Study of past and current interventions and enabling environment	Study designed, information collected, report written and validated by NLA					- Barbara to provide guidance / format / questions - partners to collect and analyse information and write report - Barbara to comment on report - partners to finalise
Output 3, ACTIVITY 1: Stakeholder and audience analysis carried out and used to inform engagement with decision makers and baseline values for outcome indicators	Baseline values for outcome level indicators defined through stakeholder engagement					- Partners to interview stakeholders, using guidance provided by Barbara - Partners to write up findings - Barbara and country leads to review - Partners to finalise
Output 1, ACTIVITY 5: Baseline survey	Survey planned, methods pre-tested, enumerators trained					- Details to be agreed once we have defined the SI indicators
Output 1, ACTIVITY 5: Baseline survey	Data collected					- Details to be agreed once we have defined the SI indicators
Output 3, ACTIVITY 2: Engagement with stakeholders at local, district and national level	Organisation of field days, village meetings and similar to enable exchange between communities and stakeholders					- at this stage this would include meetings to mobilise the communities and obtain their consensus to participate in the project
Output 3, ACTIVITY 4: Participation in NLA and global LA	Participation in and contribution to national learning alliance activities					- teams to agree who will be the NLA liaison person in the team
Output 3, ACTIVITY 3: Production of tailored knowledge and communication products and processes	Ongoing activity throughout, depending on outcome of stakeholder and audience analysis					- production of ppt and flyer (IIED), other materials to be agreed

Annex 6 Workshop Evaluation

Participants completed evaluation forms at the end of the workshop. Detailed comments from the evaluation reports are also available, but a summary of the main themes is presented here.

Q1. Did the workshop meet your expectations?

13 participants who responded said the workshop met their expectations.

6 said the workshop partly met their expectations.

None said it did not meet their expectations at all.

Of those who said it partly met their expectations, comments included:

- Specific tools and templates were not developed
- Some concepts and methodology still not completely clear

Q2. What did you like about the workshop?

Most frequent comments included:

- Facilitation and organisation of the meeting
- Structure of the programme
- Level of participation and interaction between participants
- Explanations of concepts and methodology
- Field visit

Q3. What did you not like about the workshop?

Comments included:

- Some practical sessions were not clear enough
- Conference venue and hotel issues
- Programme was intense and tiring

Q4. Please make suggestions for how the workshop could have been improved, so that we can keep these in mind for next time.

Suggestions included:

- Simultaneous translation, and French versions of all documents
- Lighter but longer programme
- Clearer practical sessions
- Better facilities and hotel
- Tangible outcomes produced during workshop, e.g. tools
- More meeting documents

Q5. Please let us know about your expectation for the period after the workshop – what would you like to happen, how can we help you, what are you worried about?

Comments included:

- Coordinated communication and follow up
- Framework for NLAs defined
- Development and finalisation of work plans
- Development and sharing of documents and tools
- Activities, implementation and roles clarified

- More information on methodology and theoretical concepts

In addition to the evaluation forms, some feedback was given earlier on Day 4 regarding the previous day. These comments included:

- Too much time was spent on the learning alliances. We were unnecessarily critical of something that is a work in process. Dr Issa probably benefited most from those discussions. Time spent on learning alliance truncated the time we had to understand our own activities and methods properly.
- Transition from discussion on trade-offs to group work was not clear enough, and this was reflected in the results. Trade-off and synergy session was excellent but did not move well into the practical work. The three groups did not have the same understanding of what they needed to do.
- Need a clear role of researchers and of NGOs.
- When translating from English to French takes time and excludes people from discussions. Simultaneous translation would be better.

The SITAM project addresses the challenges and opportunities of smallholder farmers, in particular poor farmers and women farmers, in managing the trade-offs between production, sustainability, and other socioeconomic and environmental factors, in the face of climate change, population growth and changing diets. The project aims to bring about changes in the knowledge, awareness, attitudes and capacity of decision makers and other actors at local and national level, in support of proven pro-poor approaches for scaling up sustainable intensification of agriculture that recognises farmers' perceptions of synergies and trade-offs. The SITAM project inception workshop was held in Fada N'gourma in eastern Burkina Faso in June 2016. This report summarises the proceedings and outcomes of the workshop.



Event Materials

Food and Agriculture

Keywords:
Smallholder agriculture, climate
change adaptation, action research



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