

IPM CRSP Trip Reports

Country Visited: Tajikistan

Dates of Travel: June 4 – 13, 2011

Travelers Names and Affiliations: Linda Racioppi and Zahra Jamal

Purpose of Trip: To attend annual workshop which this year focused on the development of IPM packages and plant diagnostics and to continue work on the Global Gender Theme.

Sites Visited: Dushanbe, Hissor, and Muminabad.

Description of Activities/Observations:

June 6, 2011:

In the morning, Zahra attended the Planning Group Meeting while Linda visited the extension agencies, Agro-Donish and Advisory Information Services. The Planning Group Meeting was helpful and insightful, providing the gender specialists an opportunity (a) to meet with the full team and (b) to learn more about the technical aspects and various components of the IPM packages to be developed as well as the work plan moving forward. It was also very helpful to hear about the other cross-cutting theme, Viruses, which is very different from our own Global Theme (gender). Linda's visit to Agro-Donish and AIN was also productive. Agro-Donish is the main network of agricultural and farmer outreach organizations in Tajikistan. Umed Kasimov described Agro-Donish's activities and how the network operates while Mirzoev Negmat and Aziz Jalalov provided information on the challenges of extension work in Tajikistan. The group asked for materials to help them better serve the country's women farmers and run workshops for women, which we will try to provide.

In the first part of the afternoon, we attended the plenary sessions for the IPM CRSP Workshop. We squeezed in one more meeting in the late afternoon, with Shodiboy Jabbarov at Swiss Development Cooperation. Mr. Jabbarov was responsible for the recently discontinued community development program, one of

whose remit was agricultural development (farm to fork) in Tajikistan. We wanted to talk with someone at SDC because they have taken an integrated approach to gender issues in all their programs, something that we are trying to achieve in the IPM CRSP Central Asia, and could therefore provide us with some insights into how best to work with farming women and men. Mr. Shodiboy emphasized the need to understand national and local contexts, to be flexible about programming and training, targeting men and women separately as needed, and to get the support of local officials and leaders to advance gender equity issues.

June 7-8, 2011:

We attended the IPM CRSP Workshop, which brought together faculty and students from a range of partner institutions in the United States, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. As gender specialists on the team, the workshop gave us an opportunity to hear more about the key components of pest diagnostics and their critical role in this project. We also gained insights into plant pathology, entomology, virology, especially with respect to the three key crops. We especially enjoyed observing the practicums both for our own benefit and to see the ways in which hands-on learning is important for the students. It seemed to us that the practicums were also a hit with students. We wonder if they might have been interested in a session on gender issues in IPM as well. The team might consider adding a pilot gender component at next year's workshop, along with an evaluation so that we could gauge its effectiveness.

June 9 and June 11, 2011:

Site Visits— We were prepared to run gender awareness workshops, as stipulated by the GGT director at VT, for each of the IPM sites. We developed these workshops for women and children of different age cohorts. When it was indicated that running the workshops would not be desirable, we quickly revised our plans, generating an interview protocol. At each site, therefore, we interviewed women farmers to ascertain their perceptions of (a) access to groups and information related to IPM issues, (b) decision-making about crops and seed selection; (c) planting and harvesting processes; (d) pests and their management, including through the use of local [*narodnyi*] plants; (e) capital; (f) land rights; (g) general educational, legal, economic and social contexts; and (h) gender relations in the home as they affect IPM technology uptake.

The women farmers with whom we spoke this trip, like those with whom we spoke on last year's trip, highlighted that they face a triple burden (care for family, household, and field), speak primarily Tajik, and do not access what little extension services exist since the males in their households do so. The men often do not communicate the content and logic of what they learn in extension services to the women in the household. For example, one woman farmer in Hissor explained that all pests were 'bad' while the males working on her farm were able to explain the logic of beneficial pests. Another example from Hissor is that men on the farm said that seeds came from a certified seed institute in Dushanbe, whereas the farm owner, a woman, said that the seeds came from a relative in Dushanbe. It is not clear whether a relative is in fact a certified seed dealer, or whether there is a discrepancy in understanding of the source of inputs (and presumably other aspects of the supply chain) between a male leader and a female leader working the same farm. Sometimes men seem to communicate what needs to happen, but not why. For instance, several women farmers in Muminabad knew that they should grow certain plants next to target crops, and that crops should be rotated, but they did not know why.

