

Tips and guidelines for planning CDAIS national policy dialogue event

National policy dialogue event

As part of the CDAIS policy dialogue, the eight CDAIS pilot countries will organize **a national policy dialogue event in 2018**. This may be a half-day event, to attract high-level participants, followed by a process by which recommendations are turned into an Action Plan.

This activity builds on policy consultations at niche level, facilitated by a policy consultant, which analyse challenges and obstacles in the enabling environment for innovation in each value chain. This leads to the identification, priority setting and selection of policy issues to focus on, as well as identification of challenges in implementing policies.

The policy consultant also conducts a policy analysis at national level, including review of relevant policy documents and identification of policy actors of relevance to agricultural innovation systems. The findings of the study, along with preliminary recommendations are presented at the national policy dialogue event.

Some policy issues can be addressed locally, among value chain (niche) partnerships, local government and other stakeholders. Others require action at the national level, for example to review government policies, improve implementation of existing policies, strengthen multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, or creating other incentives and capacities for innovation. This national policy dialogue event will do just that.

To facilitate the organization of the event, and to harmonize the approach among CDAIS countries, the CDAIS team has prepared the guidelines below. *Note*: this is a starting point, to be adapted in a flexible way, as needed, in each country to fit their unique policy, organizational and cultural setting.

Objectives

The objectives of the CDAIS policy dialogue are the following:

1. To reach *a common understanding* of the relevance of innovation and role of policy development and institutional issues in promoting agricultural innovation
2. To *strengthen the capacity of stakeholders* involved in the innovation niche/partnership to influence strategic and political processes relevant to their objectives
3. To *recommend improvements* in the institutional mechanisms and enabling environment, that promote agricultural innovation in each country and for the selected value chains

Contributing to the above, the specific objectives of the national policy dialogue event are:

1. To review and validate results of the CDAIS's projects' policy consultations and analysis of institutional framework and enabling environment for agricultural innovation
2. To agree on policy recommendations and develop an action plan to promote agricultural innovation
3. To foster national-level multi-stakeholder collaboration and capacity development on agricultural innovation through platforms and other mechanisms

Primary target group

Policy makers: both actors who are formally responsible for policy making (like, ministries, governments, political parties, parliaments) and those who are actively influencing and participating in policy making (like, farmer or business organizations, NGOs, influential opinion leaders and other).

Inputs

Earlier CDAIS activities at niche and national levels bring several inputs to the policy event, including:

- Draft report on niche level policy consultations + synthesis of policy issues for national level dialogue (by policy consultant)
- One short note per niche on emerging policy lessons (presented by niche representatives)
- Feedback from CDAIS Steering Committee/Technical Advisory Committee on preliminary recommendations and draft action plan

Expected outputs/results

- Policy recommendations and action plan on improving the institutional framework/enabling environment for agricultural innovation in niche partnerships and beyond
- Final report on CDAIS policy dialogue in the country (Ref to **report outline**)
- Policy brief on improving the enabling environment for agriculture innovation (Ref to **template for policy brief**)
- Links between niche partnerships and national platforms/mechanisms to follow up the action plan and develop capacity to engage in strategic and policy processes

Draft programme outline for national policy dialogue event

Duration: 1/2 day

Participation: Niche representatives, national government, other relevant stakeholders

Facilitation: External facilitator, in collaboration with Policy consultant, CDAIS national team, CDAIS Coordination Unit,

Draft programme:

Session	Expected results	Suggested methods/approaches	Duration
1. Opening session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting the scene• Good relations with national government• Getting to know each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome address of government hosting the event• Welcome address by FAO• Very short self-introduction of participants (name, stakeholder group/organization) <p><i>NOTE: Opportunity for media presence</i></p>	30 min

2. Introduction: the enabling environment for agricultural innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with CDAIS and the Common Framework on Capacity Development for AIS • Shared understanding of government policies, programmes and initiatives on agricultural innovation • Appreciation of the role on national multi-stakeholder platforms and mechanisms for improving the enabling environment for innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by national CDAIS team • Presentation by government representative • 	10 min 10 min
3. Presentation of results of CDAIS policy consultations and analysis at niche and national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validated list of major policy issues that hinder agriculture innovation • Shared understanding of earlier CDAIS work of relevance to policy environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations of each value chain/niche, including challenges and obstacles in their external environment (niche representatives) • Response from policy makers after each niche presentation • Presentation of draft report on policy issues related to agricultural innovation (policy consultant) 	60 min (4 x10 presentation + 5 min response) 20 min
4. Validation of priority policy issues and options for addressing them, to accelerate agricultural innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy options identified and assessed • Joint understanding of what the policy options are and how these could be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work, preferably in groups that mix different stakeholders Each group works on a small number of priority policy issues assigned to them. Good if two groups work on the same issue, for broader perspective on the issue. • Plenary presentations and discussion 	60min
5. Recommendations and action plan for implementing policy options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed policy recommendations • Agreed action plan • Suggestions on how niche partnership could/should engage in policy processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenary discussion, led by facilitator 	45 min
6. Closing session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of workshop results • Next steps of the policy dialogue at niche and national levels • Feedback on workshop results and process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of workshop) • Closing remarks 	20 min

Preparations and follow-up

Presentations by niche representatives and policy consultant

A team of representatives from each niche (4-6 persons would be a good number) should arrive at least one day before the policy event. The CDAIS team will organize a 'mini-workshop' focused on assisting and coaching the niche representatives to prepare good presentations for the policy dialogue the next day, and to rehearse the final presentation. (draft PowerPoint template is available).

Similar coaching should be provided for the policy consultant, to ensure that the presentation communicates the findings well.

Action plans, niche level

At the policy dialogue, recommendations and action plan will largely focus on the national level. In addition, and against the background of the results of the national policy dialogue, it is important to take this opportunity to prepare similar action plans that address issues that can be tackled locally.

We propose that the afternoon after the policy dialogue is used for a group work on niche-level action plans. Some stakeholders who attend the morning's policy dialogue can stay on, to bring additional strengths to the working groups.