



# Support to capacity development

An exploration of the lessons learnt in projects of the  
DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme  
'Globalization and Sustainable Development'

Seerp Wigboldus

Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation  
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## Preface

Institutional development and capacity strengthening forms a cross-cutting issue of the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme 'Globalization and Sustainable Rural Development'. Institutional development and capacity strengthening has emerged as a key area in sustainable development and it features prominently in the priorities of both international donors and development organizations (World Bank, DFID, DGIS, etc.) as well as among Africa's own priorities for development, including those of NEPAD/CAADP, FARA, CORAF, ASARECA, SADC/FANR and RUFORUM, etc.

Capacity development can be defined as the process by which individuals, organizations, institutions and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives. Traditionally, capacity development has focused on simply the training of individuals. While this remains important, capacity development to strengthen institutions requires support for long-term processes of organizational change and development. Such capacity development needs to focus how governmental policies can become more effective in establishing institutional environments that are supportive of rural economic development, poverty reduction and food security.

Institutional development involves establishing an enabling environment that supports the empowerment of economically disadvantaged groups, encourages self reliance, creates conditions for private sector participation in development and establishes mechanisms for sustainable natural resources management. In this context, the term 'institutions' refers not only to government agencies and organizations, but also to policy and legal frameworks, mechanisms for good governance, market mechanisms, incentive frameworks, networks and other mechanisms for coordinating the actions of different stakeholders and -even- the values and attitudes of different groups.

In the framework of the Partnership Programme institutional development and capacity strengthening is being addressed both, through formal education and training trajectories –including tailor-made courses, formal BSc- and MSc-level courses and PhD studies- and at the informal level of on-the-job training, learning in negotiation platforms and in subject-matter workshops as implemented in projects within the Partnerships' theme 'Competing Claims on Natural Resources'. Also, multiple-stakeholder participatory project development processes such as those leading to the identification of new pilots within the sub-Programme 'Value Chains for Pro-poor Development', fit in this category of 'informal' capacity development.

In 2009 an initial compilation and analysis of lessons learnt in the Partnership Programme was made by staff of the Wageningen International Centre for Capacity Development and Institutional Change. That compilation is being further explored and expanded in the present study 'Support to capacity development' that has been compiled by Mr. Seerp Wigboldus of the Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation.

In this exploration Mr Wigboldus based himself on available project documents and annual reports, and on extensive interviews with the leaders of projects that are being implemented under the Partnership Programme. The latter include: Dr. Sietze Vellema (LEI/TAD<sup>1</sup>), Ir. Ted Schrader (CDI<sup>2</sup>), Ir. Simone van Vugt (CDI), Dr. Maja Slingerland (PPS<sup>3</sup>), Dr. Petra Hellegers (LEI<sup>4</sup>), Dr. Huib Hengsdijk (PRI<sup>5</sup>), Drs. Nico Rozemeijer (CDI), Dr. Marja Thijssen (CDI), Dr. Bert Visser (CGN<sup>6</sup>) and Ir. Leo Oyen (PROTA<sup>7</sup>). The author is indebted to the project leaders for their willingness to share their experiences with him.

Reports on the various projects are available on the website of the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme (<http://www.dgis.wur.nl/UK/>), or from the Programme Manager.

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<sup>1</sup> TAD = Technology and Agrarian Development Group/Social Sciences Group, Wageningen UR;

<sup>2</sup> CDI = Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation/Social Sciences Group, Wageningen UR

<sup>3</sup> PPS = Plant Production Systems/Plant Sciences Group, Wageningen UR

<sup>4</sup> LEI = Agricultural Economics Research Institute/Social Sciences Group, Wageningen UR

<sup>5</sup> PRI = Plant Research International/Plant Sciences Group, Wageningen UR

<sup>6</sup> CGN = Centre for Genetic Resources, Plant Sciences Group, Wageningen UR

<sup>7</sup> PROTA = Plant Resources of Tropical Africa/Plant Sciences Group, Wageningen UR



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Programme background

The Netherlands' Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) and Wageningen University and Research Centre (Wageningen UR) are implementing the Partnership Programme 'Globalization and Sustainable Rural Development' (2006-2010). In the context of conflicting local, national and global interests and drivers of change processes, the programme aims, among other things, to generate options for the sustainable use of natural resources, pro-poor agro-supply chains and agro-biodiversity. These options need to result in improved rural livelihoods, food security, poverty alleviation and economic development in the south. Farmers and other small-scale entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector form the primary target group. The program has a strong -but not exclusive- focus on countries in Sub-Sahara Africa. The Partnership Programme is designed to contribute to meeting at least three of the Millennium Development Goals: MDG 1 (Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 7 (Achieving environmental sustainability) and MDG 8 (Building capacity for global partnerships). The partnership provides a platform for projects in relation to three interrelated, demand-driven themes:

1. Sustainable Agro-Supply Chains
2. Competing Claims on Natural Resources
3. Sustainable Use of Agro-Biodiversity

Within each of the three programme themes, specific projects are being implemented in close partnership with research and education institutions and with farmers', non-governmental and private-sector organizations in Africa, mainly. These projects were the main focus of the present exploration of lessons learnt in capacity development.

Institutional development and capacity strengthening are issues which cut across all three of the partnership's themes. They are critical elements in fostering and sustaining pro-poor development efforts and sustainable economic growth, and take into account the effects of (inter-) national policy changes. The focus on this set of issues is key to the development of policies and in putting them into practice. Within the DGIS- Wageningen UR Partnership Programme, this approach builds on, and nurtures, the collaborative strategic partnerships that Wageningen UR has established in Africa as well as with the international community of donors, research and development organizations and the network of DGIS.

## 1.2. The focus of this exploration

The present report is an exploration of the lessons learnt in capacity development in the context of the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme. This exploration is not about passing judgment on the projects in terms of what they achieved in the field of capacity building. Given the brevity of the assessment itself, and the fact that the various projects have not finished yet, this would not do justice to them. Rather, this exploration is meant to understand whether and how project managers have been thinking and acting strategically in providing support to capacity development, what can be reported in broad strokes on related capacity change processes and, finally, what can be learned from this towards planning a possible next phase of the Partnership Programme or other, similar, programmes, particularly in relation to the cross-cutting theme of support to capacity development.

Another limitation of this assessment, relates to the late start and, as a consequence, the relatively short lifespan of the most of the projects in the Partnership Programme. This implies that it is hard to assess what is possible in this kind of programme setup. What would have happened without the delays and short lifespan? Perhaps more would have been possible then. We won't know. Therefore, the recommendations need to be read with a clear understanding about these limitations in mind. The status of the present assessment is that of a tentative exploration which provides indicative policy recommendations, only.

This assessment is taking the approach that capacity development is essentially an endogenous<sup>8</sup> process that cannot be engineered from the outside, but which can be supported (or frustrated) through external interventions. In that sense, capacity cannot be built, and organizations and individuals cannot be 'capacitated'. The significance of making this distinction is that it requires a different outlook on any

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<sup>8</sup> Endogenous: Originating from within.

intervention geared towards making a difference in the field of capacity development. It implies that support to capacity development needs to be carefully and strategically positioned and repositioned within a constantly changing dynamic of actors and factors.

The present assessment pertains to the following projects under the Partnership Programme (full project descriptions are available at [www.dgjs.wur.nl](http://www.dgjs.wur.nl)):

**Theme 1:**

- *Value-Chains for Pro-Poor Development*: In short referred to –in this report- as the ‘Value Chains Project’ (Project leader: LEI/TAD).

**Theme 2:**

- *Competing Claims, Competing Models*: the ‘Bio-fuel Project’. (Project leader: PPS/PSG).
- *Coping with Competing Claims on Water in the Incomati Basin through Interactive Science*: the ‘Incomati Project’. (Project leader: LEI).
- *Improving Livelihoods and Resource Management in the Central Rift Valley of Ethiopia*: the ‘Rift Valley Project’. (Project leader: PRI)
- *Illegal or Incompatible? Managing the consequences of timber legality standards on local livelihoods*: the ‘VPA Ghana Project’. (Project leader: CDI).

**Theme 3:**

- *Community Empowerment for In-Situ Conservation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*: the ‘Community Empowerment Project’. (Project leader: CDI).
- *Strengthening Livelihoods and Local Management of Plant Genetic Resources Under Conditions of Climate Change*: the ‘Climate Change Project’. (Project leader: CGN).
- *Dye-Sorghums in Benin*: the ‘Dye-Sorghum Project’. (Project leader: PROTA).

A fourth project under Theme 3 (Agro-biodiversity) ‘*The inclusion of community-based agro-biodiversity into value chains and markets*’ (Project leader: TAD) will not be specifically referred to in this study, mainly because approaches applied and the experiences gained overlap with those of the Value Chains Project of Theme 1, with which it shares project leadership.

## 2. The context of capacity development

Over the past five years, more guidelines, manuals and papers have been written on capacity development and capacity building than in the preceding two decades. Partly, this relates to a change in paradigm where, what we used to call ‘technical cooperation’ and ‘technical assistance’ has been replaced by what nowadays we call ‘capacity development’. The current focus on capacity development can be characterized by an emphasis on processes of participation, continuous learning and adaptation, systemic thinking and the quest for being strategic in the face of complexity (Wigboldus et al., 2010)<sup>9</sup>.

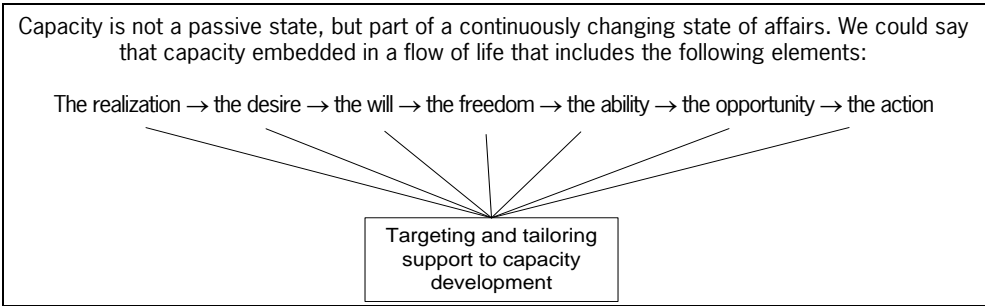
Capacity development has been high on the list of priorities for many organizations involved in international development, especially -as stated above- in recent years. Extensive studies have been carried out, most notably by ECDPM (2008)<sup>10</sup>. Manuals and guidelines were written by a range of organizations and agencies, as different as ADB, UNDP, SIDA, FAO, OECD and EuropeAid. The evolving approaches have led to a situation in which the label of capacity development by itself does not explain very much. This may be one of the reasons for the surge in documentation on the subject. Making sense of capacity development therefore requires unpacking core concepts to understand what different individuals and organisations actually have in mind.

Even though the present study is not meant to assess capacity development conceptually, it is important to share -at least briefly- a few core elements of the approach underlying the present assessment of projects under the Partnership Programme.

### Capacity – what are we talking about?

Capacity is a dynamic rather than a status, as is illustrated in Figure 1 below. Within capacity as a dynamic flow, all the elements (from realization through to action) are needed. We may also describe this as a number of capacity elements: a capacity to realize, a capacity to desire, a capacity to will, etc. In the end however, it is all geared towards a certain aspired action. The relevance of making this distinction is that, in strategically positioning support to capacity development, it is important to understand what is the appropriate entry point. E.g. without realization (awareness) it may not make much sense to support capacity development in the field of abilities.

**Figure 1: Capacity as a dynamic flow**

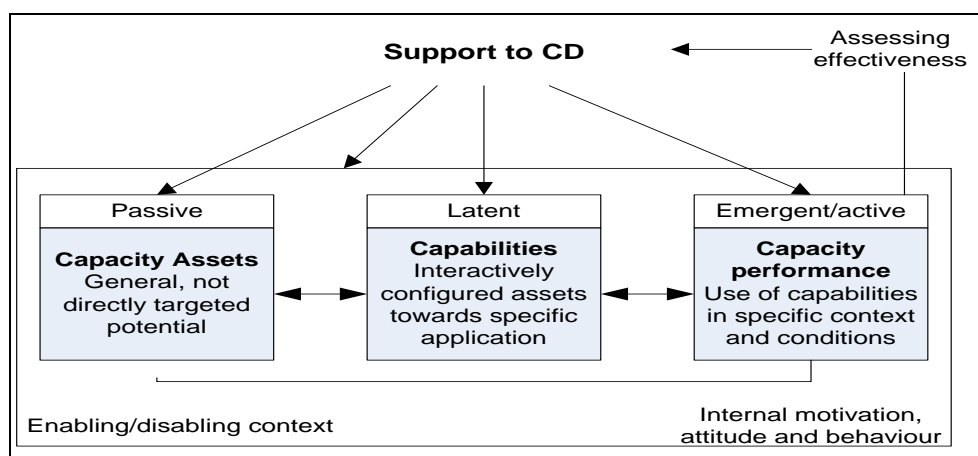


Another way to unpack the concept of capacity is to distinguish between the visible and invisible, the tangible and intangible. We send our kids to school and invest for many years in a potential (capacity), trusting that some day in some way this will benefit both the kid and -eventually- society as a whole. Investing only in a capacity that is visible and which shows through action, is a lopsided view. There is a need to invest in both, potential and active performance. Particularly with respect to research projects, this is an important distinction as such projects are very much about raising the potential and building momentum. Figure 2 further illustrates this by distinguishing between passive, latent and active capacity.