Women farmers at both sites were interested in extension services being offered solely for women in Tajik close to their farms/homes given that their time is limited and the males in their homes do not assist them with domestic chores. They were interested in seminars, practical workshops, and brochures. Those who have cell phones said that if a useful educational tool were developed for them to access through their phones, they would consider it. This insight should be investigated further to consider who in the home controls use of the cell phone (if it is the men, then women may not be able to access the intended education), how much excess capital farmers have to purchase data plans, etc.

While women and men explained that decision-making and seed selection were family decisions led by the eldest members of the family, women also indicated that it was often the men in the home who took the lead in decision making. Women explained that men, women, and children all took part in planting and harvesting. Where able-bodied men were available, they took care of irrigation and heavy-duty tasks. Where men were not available, women took on these tasks, but often faced challenges in doing so, leading to water loss and water management challenges.

The women farmers particularly in Muminabad were keen to highlight a range of local [*narodnyi*] plants, such as *ispand*, *popalak*, and many others, in the

management of pests. In the Muminabad site, they grew these plants very close to the house, which was located within several meters of the field. This might be a point of further investigation for the team's scientists to identify which plants are being used, in what ways, how they may interact with IPM technologies, whether they may attract beneficial or harmful pests, etc. The local NGO called Zan va Zamin (meaning "Women and Land") works with local women farmers across the country, including in Muminabad, on pest management and other IPM related issues. It may be helpful to engage them in a conversation with our team's scientists.

As described in last year's trip report, the poverty level in the country remains around 55-70% depending on the source of information. Among the hardest hit are women. The impacts are felt in their daily decisions of what to grow (e.g. cash crops like garlic and rice), how to spend scant resources (including on healthcare, education, and taking goods to market). Some women farmers in Hissor explained that they had access to credit and loans when necessary and that the interest rates were not too high to preclude this from being a viable possibility in times of need. They said that in the event that they did not have the money to purchase inputs, they would take out a loan to do so. It is not clear how widely this view of credit and loans is held among women farmers generally. This should be investigated further.

Property ownership appears to occur through a patrilineal and patriarchal view of social life. Women in the Muminabad site indicated that they own land and held titles to it. But when questioned further, they admitted that the titles were in their husbands' names. As we learned last year, holding of land title sometimes restricted women's access to organizations providing support to farmers (who targeted membership based on land certificates). In many cases, the males in these areas have migrated abroad for work, making local decision complicated. Those women who do have land titles in their name are by and large widowers.

Insights into the broader social, economic, legal context as well as gender relations in the home as related to IPM technology uptake has not changed significantly from last year's trip report.

Because focus groups of women were not assembled, a female translator with adequate skills could not be found and there was little time to fully engage with farmers, the effectiveness of information gathering was reduced. Interruptions, no doubt inevitable with a group of our size, also affected the quality and integrity of our research.

June 6 and June 10, 2011:

Organizational Contacts and Research on This Visit — In addition to the interviews undertaken at the farm sites, we visited with four organizations that engage in agricultural extension work among women farmers in Tajikistan: AgroDonish, AIN, Zan va Zamin, and Swiss Development Cooperation. The purpose of these visits was to get a better sense of the broader context and the challenges faced by women farmers, to understand issues on the ground for agricultural extensions services, and to ascertain the range of services currently being provided to women farmers. The meetings with Agro-Donish, AIN, and SDC are described above, on June 6. The meeting with Zan va Zamin, the only women's organization working exclusively with farm women, took place on the afternoon of June 10; this organization has the potential to be one of the most productive contacts of the past two years. We met with Ms. Dilafroz, program assistant for Flora and Fauna, as well as with Ms. Negora, and Ms. Sitara, staff members of the organization. (Unfortunately, the director was out of town in GBAO.) Zan va Zamin works in several areas of the country, including some localities of the IPM CRSP project. Prior to the land 'privatization', the group addressed certification issues so that women could understand their rights in the process. However, they have also worked for a decade on providing information and training on agriculture, including biological pest management.

We believe that information gleaned from these connections is an important resource for this project. Indeed, we identified other organizations that are directly relevant to the work of IPM CRSP Central Asia, such as MSDSP, FAO, Gender and Development and Zar Zamin. Due to time constraints and other priorities identified by the project, we were unable to follow up. If the IPM team thinks it would be beneficial, we could do so with these and other organizations.

June 12, 2011:

Team roundtable on cross-cutting themes—This final activity took place on the last day of our stay. It provided us with the opportunity to discuss the work of the Global Gender Theme team with other team members. We discussed key issues, constraints, and effects of gender issues and IPM in Tajikistan, based on bibliographic, ethnographic and other forms of research that we conducted since May 2010. Our presentation prompted a lively discussion that helped us in thinking about ways in which our observations and research can inform the development of

IPM packages and their uptake in the field. We received excellent feedback and constructive suggestions on how the IPM technologies and insights can shape our work plan for 2011-2012.

