



Metrics and Indicators for Tracking in GRiSP (MISTIG) Project Report 2014

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1. Introduction

This report describes the achievements of the results-based management (RBM) project otherwise referred to as the MISTIG project that was implemented by GRiSP in 2014. It outlines briefly the overall GRiSP monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and a summary of the supporting management information system (MIS). The report also includes a summary of the activities undertaken under the national rice research and development (R&D) strategies (NRDS) in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Summaries of the action site baseline surveys conducted by IRRI, CIAT, and AfricaRice are also presented.

2. Progress on GRiSP results framework

Our main focus in 2014 was on developing a robust M&E framework and implementation system for tracking progress along the impact pathway from outputs (rice research products) to intermediate development outcomes (IDOs). The GRiSP results framework consists of IDOs that contribute to CGIAR system development outcomes (SLOs) and United Nations sustainable development outcomes (SDOs). The IDOs have several indicators that were formulated to be monitored at three levels: global, national, and action sites. In 2014, we started developing monitoring plans for the IDO indicators at the three levels. Emphasis was placed on the national and action site indicators.

At the national scale, we identified a set of indicators relevant to the rice sector that would track a country's progress and provide a benchmark for GRiSP. Although most national-level indicators are “owned” by countries (e.g., national rice area, production, yield, etc.) beyond GRiSP's real control, we do show through our impact pathways, theories of change, and a few well-chosen indicators such as “germplasm shared with countries” GRiSP's contribution.

At the moment, we monitor most of these country indicators through IRRI's world rice statistics: (<http://ricestat.irri.org:8080/wrs2/entrypoint.htm>), but we are working with countries and with different technologies (such as remote sensing, crop models, and GIS) to improve those data. We're making especially good progress in mapping actual rice area, rice growth stages, and potential and actual yields of rice “at scale.”

3. Progress on national rice R&D priorities

In 2014, the Council for Partnership on Rice Research in Asia (CORRA) and the Global Rice Science Partnership (GRiSP) conducted two workshops to initiate a systematic inventory of national rice research and development strategies (NRDS) in Asia. The first workshop took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in May 2014 and was attended by eight Southeast Asian countries and one West Asian country: India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The second workshop took place in Hyderabad, India, in December 2014 and five South Asian countries participated: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. GRiSP IDOs/indicators and the NRDS of the participating countries were presented, compared, and discussed in group sessions. The discussions focused on five topics: (1) the relevance of the IDOs to countries and coverage in their NRDS, (2) commonalities among country strategies, (3) quantitative targets with a timeline for country development outcomes, (4) the logical link between country rice sector development goals and research objectives, and (5) impact pathways from country rice research to product development to development outcomes. An analysis of the national rice development strategies of the 12 South/Southeast Asian countries is currently being prepared and will be published this year. Country NRDS reports and presentations are also available on the GRiSP website (www.grisp.net/file_cabinet/index/185934).

The MISTIG project was actively implemented by GRiSP member organization CIAT in collaboration with the Latin American Fund for Irrigated Rice (FLAR in Spanish). Three CIAT/FLAR meetings were held in 2014. The first meeting took place in Uruguay (March 2014), the second in Colombia (September 2014), and the third in Panama (November 2014). Participants at these meetings were FLAR administrative groups and technical steering committee members. They discussed constructively in focus groups and agreed in principle to implement the MISTIG project collaboratively. Participants also selected and defined 20 indicators for monitoring GRiSP intermediate development outcomes at the national level (see report on CIAT MISTIG project, 2014, for details).

AfricaRice, in collaboration with the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD), conducted a similar workshop on national rice development strategy in 2009. The reports can be downloaded from www.riceforafrica.org/index.php/nrds-page. In 2014, AfricaRice organized a hub vision stakeholders' workshop in 24 African countries. The

objective was to form partnerships to work collaboratively in the rice hub areas so as to guarantee rapid impact.

4. Progress on action site baseline surveys

Action sites are areas within countries where GRiSP flagship projects are actively being implemented. At IRRI in 2014, we designed a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) questionnaire in Surveybe to collect baseline data to systematically monitor GRiSP IDOs at action sites. The survey, hereby referred to as the Area-Based Farm Household survey, was conducted in five Asian countries: Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam (sample size: 11,800 rice farmers). Some countries are still conducting interviews and the data are currently being quality checked and cleaned. IDO indicators will be analyzed in the coming months. We also started designing a monitoring plan for the action sites, in consultation with IRRI theme leaders and key staff working on the IDOs. We expect to conduct a similar survey every 3 to 5 years.

The main activity undertaken at CIAT and FLAR action sites is research on impact assessment. In 2013, a nationally representative survey was conducted in Bolivia and the data were analyzed in 2014. A similar survey with qualitative methods to deepen gender analysis was implemented in late 2014 by CIAT and Ecuador's national agricultural research institute (INIAP).

In 2014, AfricaRice conducted a hub baseline survey in two new African countries: Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo. The baseline survey is part of the ongoing M&E activities to collect quantitative and qualitative data to monitor GRiSP IDOs. Other activities conducted were the rice production survey, technology diffusion survey, and a hub vision stakeholder workshop.

5. Progress on management information systems (MIS):

<http://ricestat.irri.org/mistig/>

In 2014, we started developing a management information system (MIS) for managing data and reporting on GRiSP milestones, outputs/products, intermediate development outcomes, and impact assessment. The MIS is a web-based data management tool. One of its general requirements is the ability to store data, analyze, and generate reports for management decision making. Its design is based on the relational database

management model. Key features include entities (tables), attributes, and relations. Entities of the MIS include GRiSP themes, product lines, products, milestones, budget, scientists, (proposal) planning, reports (semi-annual and annual), development indicators, monitoring data, monitoring reports, evaluation data, evaluation reports, documents (PDF, Excel, Word, picture), geo-reference (maps), and project indicators, etc. Software tools used for application development are MySQL, PhPMyAdmin, and PhP. The MIS has modules for planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment. The planning and budgeting modules will reside in IRRI's One Corporate System (OCS). The system is currently being developed. GRiSP centers (IRRI, AfricaRice, and CIAT) and partners will be able to log in and enter data online. Data on IDO indicators at global, national, and action site levels will be displayed online for public viewing, searching, and downloading. We also started designing and developing modules for managing GRiSP flagship project data within the MIS. Our pilot project is STRASA (Stress-Tolerant Rice for Africa and South Asia). We will include other IRRI flagship projects when we have successfully implemented the first round of the pilot test.

AfricaRice also developed an offline web-based M&E application called MLAX. The system is designed to provide data on AfricaRice and project implementation progress and effectiveness in Africa. It can document and generate information on CRPs, projects, task forces, and hub outputs/products and outcomes. Tablets and smartphones are used to automate data collection. The system is stored in a cloud server that is accessible anywhere in the world, with backup at AfricaRice.

Given that many centers have their own management information systems, the emphasis is now on interoperability. That is the ability of the databases to exchange information seamlessly. In our case, it means harmonizing the key tables, fields, and data types for transferring only required GRiSP data from the partner databases to the central MIS database at IRRI.