<sup>9</sup> Wigboldus, Seerp et al. (2010) Making Sense of Capacity Development; Discussion paper for the seminar on international capacity building ‘Recipes for success’, 28 January 2010, The Hague. Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation, The Netherlands.

<sup>10</sup> Baser, Heather and Peter Morgan (2008). Capacity, change and performance. Study Report. Discussion paper 59B. European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), Maastricht, The Netherlands.

**Figure 2: Stages and dimensions of capacity development**



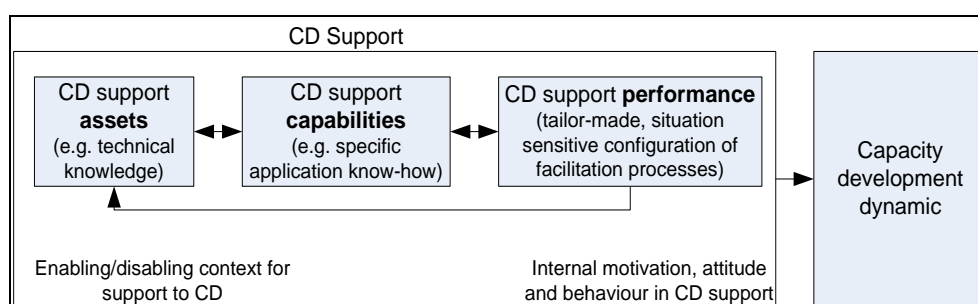
Source: Wigboldus et al. (2010).

A next question is how to value a change in potential. Partly, this can be done by looking at what performance emerges from the potential. Part of it, however, relates to values and principles that will need agreement among key stakeholders as to what is considered to be valuable and plausible as a *potential* road to performance improvement. It needs to be fed by continuous learning about what constitutes good practice under what conditions. In other words, the issue of what is, and what is not, potential worth investing in, is part of a public debate that will have different outcomes in different settings.

### Readiness to support capacity development

Appropriate capacity is needed to provide appropriate support to capacity development. This is a prerequisite that is often forgotten. Much more is involved in providing support to capacity development than just knowing how to do a certain 'trick' and then teaching others how to do the same trick. Too often it is assumed that those who have (access to) funds are naturally in a good position to support capacity development among those who lack such funds.

**Figure 3: Capacity for support to capacity development**



Source: Wigboldus et al. (2010; adapted).

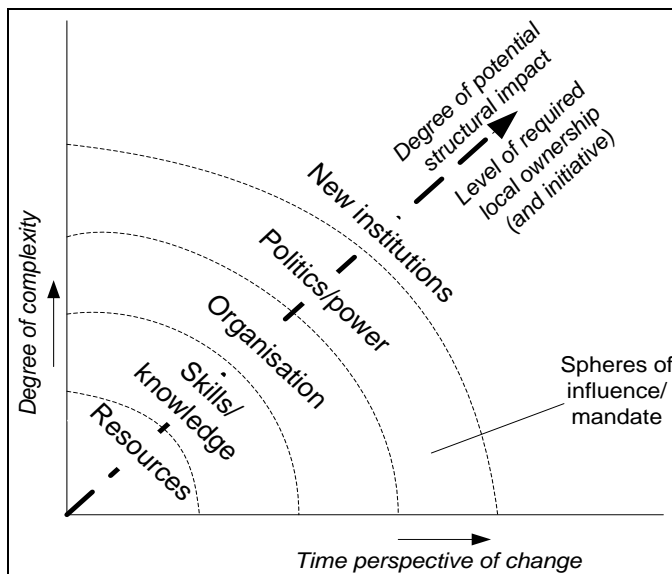
### Strategic choices in the positioning of support to capacity development

Many possible entry points exist regarding the provision of support to capacity development. Selecting these entry points has implications for the scope of what can be achieved. In general, providing resources to primary stakeholders has a more limited scope than influencing politics and power differentials. It may be safe to say that the scope for impact is bigger if the focus is on support to institutional change process (see Figure 4). However, the specifics of a situation as well as the specifics of the capacity of a partnership to support capacity development determines appropriate entry points.

This implies that projects such as those under the Partnership Programme would need to strategically position their activities (in the field of support to capacity development) in view of project ambitions, the relevant mandate/level of influence that the projects have, and the actual level of local ownership and

initiative (see Figure 4). In most cases the level of politics/power and new institutions can only be influenced indirectly through engagement in the field of resources, skills and knowledge and organization.

**Figure 4: Type of interventions determining the scope of the actual contribution**



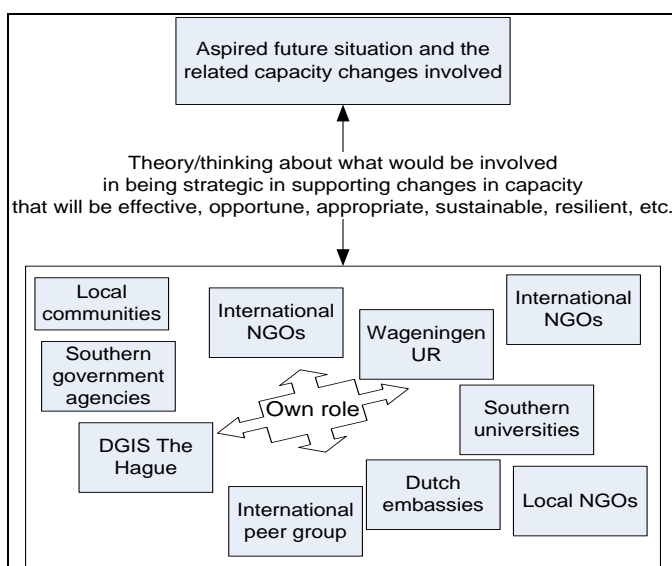
Source: Brinkerhoff, D.W. (2007). Capacity Development in Fragile States. (Discussion Paper 58D). ECDPM, Maastricht, The Netherlands (adapted).

Figure 4 shows that for capacity development processes to have structural impact they require time and the ability to deal with complexity (adaptive management). But most of all they need to link up with strong local ownership and initiative. Figure 5 (below), further illustrates the need for strategic positioning of interventions in support of capacity development.

The various interventions as shown in Figure 4 (i.e. resources, skills/knowledge, etc.) may also be seen as interrelated, where capacity development at one level depends on the status of capacity at other levels, though this will not apply in all cases. This again underscores the importance of careful positioning of interventions in support to capacity development.

This is a different way of operating than is the case in regular research and it poses new challenges to researchers who are not experienced in multi-stakeholder processes and in partnership and network development initiatives.

**Figure 5: Thinking strategically about support to capacity development**



## **Towards good practice in support to capacity development**

Even though the last word has not been said about understanding capacity development conceptually and practically, there appears to be emerging agreement about principles of good practice in support to capacity development. Such principles of good practice have been discussed in OECD/DAC strategic workshops in the past few years (DAC, 2008<sup>11</sup>, OECD, 2006<sup>12</sup>). If we translate this into the context of the Partnership Programme, it follows:

- Capacity development, wherever possible, needs to recognize, safeguard and build on existing capacities and work with the assets available in the country concerned. It needs to ensure ownership by key actors, be accounted for to constituencies and give preference to country-level initiatives: *Local embedding, ownership and positioning of Wageningen UR support are imperative.*
- Capacity development relates to a change process in which technical dimensions are only a part.
- Capacity-development approaches need to match the specific context and its dynamics: *Navigating implementation amidst complexity is imperative.*
- Capacity-development focused multi-partner arrangements need to be harmonized and aligned at country level: *Connectedness and partnership are imperative.*

To this list, we can add that providing support to capacity development requires *strategic preparation/positioning and appropriate internal capacities within the Partnership Programme.*

The sections above form the broader reference framework for the present exploration as elaborated in Chapter 5 of this report. In summary, the framework includes a range of factors and actors that –in their interdependence- determine whether or not support to capacity development makes a meaningful difference in local situations. The brief reflections on the various projects in Chapter 4, basically look at how project leaders and teams dealt with such dynamics, complexities and interactions.

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<sup>11</sup> “Capacity development: Accra and beyond”. Summary conclusions of the Bonn workshop, 15-16 May 2008. OECD (DAC) and the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

<sup>12</sup> OECD/DAC (2006). The challenge of capacity development - working towards good practice, OECD.

### 3. Assessment method

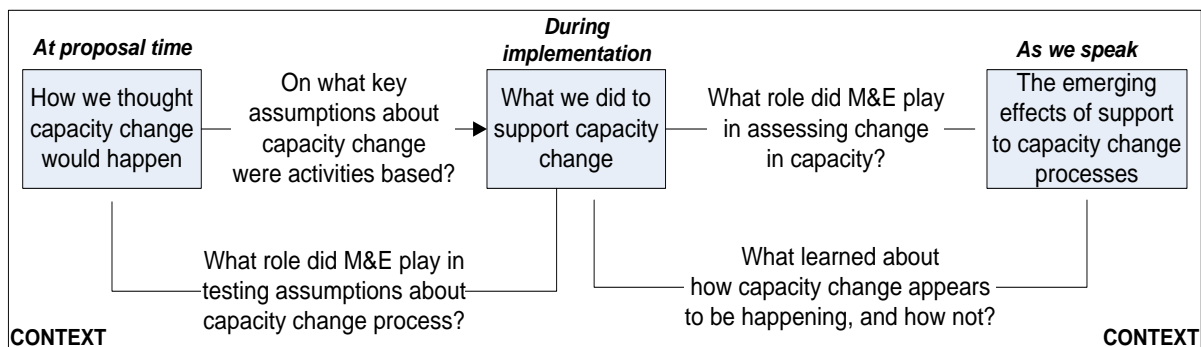
The present assessment is based on a rather straightforward process of reading project documents and progress reports and conducting interviews with project leaders and other staff of Wageningen UR involved in the implementation of the projects. The paper 'Making sense of capacity development'<sup>13</sup> was used as a theoretical reference framework. Part of the theoretical approach has been reflected on in the previous chapter.

In the interviews that were conducted, the assessment questions as formulated in the Terms of Reference for this study (see Annex 1) were translated towards the three broader categories of questions, described below: core questions, specific questions and questions relating to tentative advice on capacity development in possible future programmes and projects .

#### A. Core questions

Figure 6 below summarizes the core interview questions and how they relate to project stages.

**Figure 6: Core questions on support to capacity development**



#### B. Specific questions

The specific questions on good practices in support to capacity development included:

- How well was the dynamic of the existing endogenous capacity development understood at the time of writing the proposal for making a difference as regards capacities?
- Where was 'ownership' for the capacity change process located?
- How flexible was the process of support to capacity development: Was there room for navigating unanticipated evolution of the capacity change process?
- In what way were primary stakeholders of the envisioned capacity change involved in the process of proposal development?
- What has been the focus of the support to capacity development (indicate in relation to Table 1)?
- At what level did you target capacity change: a) the individual level, b) the organization level, c) wider structures and processes (policies, laws, regulations, etc.) or d) institutions (trade, markets, education, culture, etc.)? Was this in line with capacity change ambitions and the theory of how capacity change could happen, or was it a more pragmatic choice?
- In what way was the enabling/disabling context for capacity change a) understood and b) 'navigated'? This includes power differentials.
- How did monitoring and evaluation help in such 'navigation'?
- What do you consider to be the main results of your efforts to support capacity development and to what longer-term capacity change may this be contributing?

<sup>13</sup> Wigboldus, S.A. et al., (2010). *Op cit.*

**Table 1: Distinguishing between different types of capacity**

<b>More-evident capacity elements</b>	<b>Less-evident capacity elements</b>
Institutional and structural capacity, including organizational structures.	Capacity to learn, focus and strategise.
Hierarchies, mandates, procedures, rules and regulations, etc.	Capacity to predict, adapt and respond to the volatile and ever-changing environment.
Financial and material capacity.	Capacity to motivate and inspire personnel.
Human resources capacity, number of employees and skill levels.	Capacity to communicate effectively with internal and external audiences.
Capacity to monitor and evaluate output.	Capacity to learn and apply lessons learnt to improve performance for effective service delivery.