Training Activities Conducted

Below please find data on participation by gender of each of the activities of the IPM CRSP Team for the week of June 6 – 12.

Program type (workshop, seminar, field day, short course, etc.)	Date	Audience	Number of Participants		Training Provider (US university, host country institution, etc.)	Training Objective
			Men	Women		
IPM Planning Meeting	June 6	17	12	5	MSU, ICARDA, Kansas State, UC Davis	To discuss current and future IPM direction and activities.
IPM CRSP Plenary	June 7	113	77	36	Plenary	
Introduction to the Workshop: Discussion	June 7	40	30	10	Lecture by Dr. Bird	
Lecture: Basic Plant Pathology	June 7	45	23	22	Lecture by Dr. Kennelly	
Lecture: Basic Entomology (Entomology 101)	June	31	19	12	Lecture by Dr. Pett	
Diagnosing diseases caused by nematodes	June 7	54	37	17	Lecture by Dr. Bird	
Diagnosis of fungal and bacterial pathogens	June 8	27	12	15	Lecture by Dr. Kennelly	
Fungi and Bacteria	June 8	77	32	45	Lecture by Dr. Kennelly	
Diagnosis of Viruses	June 8	77	32	45	Lecture by Dr. Rayapati	
View and discuss arthropod specimens	June 8	42	26	16	Lecture by Dr. El-Bouhssini	
Bacteria and Fungi Lab I*: 1. Microscopy and culture techniques for fungi and bacteria.	June 8	23	8	15	Dr. Kennelly	
Insects Lab II*	June 8	17	10	7	Drs. El-Bouhssini and Pett	

Virus Lab III*: Serology and other techniques for viruses	June 8	16	6	10	Dr. Rayapati	
Nematodes Lab IV*: Microscopic ID of nematodes	June 8	19	10	9	Dr. Bird	
Field visit --Hissor	June 9	38	22	16		
Virus Lecture -- TNU	June 10	67	27	40	Dr. Rayapati	
Meeting with UCA	June 10	28	18	10		
IPM Packages Roundtable	June 10	14	9	5		
Field visit -- Muminabad	June 11	12	10	2		
Cross-cutting themes roundtable	June 12	8	5	3	Presenters: Drs. Jamal, Racioppi and Rayapati	

Suggestions, Recommendations, and/or Follow-up Items:

We might consider the following actions to improve the integration of gender into the project:

- At future workshops, the Global Themes might be discussed at the Planning Group Meeting on the first day. This approach would help to ensure that the cross-cutting themes are addressed throughout the week in an integrated manner and would increase the likelihood that all team members could be present.
- Because we learned so much at this workshop, we believe it might be useful to set up regular communication between cross-cutting theme leads and the technical specialists during the year.
- Concerning the delivery and uptake of the IPM packages, it would be helpful if we could find a way to have sustained access to farm communities (beyond the demonstration site) to understand specific contexts (e.g: attitudes towards extension workers/specialists, perceptions of pests and attitudes towards pesticide use, financial constraints on technology up-take, and which local [*narodnyi*] plants are used for pest management and other purposes and the ways in which these uses may interact with IPM technologies).

- The project may need to engage community leaders to encourage women's participation in IPM training, and it may need to run gender-sensitive training session. For example, it could use a Tajik woman trainer (or at least a woman translator) for demonstrations; it could hold women-only training and accommodate their schedules and household demands in delivering training. It might also be useful to have activities for children related to the project planned since they are also farm workers.
- Finally, if it would be useful, we could develop a summer workshop that focuses explicitly on gender issues in IPM/agricultural development or a module within an existing IPM short course. Since these courses target local agricultural specialists, this approach could provide a way to begin to build capacity in gender expertise among those working in the field who best know the technologies and their application.

List of Contacts Made:

Name	Title/Organization	Contact Info (address, phone, email)
Umed Kasimov	Agro-Donish	35 Shota Rustaveli Street
Mirzoev Negmat and Aziz Jalalov	Advisory Information Network	35 Shota Rustaveli Street
Shodiboy Jabbarov	Swiss Development Cooperation	Tolstoy Street 3
Muhabbat Mamadalieva	Zan va Zamin	21 Sherozi St., Dushanbe 2332934