



**International Crops Research Institute
for the Semi-Arid Tropics**

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The story behind the success

Colombo, Sri Lanka (25 November 2013) – Billions of dollars are spent every year on scientific research for noble causes such as lifting people out of poverty and caring for the environment – sometimes successfully and sometimes not. A new study helps identify what was critical in leading to the successful adoption of scientific research results.

Scientific research is typically well documented along with analysis of the impact of the research. However, what is not often documented are the efforts made by the scientific team to stimulate uptake of the research results – the story behind the success.

Ten case studies were selected to identify and analyze the uptake efforts from some of the most significant successes led by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), a research organization focused on water for agricultural development. These case studies were from nine countries and covered a wide range of issues from, for example, the sustainable use of wetlands to technologies for better on-farm water management, and restoring the quality of drinking water after the tsunami.

“The study recognized that research organizations need to support uptake efforts and approaches,” noted Mr. Jeremy Bird, Director General, IWMI. “And these need to be built into the research planning stage. This is why IWMI created new positions especially to focus on the uptake of the scientific research results. However, it was important to integrate the uptake efforts into our research and not to treat this as a separate activity.”

“We see it as important not to place a barrier between scientific research and the uptake-development efforts. The two need to work together, which means building relationships for partnering for uptake,” said Dr. William Dar, Director General, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), also an international scientific research organization focused on research for development. “And the study showed the importance of relationships not always being project-based, but long-term strategic commitments. It was also recognized that this requires time, resources and guidance given to scientists to nurture relationships – something which ICRISAT strongly supports.”

Some of the other efforts identified as being important in leading to the uptake of research recommendations were ensuring that the issues were high on the agenda of the stakeholders, and building the capacity of the stakeholders so that they had the knowledge and skills to adopt the solutions. Both, targeted and mass communications, were useful in different instances.

Working with early adopters (innovators) also showed that this could lead to greater success, earlier. This targeted approach combined with a participatory approach, where

researchers work closely with stakeholders in developing the solutions, was seen to be effective.

“This study was based mainly on interviews with the scientists involved in the research. The scientists were typically in close communication with the adopters of the research results, and held valuable insights into what triggered the uptake of the scientific research recommendations,” said Joanna Kane-Potaka, Director of Strategic Marketing and Communication, ICRISAT, and author of this report.

IWMI and ICRISAT are two of the 15 international agricultural research for development centers that form part of CGIAR, a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future.

A full pdf of the book can be accessed and downloaded here:

http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/Publications/Books/PDF/the_story_behind_the_success.pdf

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The **International Water Management Institute (IWMI)** is a non-profit, scientific research organization focusing on the sustainable use of water and land resources in developing countries. It is headquartered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, with regional offices across Asia and Africa. IWMI works in partnership with governments, civil society and the private sector to develop scalable agricultural water management solutions that have a real impact on poverty reduction, food security and ecosystem health. www.iwmi.org

The **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT)** is a non-profit, non-political organization that conducts agricultural research for development in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa with a wide array of partners throughout the world. Covering 6.5 million square kilometers of land in 55 countries, the semi-arid tropics have over 2 billion people, and 644 million of these are the poorest of the poor. ICRISAT innovations help the dryland poor move from poverty to prosperity by harnessing markets while managing risks – a strategy called Inclusive Market-Oriented Development (IMOD). ICRISAT is headquartered in Patancheru near Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India, with two regional hubs and five country offices in sub-Saharan Africa. It is a member of the CGIAR Consortium. www.icrisat.org For scientific information: <http://EXPLOREit.icrisat.org>

CGIAR is a global research partnership that unites organizations engaged in research for sustainable development. CGIAR research is dedicated to reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition, and ensuring more sustainable management of natural resources. It is carried out by the 15 centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in close collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector. www.cgiar.org