Source: NEPAD, 2009. The AU/NEPAD Capacity Development Strategic Framework. NEPAD, South Africa

### **C. Tentative advice**

Questions related to advice on capacity development in possible future programmes and projects similar to the set-up of the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme included:

- What would be your advice on engaging in capacity development support processes (the do's and don'ts)?
- In working towards institutional sustainability, what approach, method and practice of support to capacity development appears to be good practice in your experience and where would you want to be (more) cautious?



## 4. Brief exploration of the projects

The following sections are meant to give a taste of what happened in relation to support to capacity development in the various projects. The descriptions are not meant to be elaborate or complete. Emerging findings are mentioned in chapter four and five.

### 4.1. Competing claims, competing models

Country focus: Mozambique.

The 'Bio-fuel Project' focuses on developments in Mozambique where there are many bio-fuel initiatives upcoming, but where the government's capacity in policy development and strategic decision making is limited. In their provision of licenses to companies, CEPAGRI –the Government institution involved- needs, for example, information on how to properly assess applications in view of possible socio-economic and environmental implications. The key role of the Competing Claims, Competing Models project is perceived as to generate knowledge in close collaboration with the potential users and to generalize the outcomes so as to benefit others as well. MSc-students were engaged in the project to do targeted research, which was found useful as they could be flexibly put to work and timely address the most relevant questions for policy making. This flexibility allowed for adapting the original planning by starting additional research and by connecting to new partners. The project's link with another 'Competing Claims' project in which Wageningen University is involved in Mozambique/Southern Africa<sup>14</sup>, provided access to the services of a PhD-student working in the region. This was helpful in grounding the project activities better in the Mozambican context, and to strategically bring the project findings to value in contacts with CEPAGRI, the Netherlands Embassy and other policy players.

The PhD-MSc approach made up for the lack of capacity encountered in the university partner-institute (Eduardo Mondlane University). Staff in this university were found either to be poorly trained or, the competent ones, surcharged with other engagements. Many of the students were interested mainly in working for well-paying NGOs and consultancy firms rather than in scientific research. The project nevertheless succeeded in engaging quite a number of students in field work while researching *Jatropha*-related issues. This created opportunities for field exposure. Bio-fuel issues in Mozambique being highly politicized, the stronger staff members of the partner university managed to organize a scientific seminar, aiming to separate facts and figures from opinions and interests. At this seminar, scientists, representatives of the industry and policy makers shared and discussed project outcomes and research findings.

The Wageningen UR project leader spent some four months (September-December 2009) at the Eduardo Mondlane University to strengthen collaboration and co-organize the seminar. Along the way, there was a need to continually refocus the project. The global economic crisis, for example, reduced interest in investments in bio-fuel in Mozambique, as elsewhere. Also, in addition to the need for a bio-fuel policy, the need for a sustainability framework came to the fore. Other dynamics incurred include the restricted availability of local MSc students, the growing interest of industries, and the difficulty to link to other DGIS-funded initiatives in Mozambique, managed from The Hague. Establishing good collaborative work relationships with local partners required lots of networking and rapport building. It was found that there were interesting opportunities to provide policy and decision making support to bio-fuel plantations that have an eye for corporate responsibility. The action research efforts clearly had to be navigated in a complex Mozambican institutional landscape.

The project has provided a number of useful insights regarding options (and non-options) for policy making on bio-fuels. One example is the case of sweet sorghum, which was said to have the dual purpose of food grains and use of stalks for bio-fuel. Research by the project showed that this is a myth – something important to know when licensing bio-fuel production. Learning from Brazil might appear to be a natural route to go, but it was found that the Mozambican context of family farming is actually quite different from that in Brazil and that models from Brazil cannot be used in Mozambique without appropriate adaptations. The project is being follow-up through a WOTRO<sup>15</sup>-financed project, comparing bio-fuel options for smallholders in Brazil with those in Mozambique.

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<sup>14</sup> An INREF Project of Wageningen University. INREF: Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund.

<sup>15</sup> WOTRO: Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (focus on research relevant for development issues).

## **4.2. Competing Claims on Water in the Incomati Basin**

Country focus: South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland.

The 'Incomati Project' started from a local request for a decision support tool based on an ongoing discussions on spatial distribution of water consumption in the three countries that share the Incomati River Basin. This local request provided a strong basis for the project. Initially, the project's focus was on developing an appropriate simulation model on the relationships between land use and water consumption. However, even though there was clear ownership from the local stakeholders, the project team had to carefully start up the implementation process as, between the three countries involved, water use and water allocation is a sensitive issue: 'Competing Claims on Water'. Therefore, before starting the actual development of the model, the project needed to invest in confidence-building. As the project was not about 'just developing a tool' but, rather, about 'landing the tool in the proper place so that it would be used', this process had to be carefully facilitated: the tool would have to be flexible enough for the users to 'own' what it could do for them. In the beginning, fictitious data were used to build a general acceptance of the tool among the three main stakeholders. Another issue that emerged was the fact that, between the three countries, capacities were quite different in terms of the respective abilities to collect data and to use the tool strategically. Working with the South African and Mozambican counterpart organizations was easier than with those in Swaziland, where extra attention had to be placed on development of technical capacity.

In the course of the project, it became clear as well that it would not be possible to design a mere scientifically-correct tool for use by stakeholders. Rather, the tool would need to support strategic thinking by allowing stakeholders to understand relationships between different forms of land use and water consumption. The project's aim therefore shifted from improving the actual allocation of water (based on scientific evidence), but rather to allow the three stakeholders to have informed discussions and to prevent certain (data) conflicts.

Due to the nature of the Incomati Project (i.e. the need for an independent outsider in a delicate negotiation process, as well as the specific technical expertise that was required) it has depended a lot on input from (staff of) Wageningen UR. In addition, the project benefited from linking-up with (the work of) a Mozambican PhD-student from Mozambique in another research programme.

The next step, as referred to in the above, is that stakeholders understand how to use the tool, understand what the tool can and cannot do and what would jeopardize its usefulness. Also, the tool must be made available on a local internet platform, something that is not yet the case. Follow-up of this project will be crucial. A planned follow-up process of tailor-made support to capacity development will also be facilitated.

It should be noted that, as such, the process of developing the decision support tool and the data collection related to it, provided quite a number of interesting scientific insights, including the fact that the Kruger National Park, which is located in the Incomati Basin, consumes much more water than hitherto known.

## **4.3. Livelihoods and Resource Management in the Central Rift Valley of Ethiopia**

Country focus: Ethiopia.

The 'Rift Valley Project' is based on a project that started two years earlier and that studied the relationships between water, food and ecosystems in the Central Rift Valley. The focus of the present project is on strengthening the capacity of local policy makers, private sector and development organizations to mitigate competing resource claims and to develop alternative options for resource management in the Central Rift Valley.

Under the Rift Valley project, a multi-stakeholder platform –having voluntary membership- was started and, as it seemed to provide strong local ownership for the process, it would be the place where to 'land' the knowledge that would be generated through the project. In the beginning, the platform consisted mainly of representatives from NGOs, local government, INGOs, and academia. However, most government representatives pulled out soon after the start of the platform, and the private sector was poorly represented. Realizing that the platform was not a good reflection of the stakeholders, the project team managed to involve the private sector and government again in later stages of the project. This resulted in a number of new public-public and public-private action-oriented projects, which continue after the DGIS-Wageningen UR project has ended.

Research outcomes provided clear evidence of worrying environmental degradation as a result of increased water consumption by horticultural activities emerging in the study area. It was also found that this was not so much attributable to floriculture in the large-scale greenhouses -as was thought initially-, but to open-field horticulture as practiced by smallholders mainly. In the Rift Valley, both the Ethiopian government and NGOs are stimulating irrigated horticulture to reduce poverty and to increase economic growth. Stakeholders have very limited capacity to respond to the negative impacts of horticulture and, given the political situation of the country, few -if any- local actors outside the government are ready to stand up and share this kind of critical information. However, recently observed changes in the quality of the main water source of the government-run drinking water company (i.e. increased concentrations of nutrients and pesticides) may create the necessary sense of urgency. Also, project results were used to convince the International Development Enterprise (IDE funded by the Gates Foundation and DGIS) to focus on service provision to smallholders instead of focusing on the expansion of irrigation.

The project team has developed links to other efforts, such as the development of a code of practice for floriculture in Ethiopia (trying to include water quality and quantity as one of the components). Also, links have been established with the Master Plan that is being developed for the entire Rift Valley. In the Master Plan, the vision is that the multi-stakeholder platform will evolve into a formal advisory platform for the River Basin Authority to be founded. This shows that the role of the multi-stakeholder platform is being taken seriously by the authorities. This can be attributed to the increased capacities that have been built among the platform members.

Recently, Wageningen UR and the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have embarked on a collaboration project on pesticide registration. In the framework of that project, chemical laboratory capacity will be build to facilitate environmental research and monitoring. This will help to convey the message of environmental degradation more strongly. Currently, pesticide laboratory tests need to be done in the Netherlands.

In the end, the challenge remains the dovetailing of the strong policy focus on horticulture -as a means to reduce poverty and increase economic growth- with the (underexposed) environmental objectives. The former focus relates to short-term needs and objectives, whereas the latter relates to objectives on the longer term. The Rift Valley Project aims to provide knowledge and understanding on how to overcome these seemingly-conflicting objectives. Options that are currently researched relate to a more efficient use of rainwater and other resources, the training of horticultural extension agents on nutrient, pesticide and water management, exploring alternative livelihoods (such as community-based tourism) and exploring the possibility to reduce emissions to fresh water bodies through buffer zones.

Considering the state of the resource base, regulation appears to be a must, but this cannot be engineered from outside. Research plays a crucial role in terms of 'early warning' and by supporting innovative ideas that aim to mitigate environmental problems and to develop alternative resource uses. As an outsider, Wageningen UR can put unwelcome information on the table in policy dialogues, something that local actors would not dare to do.

#### **4.4. Illegal or incompatible?**

Country focus: Ghana.

The focus of the 'VPA Ghana Project' is on understanding the effects of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) that addresses illegal timber production, on rural livelihoods in Ghana. Originally, a comparative research component was to be implemented in Indonesia, but this did not work out due to long contract negotiations and unforeseen budget cuts with the local partner. The core of the VPA Ghana Project is formed by the work of a PhD-student and a number of MSc-students, and the translation of their research results in policy dialogues. A complicating factor is that the PhD-student, who as an employee of the Forest Commission of Ghana is formally involved in developing and implementing the VPA. This results in a dual role of asking critical questions while simultaneously having to implement the agreement. However, the project's most complicating factor has been the delayed ratification of the VPA. Only recently did it get ratified by both the Government of Ghana and the European Commission. Not being able to look at effects of the VPA on rural livelihoods yet, the project team (Wageningen UR, Tropenbos International and the Forest Commission of Ghana) decided to develop scenarios as an alternative ("What are the possible implications of implementing this trade instrument on local livelihoods of forest communities in Ghana?").

Research and policy dialogues were made possible, mainly because of the project's strategic collaboration with Tropenbos International (TI) which has a strong basis in the Ghana. TI was able to communicate key findings through its own collaborative 'Chainsaw Project' in which 8 forest officers provided inputs from 8 districts of Ghana. One of the clear findings of this project was that there are 130,000 chainsaw operators in Ghana, that according to the VPA, are engaged in illegal activities. Many of these 130,000 people and their families depend on this work for their livelihoods.

Tropenbos International can continue to support the process, which is crucial, because the VPA was only recently ratified (i.e. the end of 2009). The VPA Ghana Project broadened its partnership scope by connecting to universities and forest policy organizations in Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands, all sharing a similar interest in the effects of the VPA on rural livelihoods. As DGIS supports the VPA processes, it seems natural that it would be interested in effects on livelihoods and poverty. The VPA Ghana Project and the findings it generates therefore can be linked easily and strategically to DGIS' policy development.

There are quite a few scientific outputs of this project such as in the form of a synthesis report to be finished by the end of 2010 and a special issue of the Journal of Forest Policy and Economics. Research findings are further debated in policy dialogues in Ghana (and in the wider West and Central African region), at the European Commission in Brussels and the Netherlands. This is particularly relevant as the VPA is a mechanism that is being developed and implemented in many more countries than just Ghana.

The project team has developed and maintains an informative website that links proactively with other FLEGT/VPA and forest livelihoods debates and networks ([www.vpa-livelihoods.org](http://www.vpa-livelihoods.org))

#### **4.5. Community Empowerment for In-Situ Conservation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**

Country focus: Brazil, Ethiopia, India and Nepal.

