F2F Networking Event for Happy Families of Social Learning

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**Background**

In December 2013 at the Core Group meeting in London we described one of the three main areas of CCSL activity as being “Bringing together communities to practice and advocate social learning methodologies”. Within this activity area, the idea to have a face-to-face event to convene communities of practice related to social learning and produce a tangible product was suggested for the last quarter of 2014. A thumbnail costing of US$125,000 was made on the assumption of piggy-backing on another event. A mixture of networks/organisations and individuals were mentioned as potential participants in the event:

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| --- | --- |
| * Parade CoP * Other CRPs (HT / AAS / Drylands) * CG Gender * CRP Design Process (phase 2) * IDS * FARA * ODI / Rapid / Aid on the Edge * KM4Dev * Knowledge Brokers Forum * Carla, Petra * CIM / GIZ * CARE ALP * Prolinova * IIED * Shamba Shapeup * FAO Family Farming | * Univ of Reading * Oxford * ILRI / CG Cap Dev * UNDP * CC World (Bonn, WCMC, UNEP) * ICT4Ag Ethiopia * Makerere University Hoima IWM (Moses Tenywa, Alex Zizinga, Gerd Foerch) * CARIAA * CSIRO / FSIFS * KMC4CRP 3 * Andy Hall, MS Reed, WWF Andy??, C. Leeuwis * WUR people * Sandbox Yammer Members |

This idea was further developed within the Theory of Change for Activity Area 3[[1]](#footnote-1) which suggests that “the work we are developing in this area is complementing and augmenting other pieces of work, that existing tools, approaches, case studies and insights can fruitfully fuel CCSL, while we can also contribute useful resources and capacities to those other 'akin' actors.” To pursue the ToC’s vision that ‘social learning for climate change, agriculture and food security is scaled up in a qualitative manner’ three main steps were envisaged:

1. Mapping the Field
2. Mapping the Actors
3. Network around Joint Interests

The second and third steps in the ToC have not begun, and can now be brought into focus through the idea of the Face-to-Face Networking event. The first of these, has largely been accomplished in Ewen’s drafting a CCSL Learning Brief ‘The Happy Families of Social Learning’ where he identifies and compares to social learning several more or less related fields of theory / practice:

* Complexity and complex adaptive systems
* Thinking about wicked problems and resilience
* Systems thinking
* Participatory research
* Action research
* Social media networks
* Enterprise 2.0
* Crowdsourcing
* Adult learning
* Communities of practice
* Organizational learning / development
* Knowledge management
* Innovation systems and platforms
* Process/product innovation
* Gender and equity

As it currently stands the theory of change’s outcomes for Activity Area 3 are orientated towards theory and practice and don’t have a specific development impact orientation. Building on suggestions from Philip about the new planning direction of CCAFS to 2019, it is sensible to revisit the ToC and see how this work can be most useful to the new CCAFS flagship programs.

CCAFS is designing flagship programmes to meet eight outcome indicators by 2019. In relation to CCSL, where our work can be most useful appears to be under Flagship 4 Policies and institutions for climate resilient food systems where the first outcome indicator is that:

15 equitable national/subnational food system policies enacted that take into consideration climate smart practices and strategies, informed using knowledge, tools and approaches derived from CCAFS science

This is because in our CCSL work with Makerere Univesity on the Hoima Integrated Watershed Assessment project we have already seen how social learning with communities and other stakeholders can highlight policy and institutional barriers to climate smart agriculture such as land tenure which were not originally in the frame of reference set by the researchers. It is worth noting the climate smart agriculture isn’t a concept restricted to crops, but covers issues of interest to all CGIAR research centres including livestock, fisheries, forest, water and land.

CCAFS has recently published lessons from climate smart agriculture experiences, which highlight an important need that CCSL is well suited to enabling action on. Discussing the need for climate smart agriculture to involve communities and encourage farmers to innovate, the report states that:

Multi-stakeholder participation and active community involvement in project design and development are critical for successful climate-smart agriculture. Innovation by farmers is also essential, but is lacking from the experiences described in the case studies. Practitioners, scientists and policymakers must encourage farmers to become actively engaged in innovation for climate-smart agriculture.[[2]](#footnote-2)

As the Hoima experience showed, farmers with insecure tenure “have little interest in awareness, trainings on proper agronomic practices, or how to implement adaptation measures like improved seeds or appropriate technologies”. A CCSL approach is suggesting that land tenure can be a significant blocking or enabling factor in farmer innovation.

The Core Group meeting in Naivasha is a opportunity to further explore the idea of organising a face-to-face event in 2015 around these issues and this concept note sets out some further thinking around the impact, outcomes, outputs and inputs needed should we wish to take this activity forward.

**Impact**

Climate smart practices and strategies considered within equitable national / subnational food system policies include more farmer innovation because the behaviour of practitioners, scientists and policy makers now encourages farmers to become actively engaged.

**Outcomes**

Tools are available that enable farmers, scientists, practitioners and policymakers to collaboratively learn about policy and institutional enablers and constraints to farmer engagement in innovation for climate smart agriculture.

**Outputs**

Representatives of communities / networks related to social learning have packaged tools from their collective expertise that enable collaborative learning about policy and institutional factors in farmer innovation for climate smart agriculture.

**Inputs**

1. Mapping the actors in communities / networks related to social learning (within and beyond the CGIAR) with expertise in policies, institutions and farmer innovation, building on the Happy Families learning brief, the Sandbox members and wiki resources. A matrix will be elaborated to plot possible objectives or joint interests with the CCSL group, paving the way for the next input
2. Identify an existing event in 2015 that CCSL could collaborate with to organise a 3 day face-to-face event with mapped actors to review, adapt and plan how to package tools that enable collaborative learning about policy and institutional factors in farmer innovation for climate smart agriculture
3. With support from CCAFS Communications team, willing participants from the face-to-face event continue working remotely to package the tools

1. Theory of Change for Activity Area 3 - http://ccsl.wikispaces.com/Area3\_Coalition\_Building\_Networking [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. CCAFS (2014), Evidence of Impact: Climate Smart Agriculture in Africa - https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/51721/climate\_smart\_farming\_successes\_Africa.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)