The focus of the 'Community Empowerment Project' is on the questions "Community Biodiversity Management (CBM) is a method for *in situ* conservation of plant genetic resources, but what is the best way to go about it" and "How to make CBM effective in contributing to genetic resources conservation?" The project then does not focus on the mere development of technical methods but, first of all, on issues related to the empowerment of farmer communities, as a prerequisite for effective *in situ* conservation. In the context of the project empowerment means recognition of farmer communities in their role of effectively managing genetic resources, and community biodiversity management as a method to do so. Finding answers to the questions leads to farmers having better access to, and generating more benefits from, (plant) genetic resources.

The project team linked up with existing partners of Wageningen UR, such as EOSA, EIAR and Haramaya University in Ethiopia, LI-BIRD in Nepal, Bioversity International and MSSRF in India and EMBRAPA and the University of Santa Catharina in Brazil. The team chose to take time with all key partners to elaborate the initial project plan in a proposal development workshop in Wageningen.

The initial ideas for the project originated from Wageningen UR, but the project leader deliberately chose not to take a leading role in project implementation. Rather she applied a catalyzing/facilitating and coaching role. Moreover, the project basically functioned as a seed money mechanism, putting the money to use very strategically in a much wider context than that of the project locations only. Currently, the project is evolving into the development of the Global Community Biodiversity Management Platform. The Nepalese partner, LI-BIRD has taken the initiative to organize a global consultation meeting in Wageningen, August 6-7, 2010. Thirteen delegates from eleven organizations and collaborative programmes participated. They represented regional programmes on agrobiodiversity management in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. They jointly formulated the justification of a global CBM platform, agreed on common principles and core values, a platform structure and its modalities, and discussed funding issues. LI-BIRD is now establishing the secretariat for the platform for necessary communication, coordination, and facilitation of the platform building process.

An important element in the Community Empowerment Project is its exchange programme where teams with representatives from the four countries involved, visit CBM sites in the different countries for 3-4 weeks and study specific topics on CBM and empowerment within the country context. The exchange programme provides several opportunities for capacity development such as participation in action research (on-the-job

learning), working in interdisciplinary and international research teams, seminars organized with different partners, and the synthesis of findings for further use in policy development.

The work of the Community Empowerment Project connects to the compilation of a book on Community Biodiversity Management, as well as to existing training activities of Wageningen UR/CDI on the management of genetic resources.

The project is also a strategic investment in capacity of Wageningen UR itself by generating opportunities for scientific publications, input into university curricula, empirical research findings and strengthened relationships with partners in the South. In September 2010 a follow-up proposal will be submitted to the International Treaty/Benefit-sharing Fund, that will contribute to and further facilitate the establishment of a global partnership.

The aforementioned Global CBM Platform that is emerging from this project, lies in the hands of partners in the South. There is a very strong commitment of local partners, showing that an initiative that started in Wageningen UR is now strongly owned in the South. Only a small part of the funds of the Partnership Programme have been used by Wageningen UR itself. Much went into investing in capacities and networks in the South. This project seems to have gone beyond addressing research questions towards something we may call a development mission.

#### **4.6. Strengthening Livelihoods and Local Management of Plant Genetic Resources Under Conditions of Climate Change**

Country focus: Ethiopia and Zimbabwe.

The 'Climate Change Project' focuses on support to capacity development in managing plant genetic resources in local communities through partners in the South (i.e. in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe). The Netherlands' Centre for Genetic Resources (CGN) provides strategic and technical inputs. The approach of Farmer Field Schools is used to investigate *in situ* management of genetic material of crops. The rationale for this project is that the formal sector can not answer the needs of local communities. There is not enough, nor appropriate, seed being provided by this sector, mainly because of a lack of market expectations and a lack of expertise. On the one hand, the public sector focuses on food security (food crops) whereas, on the other hand, the private sector focuses on the 'bigger' cash crops. As this is a limited focus, it is deemed strategic and sustainable to invest in the role that communities can play. Wageningen UR/CGN took the initiative for this initial project, but the partner in Harare is going to co-ordinate the Oxfam follow-up. This is a good sign.

In terms of support to capacity development, there are two key components in this project: A technical component (genetic material made available through a broker role) and a component of awareness raising of farmers that they can do breeding and selecting themselves (self-reliance). The active involvement of farmers is also strengthened by the collection of on-farm weather data (precipitation and temperature) that help farmers to better understand what is happening on-site, in terms of climate 'change'.

One of the outputs of this project is curriculum development for Farmer Field Schools focusing on climate change modules. The interest of farmers in this kind of project is illustrated by a quote from a farmer in Zimbabwe: "This project is about our crops for tomorrow". The role of Wageningen UR is limited to a strategic guidance and facilitating role, catalyzing implementation of activities and processes at the project locations in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe.

The project is building on earlier experiences gained in an LNV-BOCI<sup>16</sup> project. It also built on knowledge and insights gained in work in Southeast Asia. It turned out that farmer field school dynamics in Zimbabwe are similar to those in Asia, but very different from those in Ethiopia. Therefore, the process of how to engage farmers in FFS needs to be designed very differently. Another need for strategic maneuvering relates to gender issues: the project decided to work both, on staple crops (the domain of men) and on vegetables (women's domain).

The project made active use of the technical capacity of NARS in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe which brought highly esteemed breeders into the project. These breeders participated in Training of Trainers sessions and

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<sup>16</sup> BOCI: International Policy Support Research Programme of the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV).

they provided genetic material. This kind of involvement in an essentially participation-driven project is also advancing changes of mindsets in the NARS towards a more farmer-participatory approach.

In essence, what will remain when this project terminates is the understanding among the partners of what is going on in relation to climate change and how they may respond to it, as well as access to improved genetic material. The ability of farmers to do their own crossings and selection is still a challenge.

There has been an active link with the Netherlands Embassy, particularly in Ethiopia, DGIS (The Hague) has not been directly involved. For Wageningen UR/CGN the project brought opportunities for publications and it provided access to empirical research that can be used in curriculum development and in future services in support of capacity development. The project is achieving beyond its own means as the local partner in Zimbabwe is doing similar work at 5 additional sites, using other financial resources. Moreover, the project is being 'adopted' by Oxfam-Novib who will also work in Indonesia. The spin-off effect is therefore significant.

#### **4.7. Dye-Sorghums in Benin**

Country focus: Benin.

The focus of the 'Dye-Sorghum Project' is on understanding the characteristics and potential of dye-sorghum (*Sorghum Bicolor*). Dye-sorghum is a traditional crop in West Africa that has been 'discovered' by scientists only recently as a crop with market potential. This particular *Bicolor* species produces a dye that is used for dyeing food and textiles. Understanding the mechanism of dye production in the plant (is it a fungus?) and the conditions to increase dye production, are among the research questions that emerged through farmer consultation meetings in the early phases of the project. Eight MSc-students from the Université d'Abomey-Calavi in Benin and one from Wageningen University have been involved in field activities and research trials. The research was designed and guided jointly by Beninese and Wageningen supervisors. Finding suitable MSc-students in Benin was somewhat cumbersome. Having students doing the research was deemed important for building university capacity and often this is frustrated due to lack of funds. The project set-up also offered opportunities for collaboration between the socio-economic and the agronomic faculties of Abomey-Calavi. The Dye-Sorghum Project activities also provided a basis to link the university to local farmers. For Wageningen UR/PROTA it was important to be able to carry-out empirical research to strengthen its scientific basis. The research has yielded useful insights into the effects of fertilizers and on the role of fungi in relation to dye production. Toward the end of the project (2010), these and other research findings will be debriefed with farmers, in particular those that were part of the group that defined the original research questions.

A next step may be to disseminate new understanding on the properties of dye-sorghum and on its market potential through agricultural extension services. Currently, agricultural extension activities in Benin focus on cotton production mainly, but the government aims to diversify its crop production focus. As the cultivation and processing of dye-sorghum originates from the farmers themselves there is genuine interest in possible improvements. Therefore, there is a need to re-orient extension services, through capacity development efforts at that level.

Contacts with (staff of) the Netherlands Embassy in Cotonou have been limited. However, as the embassy is interested in supporting the crop diversification initiative in Benin, away from cotton, the Dye-Sorghum Project may provide an interesting case for support to policy development. In Benin there are plans to follow-up on the Dye-Sorghum Project beyond 2010 by trying to access funds from Austria and Germany. This Beninese initiative clearly reflects the interest among project partners in the continuation of the projects activities. There may be a continuation of the project through financial support from WOTRO.

#### **4.8. Value chains for pro-poor development**

Country focus: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda and Uganda.

The main focus of the 'Value Chains Project' is on the inclusion of smallholder farmers in agri-food value chains and in trying to find leverage points and conditions that hold potential for success. The central research question is how local actors are capable of 'reconfiguring' value chains towards the inclusion of smallholder farmers, and to look for specific cases that provide examples of how this could happen. It was decided that action research would be the tool to provide insights into the strategic thinking and actions of local actors. There are a number of sub-projects ('pilots') under this umbrella project, which all connect to an already-existing quest for reconfiguring agri-food chains towards the inclusion of smallholders as put

forward by producer organizations. The project is a collaborative activity of Agri-ProFocus (in itself an alliance of a range of partners), Agriterra, Wageningen UR, partners in the south (mainly producer organizations) and INGOs. At the local level the program engages action research/pilot studies with ongoing change processes. At a strategic level, mainly located in the involved Dutch networks, the program aims to provide practitioners and policy makers with insights in pro-poor mechanisms to reconfigure existing value chains. The Value Chains Project scouted for promising, on-going change processes, and asked change actors whether the action research could align with them. These change actors were the ones whom the project then sought to support in the field of strategic foresight, providing new insights through action research that would support the ability of producer organizations to organize collective economic action. As an outside agency, it is not desirable for Wageningen UR or for others, to reconfigure chains. This is something that local actors must do. The action research on the dynamics of actors and factors in specific value chains was meant to provide options for such collective economic action. In order to be able to this, there needs to be a good understanding about possible leverage points. This includes getting an understanding about why actors act as they do (core drivers and resulting tactical maneuvering). In turn, this often includes putting emphasis on understanding informal institutions that, often, tend to be forgotten. In this way, action research helps to better understand the visible and invisible mechanisms and causal relationships that play their roles. An active link to scientific theory is then meant to generalize and consolidate understanding, broadening understanding beyond isolated cases (see Annex 3 for a more-elaborate overview of concrete activities in relation to this).

Though the project's focus on finding 'leverage points' is clear, it requires a dynamic research approach that, by itself, resembles trying to hit a moving target. On-going changes in the context, such as government interventions and policy changes, require constant fine-tuning of the action research. Emerging understanding through research happened in an evolving change process which required a process of positioning and repositioning the action research. In the various countries, the project started action research pilots with the aim to gradually incorporate strategic thinking of local change actors (e.g. the producer organizations), because knowing what potential leverage points are, is not the same as knowing how to act on such understanding. A good example of the use of this approach is the case of the oil seed value chain in Uganda. The project was able to support the local producer organization in its aim to influence policy through a facilitated internal priority setting process (SNV, Makerere University, Wageningen UR). This involved reaching settlement between different actors and identifying sector-level interests. The proposition of such a platform was that pro-poor development needs a certain level of stability and predictability in a sub-sector, which allows poor farmers to create terms of trade tailored to their specific resources and interests. The partnering producers' organization, UOSPA, made an important strategic contribution to this process, despite its more immediate economic and political interests.

As the Value Chains Project contains a number of pilot studies, there was a need to establish clarity on how to understand action research and its role. Hence, one of the contributions of the project has been to enhance the methodological anchoring of action research, particularly focusing on how to translate localized change processes to high-level strategic processes. Within the project's pilot teams and partner networks, this entailed time to learn each other's professional language and to build good personal working relationships<sup>17</sup>. From this, interesting reflections have emerged that can a basis for the further clarification of the strategic role of action research in research services provided by Wageningen UR. Part of the discussions related to the distinction between empirical research -which provides evidence for the effects of interventions-, participatory learning -which contributes to solving localized problems- and action research -which contributes to identifying the working mechanisms and defining conditions for replication and up-scaling-. To position the action research appropriately there was a need for active configuration of intra-Wageningen UR capacities. A participatory learning approach with knowledge about the country and its culture could be married with an action research approach that is explicit to scientific theory. This turns out to be a very promising combination that the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme should further capitalize upon.

The action research in which the Value Chain pilot studies engaged (e.g. the onion value chain in Niger) have shown potential for supporting strategic planning of donor organizations and INGOs. In the case of Niger,

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<sup>17</sup> Personal relationships, in any situation, that hinge on good collaboration, are much more a driver of change than is often acknowledged and actively and strategically being invested in. In terms of finding 'leverage points', many of the projects in the Partnership Programme reported the critical role of individuals and related relationships as a factor for success (or failure).

for example, this was SNV. A tentative conclusion from the Value Chain Project is that action research can enhance the effectiveness of development action by improving critical understanding of the situation in which a donor intends to make a difference.

The various pilot studies engaged in active multi-stakeholder process facilitation through workshops that used a variety of methods such as rich pictures (as derived from Soft Systems Analysis), participatory video and story-telling. These participatory processes are more political in nature and involve negotiation processes that explore new forms of collective action.

The action research processes, even though they are not finalized yet, are providing a stronger basis for understanding better how change in terms of smallholder-farmers becoming included in agri-food chains, can happen and under what conditions. They also contribute to the on-going discussion in the donor community about how to find credible ways to assess impact in action-oriented projects. The insights emerging from the Value Chain Project, therefore, can be used in policy development in DGIS and at Embassy level, INGOs and the donor community at large. As DGIS is supporting (the activities of) Agri-ProFocus, Agriterra and SNV (ref. the Niger-onion pilot), this is a good example of how DGIS' various channels of support to capacity development can be interlinked and, thus, allowing for synergy and complementarity. Similarly, the findings from the Value Chains Project feed into Wageningen UR capacity through (i) the empirical insights gained, (ii) the better understanding obtained, which can be used in curricula improvement, (iii) the opportunities created to contribute to scientific knowledge generation and (iv) the understanding that can support better services in support to capacity development. As the Value Chains Project is linked to the Country Focus Programme of Agri-ProFocus, opportunities abound for further building on the achievements of the Value Chains Project.



## 5. Exploratory discussion

The sections below discuss how the various projects appear to be faring in the respective performance areas that were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report. These performance areas are considered to be important in terms of supporting capacity development in appropriate, effective and sustainable ways:

- *Local embedding, ownership and positioning of Wageningen UR support:* How was the project positioned in endogenous capacity development processes and based on local ownership for the intervention process?
- *Connectedness and partnership:* How was the project positioned in relation to other efforts in support of capacity development and how did partnerships play a role?
- *Strategic preparation/positioning and appropriate internal capacities within the Partnership Programme:* How did the project prepare for and engage its own internal capacities strategically towards support to capacity development?
- *Navigating implementation amidst complexity:* How has the project been navigating the complexities and dynamics of capacity development processes?

In addition to these performance areas, this section also explores tentatively:

- *Achievements vis-à-vis programme purposes:* How (tentatively) does the project contribute towards overall purposes of the Partnership Programme?

### 5.1. Local embedding, ownership and positioning of Wageningen UR support

The various partnership projects have approached local embedding and (building) local ownership differently, depending on the prevailing location-specific conditions. Whereas some of the projects could build on readily-articulated questions originating from the local or national setting, others could not. However, the question arises when local ownership needs to be in place. If Wageningen UR works as a catalyst for processes that subsequently will be taken over and carried forward by the projects' local partners (as is the case in the Community Empowerment Project), it may not be fair to judge a project ex-ante on whether demand was articulated by partners in the South, or not. Rather, the emergence of ownership in the project setting should be monitored and assessed in the course of project implementation. In the case of the Community Empowerment Project, for many, project partnership and establishment of local ownership for the project's focus, was something that took shape gradually. The project coordinators took the initiative, but this landed so well that one could speak of latent local ownership that actually already existed.

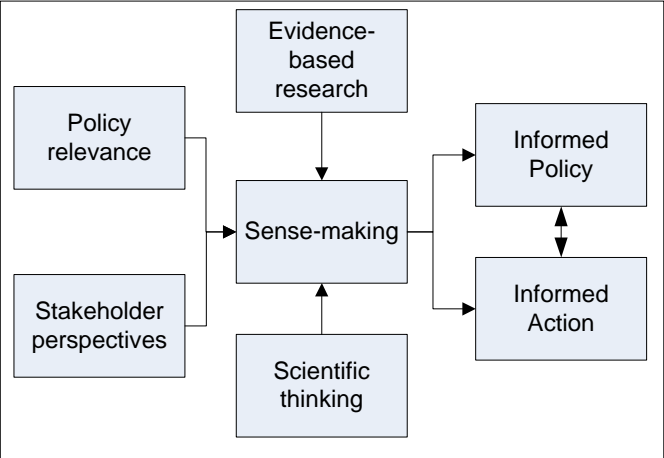
Ownership does not show from paper, but shows from engagement in action. This may be illustrated with the VPA Ghana Project that would originally work in Ghana and Indonesia. The project partner in Indonesia, however, who had co-submitted the project proposal, pulled out soon after approval of the proposal. So, on paper, ownership appeared to be in place but when it came to action, it did not persist. In another example: in the course of its implementation, the VPA Ghana Project expanded its network towards development actors that were not in the picture yet at the time of submitting the proposal. This means that ownership developed over time.

Different choices regarding the role of research were made in the various projects. This was partly because of different approaches being applied and because of widely-differing conditions and contexts determining the degree of engagement in change processes. As a result, some projects focused on roles of catalysts and facilitators (i.e. the two genetic resources projects), others took more of an expert role (i.e. the Incomati and Dye-Sorghum Projects), or the role of an on-the-job trainer/researcher (some of the pilots in the Value Chains Project).

A constraining situation, but one that does not specifically relate to the Partnership Programme, is that of 'abounding development funds', which makes it attractive for local actors and partners to engage in 'capacity building' with the support of one donor agency, after which they can easily turn to another, leaving behind what was built-up and looking ahead for new opportunities for (financial) support. It is sometimes just too easy to access new funds for yet another capacity development effort. All this underscores the importance of harmonization of donor investments. Not only the Bio-fuels Project struggled with this context.

Different projects have put different emphasis on the various elements of action research (see Figure 7), which resulted in different research processes.

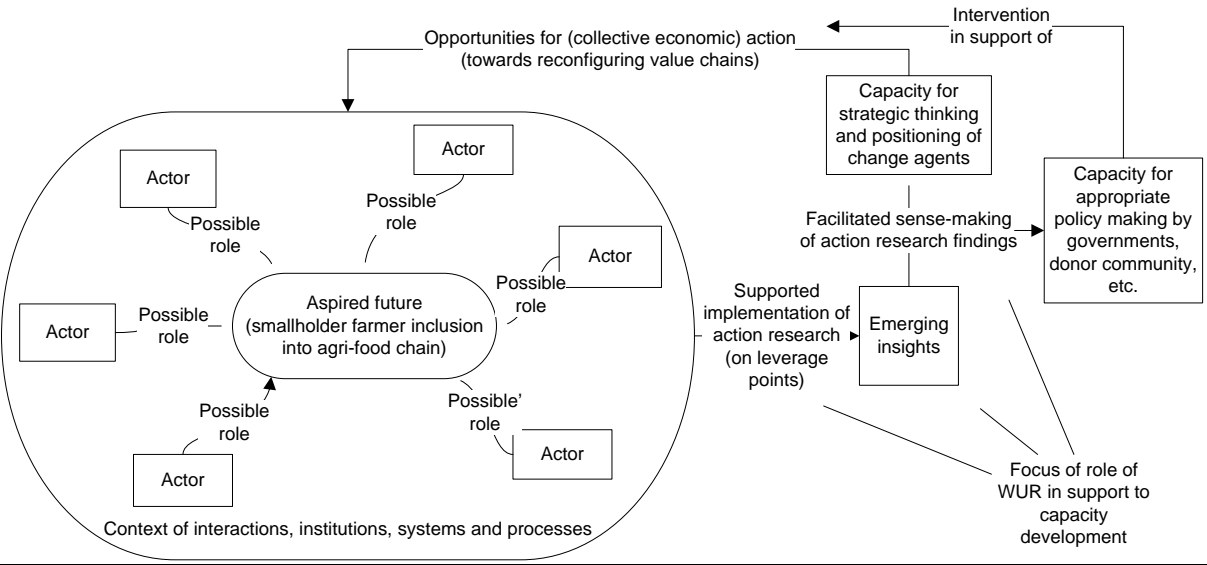
**Figure 7: Elements of action-oriented research**



Some projects emphasized the need for influencing policy/decision making. This was the case, for example, in the Value Chains project which worked on reconfiguring value chains towards smallholder inclusion). On the other hand, the Incomati Project is rather different. Because of its focus on the development of a straightforward, but complex, tool/simulation model, the tool may be seen as the product of evidence-based research that can potentially inform policy and action. The Dye-Sorghum Project is a bit of a different case altogether, where the focus is more on research per sé than on action-oriented research.

Figure 8, below, illustrates the core idea of the role of action-oriented research in support of local capacity development processes, contributing towards an envisaged momentum for endogenous action. This particular figure illustrates the example of the Value Chains Project. Similar diagrams, but with a different subject focus, apply to most of the other projects of the Partnership Programme.

**Figure 8: Action research and support to capacity development illustrated**

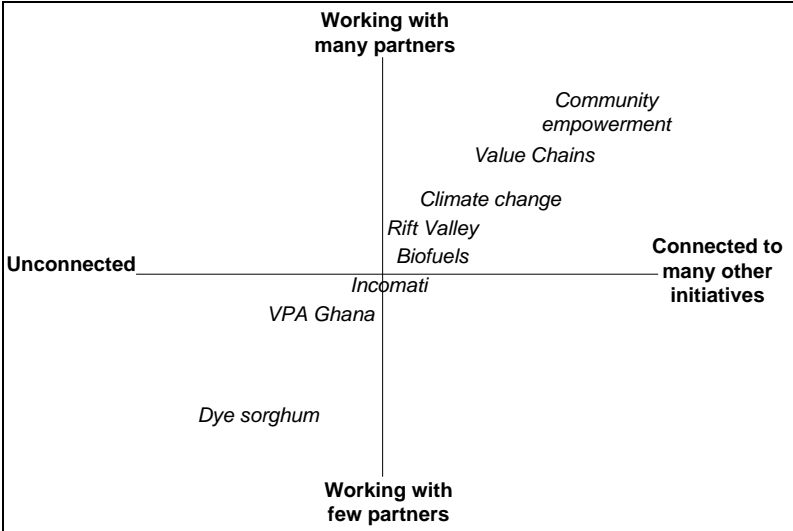


**5.2. Connectedness and partnership**

As in the case of 'Local embedding and ownership' the partnership projects made different choices with respect to the performance area 'Connectedness and partnership'. Some projects put 'their eggs in a few

baskets' (the Dye-Sorghum Project being a typical example) whereas others put 'many eggs in many baskets' (e.g. the Community Empowerment Project). This has implications in terms of sustainability and contribution towards self-propelling action within the partner organizations. By design, the partnership projects were not dependent only on DGIS funds and they availed of matching funds from other projects and activities. This enhanced connectedness of the projects to wider efforts in the same area of work. Once on stream, most projects continued to explore connections with other partners, which sometimes led to networking and partnerships unforeseen at the beginning of the project. This was the case, for example, in the Rift Valley Project, due to a weak multi-stakeholder platform which initially lacked the major actors and in the VPA Ghana Project due to the delayed ratification of the VPA itself. At present, with the termination date of the Partnership Programme in sight (December 2010), most of the projects are already in advanced stages of planning new activities that may take them into a next phase. The Community Empowerment and the Climate Change Projects –both focusing on community management of genetic resources- are good examples of the latter. In that sense, these partnership projects have clearly worked in terms of providing basic conditions for starting wider-focused change processes.

**Figure 9: Partnerships and connectedness**



The different ways in which partnerships at project level have been forged and projects were connected to other initiatives seems to have to do with their differing foci. The more the focus is on inspiring action, the more we see projects that are widely connected to other initiatives and that involve many new partners. Quite expectedly, an action focus often goes hand in hand with engagement in multi-stakeholder processes.

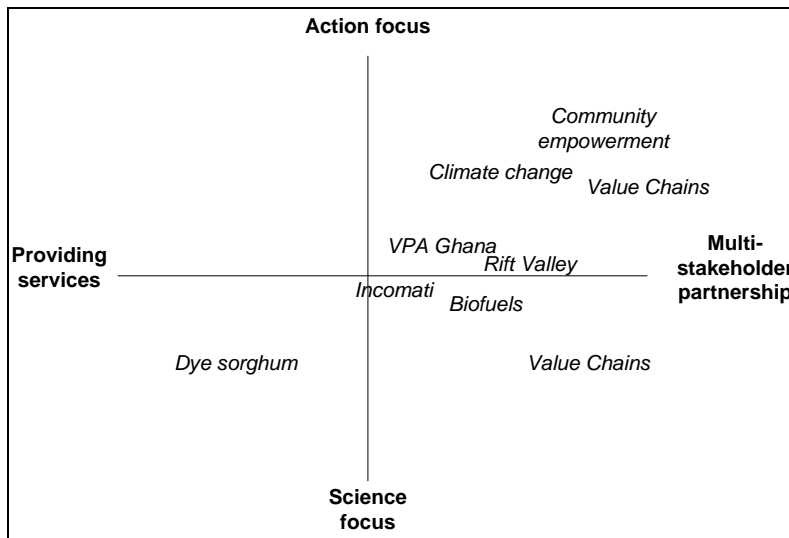
A similar picture would emerge if we would replace 'providing services' by 'passive ownership', and 'multi-stakeholder partnership' by 'self-mobilizing ownership' (this, in an analogy to the 'continuum on participation' as developed by Jules Pretty (see Annex 2). In most of the action researches, the action focus required self-mobilizing ownership as the project teams were not in a position -nor did they want to be in a position- to try to initiate action. Rather, they sought to inform endogenous action.

The role of PhD and MSc-students is assessed differently by individual project leaders. In general, most of the more science-oriented project leaders see a clear role for PhD-students. Others however, do not consider PhD-students -and their research- to be strategic investments, in particular if 'inspiring action' is a project objective. MSc-students are generally being viewed as making very useful contributors to the projects, mainly because of the flexible way in which the students can contribute targeted research. MSc research trajectories are short-term as against the 4-year programmes involved in PhD research.

**5.3. Strategic preparation/positioning and appropriate internal capacities in the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme**

The early stages of the Partnership Programme encountered a number of delays, which did not put projects in the best of positions to develop a suitable process for support to capacity development. Some projects,

**Figure 10: Focus of projects**

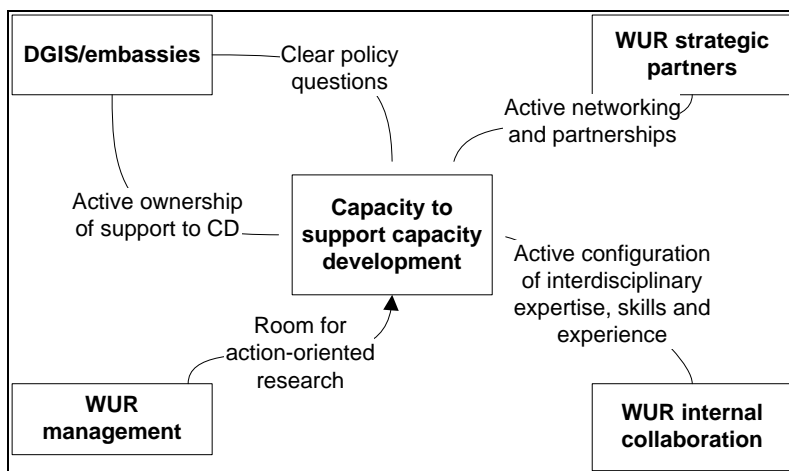


for example, required active configuration of internal capacities within Wageningen UR. The ‘Value Chain Project’ is a good example of this.

Some of the project leaders have suggested that engaging in research projects that seek to actively influence decision making and policy development in the South, is something that not all researchers are ready for. Apart from requiring what makes for a good researcher, other qualities such as ability to think and act strategically -including adaptive management-, skills to facilitate multi-stakeholder change processes and networking qualities are needed. However, in terms of capacity to support capacity development, we need to take a broader perspective. The success of support to capacity development has to do with context conditions and roles to play, as is reflected in Figure 11, below.

Many project leaders would like to see a stronger engagement by DGIS in the project, which would strengthen the focus and use of project outputs and outcomes. None of the project leaders reported constraints in terms of their room to engage in action-oriented research as scientists. Most project leaders have not only actively networked with existing partners of Wageningen UR, including its alumni, but also, they expanded their networks for the purpose of linking to new capacities in order to continue what was started

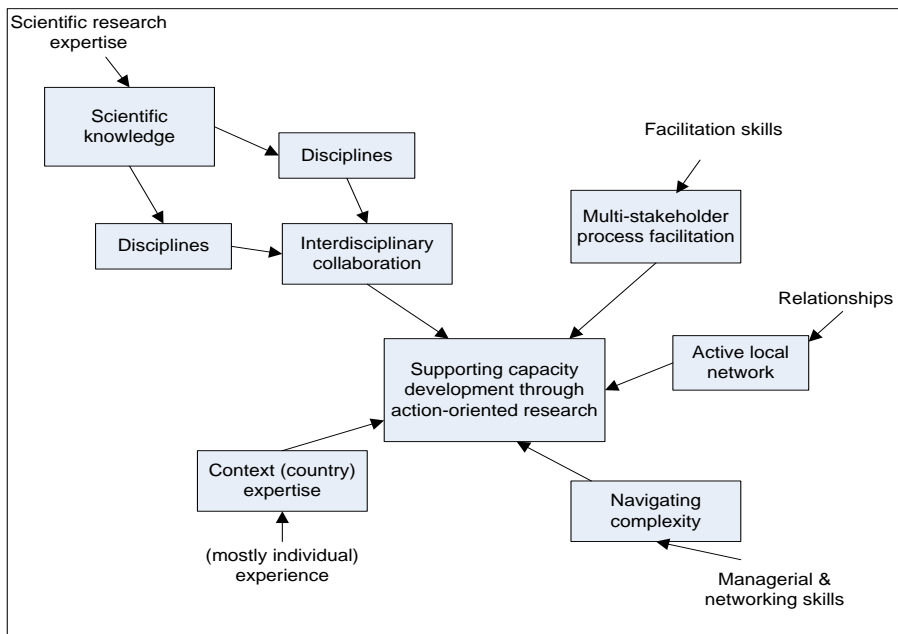
**Figure 11: Partnership capacity to support capacity development**



by the projects. Finally, the internal collaboration in Wageningen UR, configuring strategic project teams, is an area in which there is more potential for support to action-oriented research than is currently being used. Figure 12 zooms in on opportunities for configuring Wageningen UR-capacity in support to capacity

development. Obviously, it will be hard to find all of the necessary expertise, skills and experience in just one or two individuals. Hence there is a need to work in cross-disciplinary teams.

**Figure 12: Configuring support to capacity development through action-oriented research**



The Partnership Programme has been fortunate to work with staff that put both their hearts and their heads into the projects. This enabled them to strategically guide the projects and, even with the restricted time frames and under complex conditions, they have been able to achieve significant results. This very much had to do with the kind of persons providing such guidance. This underscores the importance of not only looking at project proposals at face value, but to also look at who will be involved in its implementation.

Having someone involved on-the-ground can be very helpful in getting a process going, rather than trying to work through a 'remote control'. In the Bio-fuels and Incomati Projects this proved to be an asset through the PhD-students concerned. However, it depends on the nature of the project, its context, ambitions and maturity of partnerships whether this would be appropriate or not.

#### 5.4. Navigating implementation amidst complexity

Support to capacity development, particularly in complex and dynamic situations such as under 'competing claims', is not a matter of engineering. It requires time to strategically maneuver such support, and to re-focus if necessary. Available resources, both in time and in finances, need to be in line with the ambition to make a difference in such dynamic, complex, and often volatile, conditions. As was discussed in Chapter 2, capacity development is not a straightforward process for which linear, blueprint interventions can be applied. Most projects under the Partnership Programme relate to complex change processes. As a result, most project as they had been formulated originally, required adaptive management and regular re-orientation and refocusing in terms of how, what and whose capacity development to support.

Most project leaders reported the opportunities for flexibility existing within the Partnership Programme as a success factor that is not only appropriate, but also critical to complex capacity change processes in which most projects had to operate. Even though it is important to articulate the project's theory of change, partnership opportunities, and everything else that goes into a proposal, this should be used as a guide to adaptive management purposes, rather as a fixed blueprint.

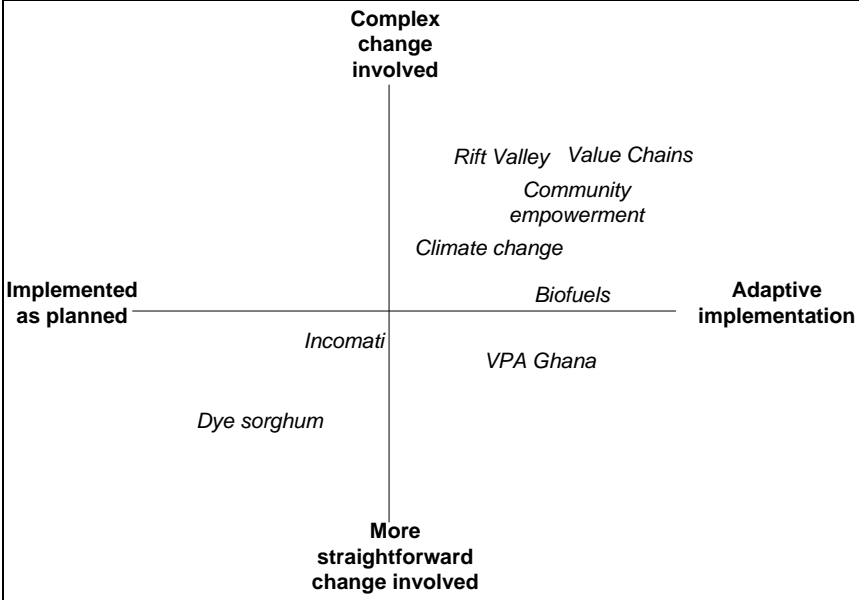
Strategic guidance was provided through informal monitoring mechanisms rather than through formal systems. This informal set-up meant that the quality of strategic guidance also depended very much on the ability of the project management to detect signals with respect to the process and to adaptively seek ways forward when original plans appeared to work out different from what was anticipated.

For most of the Partnership’s projects, given their short lifespan and the way they were set up, elaborate monitoring and evaluation systems would not have been an efficient investment of time and other resources. Hence the need for working with researchers who are ready to engage with the complexities, dynamics and uncertainties involved in multi-stakeholder capacity development processes. Not everything, however, can be navigated. In some cases, conditions beyond the control of the project management have limited the (potential) impact of the projects. Examples include the delayed ratification of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in Ghana, the decreasing investments in bio-fuel production in Mozambique and the limited political maneuverability in Ethiopia.

Even though the role and feasibility of formal M&E systems is questionable, they would make projects more transparent in terms of management, if critical milestones, partnership issues and other (context) factors were made explicit at an early stage. These would then allow those involved in the projects to better track and understand the complexities amidst which they navigate. In addition, they provide insight into the need for flexibility and for adaptive management.

When comparing the projects, a difference can be noted as regards the need for adaptive management. This is illustrated in Figure 12: There appears to be a correlation between projects having a focus on self-mobilizing ownership (see Section 5.1), and the extent to which they have been adaptively implemented.

**Figure 12: Complexity and adaptive implementation in support of capacity development**



**5.5. Achievements vis-à-vis programme purposes**

In essence, the purpose of the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme is to generate options for the sustainable use of natural resources, pro-poor agro-supply chains and agro-biodiversity. The ultimate aim is then that these options result in improved rural livelihoods, poverty alleviation and economic development in the south. This last part relates to what we would be inclined to call the impact of the programme. It is without question that such impact cannot be assessed at this stage. However, it is safe to say that all projects are about increasing potential and building up a momentum. Both, increased potential and the momentum built relate to many more dynamics of actors and factors than what the projects themselves have been supporting. Already, some of the projects are showing that partners in the south are ‘cashing in’ on the momentum built through the programme. This applies in particular to the two projects dealing with community management of genetic resources.

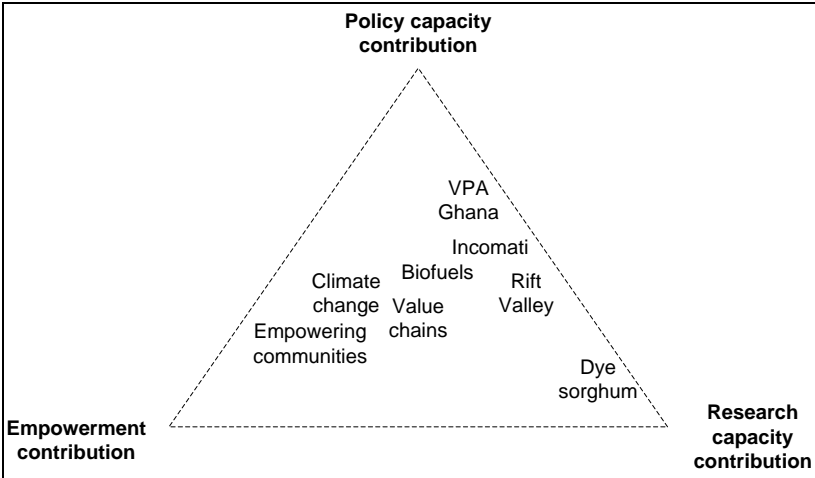
It has been suggested that action research can play a strategic role in better positioning development initiatives in a complex dynamic. In itself, the process of action research needs to be strategically designed and positioned in order to be able to play that role. Investments in MSc- and PhD-students can be seen as support to capacity development. However, any proposal on support to capacity development will need to

clearly indicate why such investment would be a strategic way to support capacity development in view of the action orientation, the aspired capacity future and the specific context in which capacity development takes place. A strategic assessment of how investments in MSc- and PhD-students is expected to support wider capacity development processes in specific contexts would help to create clearer reference frames for ex-post evaluations.

At the same time, if we limit ourselves to just looking at what has happened in the process of implementing the projects, we observe that many seeds of support were sown in the field of capacity development and that it is more than plausible to assert that a harvest can be expected.

It is beyond the scope of this assessment to provide a comprehensive overview of results emerging from the projects. Annex 3 provides a taste of key elements of support to capacity development and institutional change. We may summarize the various contributions in relation to policy capacity, research capacity and empowerment as shown in Figure 13.

**Figure 13: Types and mixes of contributions by projects**



Support to capacity development is not necessarily the same as institutional development. Institutional development is something that needs to emerge from within institutions. The short lifespan of the partnership projects has limited the scope of what could emerge from their implementation. Some projects, however, show evidence of institutional development through contributions of the projects, particularly where partners have taken a strong role in spin-off projects. Both of the projects on genetic resources are good examples of this.

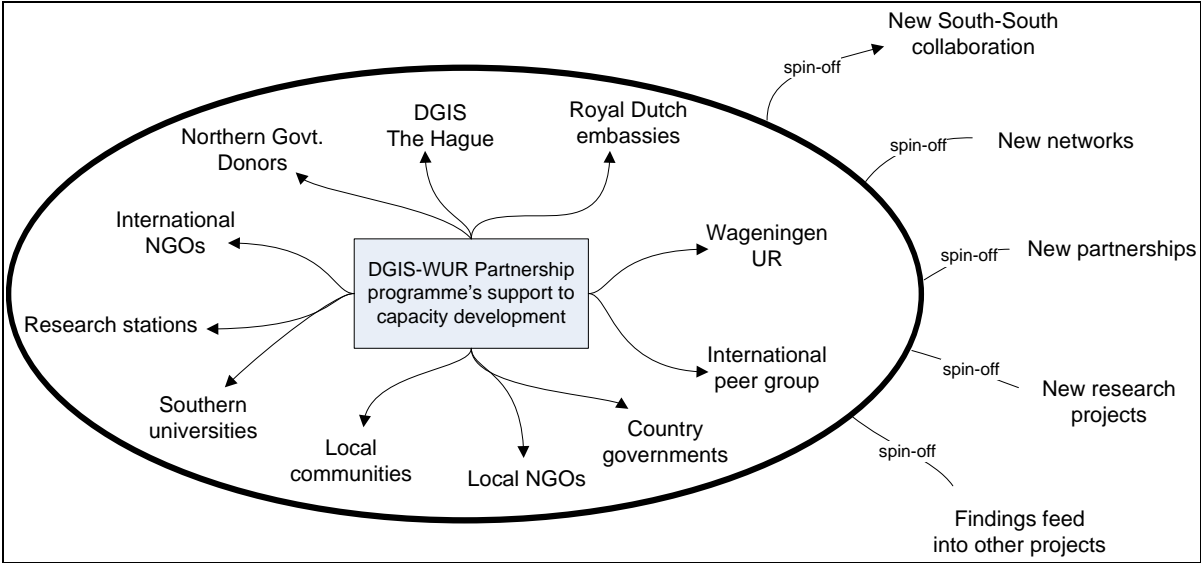
Overcoming the limitations of the short lifespan of the projects (i.e. less than the 4 years as was originally envisaged) has not been easy for project leaders and teams. A good indication that they have been quite successful in doing so, is the fact that there are so many spin-off activities and projects that can be reported on, particularly those that will be initiated from the South. Moreover, by design project funds were strategically linked to those of other activities.

The various partnership projects have different reach in terms of supporting capacity development. When putting the different pictures together, an overall picture emerges regarding whose capacity development was supported, as shown in Figure 14, below.

Most projects report spin-offs in the form of new or different projects that will build on the work done under the Partnership Programme. Sometimes this is a single follow-up research projects, but it also includes emerging large-scale networks and partnerships such as in the case of the community empowerment project.

More detailed descriptions can be found in project documentation, part of which will be made available by the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme Management over the next 6 months.

**Figure 14: The Partnership Programme's reach of support to capacity development**





## 6. Policy recommendations

The policy recommendations provided in this chapter reflect on (i) success factors as distilled from the projects implemented in the framework of the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme: issues to be consolidated in a possible future programme, (ii) apparent opportunities for bringing out more of the implicit potential of the partnership and its projects, and (iii) tentative ideas for strengthening the capacity of DGIS and Wageningen UR to collaboratively and strategically support capacity development processes.

As stated before, these recommendations are based on a quick-scan only of the partnership projects as they have been implemented to date, not on a thorough investigation. The recommendations emerged mainly from the interviews conducted with the project leaders. The recommendations below need to be viewed against the backdrop of the complexity of the development questions and processes that were been addressed in the projects, as well as against the delayed start with which most of the projects had to cope.

### 6.1 Recommendations pertaining to the programme design phase

1. Wageningen UR should continue the strengthening of the capacity of its researchers to engage in action research in the context of multi-stakeholder processes.
2. DGIS should actively use the DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme to provide insights related to its articulated policy questions with regard to its manifold investments in support to capacity development.
3. DGIS, as part of its integrative outlook on support to capacity development, should consider soliciting larger, and longer-term, programme proposals that are to be supported by targeted action research. This would enhance the strategic positioning of interventions aimed at support to capacity development. In its turn, this relates to a more-strategic employment of action research efforts towards enhancing development effectiveness. The latter would be very much in line with recommendations from the recent WRR report<sup>18</sup>.
4. The science-based policy support programme BOCI<sup>19</sup>, of the Netherlands' Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) provides an interesting model to explore for a set-up of a possible future DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership. In particular BOCI's clear linkage to explicit policy questions may add value to a Partnership Programme and increase its impact on capacity development. Much along the lines by which BOCI supports LNV, a new DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme could provide better support to DGIS and the various Netherlands Embassies in their efforts on support to capacity development.

### 6.2 Recommendations pertaining to the project selection phase

5. Project proposals need to be based on the articulation of existing problem-owners in the south and, wherever possible, they are to be linked to on-going other efforts in capacity development. However, in designing projects, time is required for the exploration of additional or alternative partnerships during project implementation. These would cater for the need for appropriate flexibility to move strategically in view of improved or altered understanding.
6. Select projects that, on the one hand, contribute to DGIS policy questions and that, in on the other hand, link with DGIS's on-going development projects.
7. Project proposals need to articulate why applicants consider the particular way in which they provide support to capacity development, as the most strategic/appropriate way to do this: Provide 'theory' on how capacity is expected to change.

### 6.3 Recommendations pertaining to the project implementation phase

8. Allow for in-project experimenting and for optimal flexibility in the use of funds to support strategic maneuvering vis-à-vis the defined policy questions.

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<sup>18</sup> WRR (2010), Minder pretentie, meer ambitie: ontwikkelingshulp die verschil maakt. Report of the Netherlands' Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR). Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. 352 pp.

<sup>19</sup> Research Programme International Cooperation and International Agreements funded by Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

9. Plan for 'putting several eggs in several baskets' in terms of partnerships, so as to increase opportunities for spin-offs in institutional development.
10. Wageningen UR should pay careful attention to, and actively coordinate the establishment of project teams capable of providing support to capacity development tailored to the specifics of a project setting. Such teams are to represent appropriate mixes of content/scientific expertise, interdisciplinary collaboration, country acquaintance and multi-stakeholder process facilitation experience, embedded in an ability to think and act strategically feeding into adaptive management.
11. At country level, DGIS should strategically interlink all projects that support capacity development in order to enhance synergy and complementarities. DGIS-Wageningen UR partnership projects would then be just one of these 'modalities'.
12. With regard to (DGIS-Wageningen UR) Partnership Projects, OS/DGIS should appoint 'problem owners' within its staff, both in The Hague and at the Embassies in the countries concerned. This in order to ensure connectivity between DGIS policy questions and action research processes and the results thereof,
13. The DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme manager to provide opportunities for linking project leaders to DGIS-staff and for interlinking (for the purpose of exchange) projects under this partnership during implementation, at least within a theme. There needs to be an appropriate budget allocation for this.
14. For possible future programmes, a phased set-up is recommended. The first phase is to comprise the programme's and project's core efforts. Phase two would then entail the emerging need for anchoring and grounding these efforts through support to local institutionalization processes. As the latter's context will only become clear in the course of implementing Phase 1, the second phase cannot be properly designed at the onset of the project. Therefore, proposals for Phase 2 are only to be submitted toward the end of Phase 1. A tentative budgetary division might be in the order of some 80% for the projects' core efforts (Phase 1) and some 20% for Phase 2. The latter would then have to come along with significant local matching local funds<sup>20</sup>, as an indicator of local adoption and ownership.

#### **6.4 Recommendations pertaining to the programme and project monitoring and sense-making phase**

15. Appropriately assess the effect of investments in support to capacity development. This requires an understanding about capacity development processes that acknowledges dynamic issues such as raised in Chapter 2 of this report. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' assessment methodology.
16. The extent to which a project leads to effective spin-off activities/projects, which are initiated (and managed) by partners in the South, is a key measure of success in the field of support to capacity development.
17. A study such as this one should be planned for in such a way as to allow for including interviews with key partners in the South. This would provide more understanding particularly about institutional change processes.
18. An exchange workshop where project leaders and other project staff are facilitated to interactively compare projects, for example along the lines that are being discussed in Chapter 5 of this report, is an essential follow-up of this exploratory study.

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<sup>20</sup> "Significant" will need to be interpreted according to the specific situation.



# Annex 1: Terms of reference

## Aim

This study aims to sketch thinking about and practice in capacity development as incorporated as objective in DGIS-Wageningen UR partnership projects. Key questions that this study seeks to answer:

- What strategic approach was chosen on the basis of what weighing of alternatives?
- What were the core objectives (if applicable) in the project as regards capacity development, what were key assumptions made as regards the intended capacity change process (how capacity change was expected/hoped to happen)?
- What has been the actual dynamic in this respect, what challenges encountered, what assumptions turned out to be incorrect?
- What role did learning-orientated M&E play in assessing change in relation to planned/hoped for change and actual change?
- What have been tentative results regarding (support to) capacity development processes?
- What patterns can be found in the way in which is dealt with the complexity of capacity development processes?
- What patterns can be found in comparing different cases in terms of choices made, on what basis, and with what tentative results? Overall, what are tentative areas of learning as regards the capacity development change processes and what would be emerging recommendations for future efforts focusing on similar capacity change processes?

## Envisaged setup

- Study of existing documentation (proposals, reports) on the DGIS-Wageningen UR partnership projects
- Creating a sense-making framework (incorporating the above study questions) based on the paper on "Making sense of capacity development" as referred to earlier.
- Use framework for facilitating interviews with project leaders (and possibly selected others based on recommendation by project leaders).
- The idea is to interview at least 6 project leaders and the coordinator of the programme.
- As one framework will be used in relation to the various projects, it is expected that a pattern will emerge as to how navigation in the face of capacity development complexity has taken place in those projects.
- The study will lead to a short, policy-oriented paper, which will include recommendations.

## Subjects of analysis

- Rationale en strategic thinking behind the design of support to processes of capacity development.
- The way in which such processes were adaptively managed/reoriented along the way.
- Summary of the strategic process of shaping support to capacity development.
- Compare the above to emerging international agreement on what constitutes good practice in support to capacity development.

## Time allocation and planning

- Total time available: 12 days (DGIS-Wag UR Budget Allocation 2010)
- Period: June-July 2010

## Deliverable

- Report (approx. 15-20 pp)

## Implementation

- Centre for Development Innovation (Ir. Seerp Wigboldus)

## Advisory Group

- CDI (Jim Woodhill), Wageningen International (Wim Andriessse)

## Annex 2: Participation typology applied to ownership

The participation typology as developed by Jules Pretty (1995<sup>21</sup>) provides a clear perspective against which to understand 'ownership' as we can distinguish similar levels when trying to understand variations in ownership in relation to capacity development. The level of ownership is clearly different in the various projects discussed in this paper.

Typology for participation:

*Passive Participation [ownership]:* People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.

*Participation [ownership] in Information giving:* People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.

*Participation [ownership] by consultation:* People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to views. These external agents define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.

*Participation [ownership] for material incentive:* People participate by providing resources, e.g. labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much on-farm research falls in this category, as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in the experimentation or process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.

*Functional Participation [ownership]:* People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organization. Such involvement does not tend to be at early stages or project cycles of planning, but rather after major decisions have been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.

*Interactive Participation [ownership]:* People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple objectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. These groups take control over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.

*Self-Mobilization:* People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power.

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<sup>21</sup> Pretty, J. et al. (1995): Participatory Learning and Action. A trainers' Guide. IIED, UK.

# Annex 3: Project summaries on capacity building and institutional development

## 1. The Value Chains for Pro-Poor Development Project

The following is an excerpt from the paper written on request of the management team of the Partnership Programme 'Globalization and Sustainable Development'.

**Vellema, Sietze (2010). Value Chains for Pro-Poor Development - Key events, institutional strengthening and capacity building. A preliminary overview of the interaction between practice, policy and action research. DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership Programme 'Globalization and Sustainable Development'.**

Pilot study	Events	Institutional strengthening	Capacity building	
			Partners	Research
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic workshops with REKAF network</li> </ul> <b>2010</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic workshops with REKAF network</li> <li>▪ Multistakeholder workshops with <i>Interprofessional</i></li> <li>▪ Meetings/dialogues with APF Gender and Value Chains network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Solid strategic perspective for REKAF network of women and women organizations.</li> <li>▪ Defined role for REKAF in <i>interprofession</i> in the shea nut sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Priority setting and composing action plans by REKAF</li> <li>▪ Strategizing capacity within REKAF network</li> <li>▪ Exchange study visits to learn from other countries</li> <li>▪ Dovetail organizational strategies of REKAF with market perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student involvement (Burkinabe and Dutch) in action research</li> <li>▪ Collaboration with network in BF (CEDRES, CRIGE, CAPES, Un. Of Ouagadougou) encouraging researchers to contribute to strategic foresight in REKAF and sector.</li> <li>▪ Interaction with project in CoS SIS programme</li> </ul>
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Series of feed back and exchange workshops under the umbrella of the Public Private Partnership Oilseed.</li> </ul> <b>2010</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exchange meetings with Trade Association (EPOSPEA).</li> <li>▪ Consultation with embassy and DGIS on future perspectives</li> <li>▪ APF Country Focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthened Public Private Partnership Oilseed.</li> <li>▪ Informed multi-stakeholder platform involved in implementation of Commodity Exchange.</li> <li>▪ Improved capacity of Kaleb to make contract farming arrangements viable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support SNV in their work on Commodity Platforms</li> <li>▪ Work with PPP Oil Seeds in identifying organizational models (incl. <i>Productschap MVO</i>)</li> <li>▪ Work with Trade Association EPOSPEA and its members on joint action</li> <li>▪ Work with FFARM on chain facilitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participatory analysis with chain actors</li> <li>▪ Collaboration with EIAR and FFARM</li> <li>▪ WU Students</li> </ul>
Mozambique	<b>2010</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Informal exchange meetings with Netherlands supporters, in particular Rabobank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhanced strategic capacity APAC</li> <li>▪ Workable implementation models of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity to tailor cooperative model to existing forms of social organization.</li> <li>▪ Capacity to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ M&amp;E Capacity within APAC.</li> <li>▪ Possible cooperation with regional college</li> </ul>

Pilot study	Events	Institutional strengthening	Capacity building	
			Partners	Research
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal workshops APAC and cooperation management</li> <li>APF Country Focus</li> </ul>	cooperatives	integrate economic organization with land policies and investments in irrigation infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity to attune business realities and conflict resolution.</li> </ul>	
Niger	<b>2010</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops and ateliers with interprofession (in collaboration with IFDC).</li> <li>Policy workshop, with a focus on development projects with a focus on onion (WorldBank, USAid, FAO, ADF, IFDC, Agriterria,)</li> <li>Exchange workshop with ROPPA (Network of Farmers' Organisations in West Africa)</li> <li>APF Country Focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced capacity of ANFO as interprofessional organization to arrange collaboration between producers and traders.</li> <li>Strengthened strategic capacity of interprofessional National Onion Platform (CORFO) and Regional Oignon Observatory (ORO) to develop and implement sector specific policies and regulations</li> <li>Capacity to bring coherence into several onion-specific strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity to use trade hubs as an intervention for modifying terms of trade.</li> <li>Capacity of trade firms, e.g. AGRO Niger, SAFIE and Nestle, to source onions from organized producers.</li> <li>Capacity of ANFO to link institutional innovations, i.e. trade hubs, to policy and regulatory measures of local governments</li> <li>Support SNV is tailor services provision to on-going institutional innovations in onion chains and to work with associated onion producers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration with INRAN, ICRISAT and University of Niamey</li> </ul>
Rwanda	<b>2010</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization of workshop in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, in collaboration with major partners: APF-IPER network, INGABO, SNV, EKN, IFDC.</li> <li>Coaching of cassava cluster</li> <li>Joint Action Forums</li> <li>APF Country Focus</li> <li>Exchange meeting with embassy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthened capacity of INGABO to link cassava cluster development to associated producers and to advocate with local and national governments for farmer-led cluster development</li> <li>Shared capacity among leaders and supporters of farmer-led cluster development.</li> <li>Capacity of Joint Action Forums to organize public-private dialogues</li> <li>Local service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity in INGABO to assess and select organizational innovations in the field of adding value and bulking</li> <li>Capacity to assess service provision (with COOP Africa and SNV)</li> <li>Self-assessment capacity of cooperatives included in clusters.</li> <li>Support capacity by SNV and IFDC. Modalities and tools to support and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M&amp;E of farmer-led cluster development in Joint Action Platform and cooperatives.</li> <li>Collaboration with ISAE</li> </ul>

Pilot study	Events	Institutional strengthening	Capacity building	
			Partners	Research
		providers in Rwanda as Centers of Competence for accompanying cooperative management and entrepreneurship	facilitate cluster development and Joint Action Forums (with KIT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity of cassava cluster to navigate in a whimsical business environment</li> </ul>	
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Policy Dialogue</li> <li>DGIS-DDE Coherency Mission</li> <li>SCAPEMA (IFAD-SNV) conference</li> </ul> <b>2010</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;D Market Place (with OSSUP, Makerere University, SNV)</li> <li>Commodity Association in East Africa (with FAO, SNV, Café Africa, OSSUP)</li> <li>APF Country Focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defined function and role of Sub-Sector Platform in Oilseed, i.e. OSSUP: agreed roadmap for medium and long-term.</li> <li>OSSUP included in public support programme (funded by government and IFAD); OSSUP's agenda importantly informed support programme as a result of strategic policy dialogue</li> <li>Enhanced capacity of UOSPA and SNV to coordinate and support Regional Platforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity of task forces in OSSUP to prioritize and to define precise advocacy towards government and support agencies.</li> <li>Capacity of OSSUP to perform its role at a national level and to reach agreements in joint advocacy</li> <li>Capacity of SNV and Makerere to support commodity-based multi-stakeholder platforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity of Makerere to facilitate demand-driven research and development in oilseed sub-sector.</li> <li>Makerere master students</li> <li>Capacity of OSSUP to set research agenda.</li> <li>Advocacy for strengthened support to public breeding programmes.</li> </ul>



## 2. Strengthening livelihoods for in-situ conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture project

Country focus: Zimbabwe and Ethiopia

Events 2010	Institutional strengthening	Capacity building	
		Partners	Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consortium formation for project proposal IT PGRFA Call</li> <li>▪ Project staff meeting</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires</li> <li>▪ Farmer Field Schools</li> <li>▪ Supportive research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sub-regional consortia of public, private and civil society partners forged</li> <li>▪ Includes participants from NARS</li> <li>▪ Increases visibility of primary counterparts in communities and enhances trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotion of strategy development on climate change adaptation at community level</li> <li>▪ Improves analytic and planning capacities in primary counterpart organizations</li> <li>▪ Increases insights in what drives farmers' participation in field schools and how farmers perceive climate change events</li> <li>▪ Development of climate change-focused modules in participatory plant breeding curriculum</li> <li>▪ Providing feedback on effectiveness of approaches to primary counterparts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Joint proposal development based on early results in DGIS-Wageningen UR Partnership project</li> <li>▪ Planning of most appropriate supportive research and discussion of early research results</li> <li>▪ Analysis of questionnaire results</li> <li>▪ Appropriate starting materials sourced and performance studied on-farm, selections and crossings performed.</li> <li>▪ PhD student involved in overall monitoring and evaluation of approaches</li> </ul>

### 3. Improving Livelihoods and Resource Management in the Central Rift Valley of Ethiopia

Country focus: Ethiopia

Events	Institutional strengthening	Capacity building	
		Partners	Research
Inception workshop in Addis Ababa in 2008.	Creation of local ownership and identification of priority areas for research and development.	EIAR, HoA-REC, local universities and various NGOs (e.g. IDE, SEDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of two sandwich PhD projects.</li> </ul>
Various meetings with Master Plan developers in 2008-2009	Link to national policy to develop Master Plan for the entire Rift Valley in Ethiopia	HALCROW, GIRD and MoWR	Exchange of data and information on the study area
Participation to various meetings of stakeholder platform CRV in 2006-2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informed multi-stakeholder platform</li> <li>Create awareness on environmental degradation</li> <li>Identify R&amp;D needs and options together with stakeholders</li> </ul>	HoA-REC, Intermon, Oxfam, IDE, SEDA, SNV, OIDA, NACID, ECWP, EWHNS, Oromiya Protection Agency, Addis Ababa University, Haramaya University, Fish for All, RCWDA	Eight MSc. theses of WU and local students a.o. on water use efficiency in smallholder irrigation, opportunities for tourism, assessment of ecosystem services, options for dairy development and rain water harvesting
Two missions with informal meetings to prepare participatory land use planning workshop in 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs assessment for land use planning workshop.</li> <li>Creating local ownership for workshop.</li> </ul>	HoA-REC, municipalities, SEDA, Bureaus of MoARD, Intermon-Oxfam, Oromia investment office, MoARD, MoWR, RNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High resolution land use cover study.</li> <li>Development of maps on current land use.</li> </ul>
Meetings at MoWR 2006-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raising awareness on falling water tables in the CRV</li> <li>Create transparency on MoWR plans for irrigation expansion and dam construction.</li> </ul>	MoWR and HoA-REC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hydrological study of the CRV</li> <li>Study on risks for salinization of major fresh water resource.</li> </ul>
Participatory multi-stakeholder land use planning workshop 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create awareness on environmental degradation</li> <li>Stimulate partners to think 'out of the box' to develop new initiatives.</li> <li>Identify priority areas for R&amp;D.</li> <li>Create new partnerships (public, private)</li> </ul>	HoA-REC, municipalities, SEDA, Bureaus of MoARD, Intermon-Oxfam, Oromia investment office, MoWR, RNE, Sher, peasant associations, etc. (in total over 30 different local organizations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop report with CDROM containing participatory developed future land use maps.</li> <li>Project plan for implementation of participatory identified R&amp;D areas.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Illegal or incompatible Project The Value Chains for Pro-Poor Development Project

Country focus: Ghana

Events 2010	Institutional strengthening	Capacity building	
		Partners	Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VPA and livelihoods research coordination and policy debate workshop in June 2009 in Wageningen</li> <li>• 2-day seminar on translating research findings on VPA and livelihoods in a policy debate in Accra, Ghana in October 2009</li> <li>• Policy dialogue planned in 2010 in The Hague and Brussels</li> <li>• End-of-project policy dialogue seminar planned in November 2010 up-scaling Ghana experience on VPA/livelihoods to FLEGT/VPA processes in the region</li> </ul>	<p>The linkage between designing a trade instrument aimed to positively impact sustainable forestry and possible (likely) negative implications on people's livelihoods living in and around tropical forests is firmly recognized in forest policy debates in Ghana.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity built at the Ghana Forestry Commission on forest policy analysis and development</li> <li>▪ Capacity built of TBI Ghana staff (eight Community Forestry Workers) to analyze forest and livelihood dimensions and contribute to national policy debates from local perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student involvement (Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya and Dutch) in action research</li> <li>▪ Collaboration with network of universities and research institutes in Europe, Indonesia and Ghana on VPA/livelihoods theme through joint research, workshops and exchange of data through the project website</li> <li>▪ Two PhD students in Ghana involved in project research</li> </ul>