

CD interventions tool



Tool factsheet

IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON FRAMEWORK ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (CD) FOR AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION SYSTEMS (AIS)

This factsheet is part of a series outlining tools and approaches to promote more effective capacity development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS). These tools and approaches put to use the principles of the Common Framework of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), a G20 initiative. Some of these tools are applied through the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project, funded by the EU and jointly implemented by Agrinatura and FAO in collaboration with national partners in Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos, Rwanda. New tools are proposed to be used at different stages of the CD for AIS cycle in similar CD for AIS projects. Since 2018 FAO implements a Capacity Development for AIS project in El Salvador, funded by the Italian Government.

Background

Capacity development for AIS encompasses empowering people, strengthening organizations, institutions, networks and multi-stakeholder processes as well as sharpening the enabling policy environment interdependently and based on assessed needs, in line with the TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development (CD) for Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS). In the context of innovation partnerships, the design of comprehensive capacity development interventions aimed at strengthening functional capacities is a crucial phase of the CD for AIS cycle.

After the visioning exercise and following the capacity needs assessment, actors of the multi-stakeholder innovation partnership jointly discuss and reach consensus about ways capacities of the partnership can be enhanced to ultimately contribute to the strengthening of the AIS.

Before implementation can start, individuals and organizations need to clearly state the vision (goal), priority objectives and expected outcomes of the partnership as a whole. This based on the capacity strengths as well as gaps identified during the capacity assessment together with defining contextualized activities to comprehensively strengthen capacities.

This tool is designed to provide an overview of the different options in terms of capacity development interventions, the innovation partnership can consider while developing the action plan.

¹ These capacities are needed for an individual or organization to work effectively. Examples for developing functional capacities are provided in the Guidance note on Operationalization of the TAP Common Framework, page 19, Table 4.1 and include, among others: system thinking; multi stakeholder analysis; gender and diversity; theory of change; team building; listening skills; conflict resolution; leadership skills; emotional intelligence; participatory methodologies.



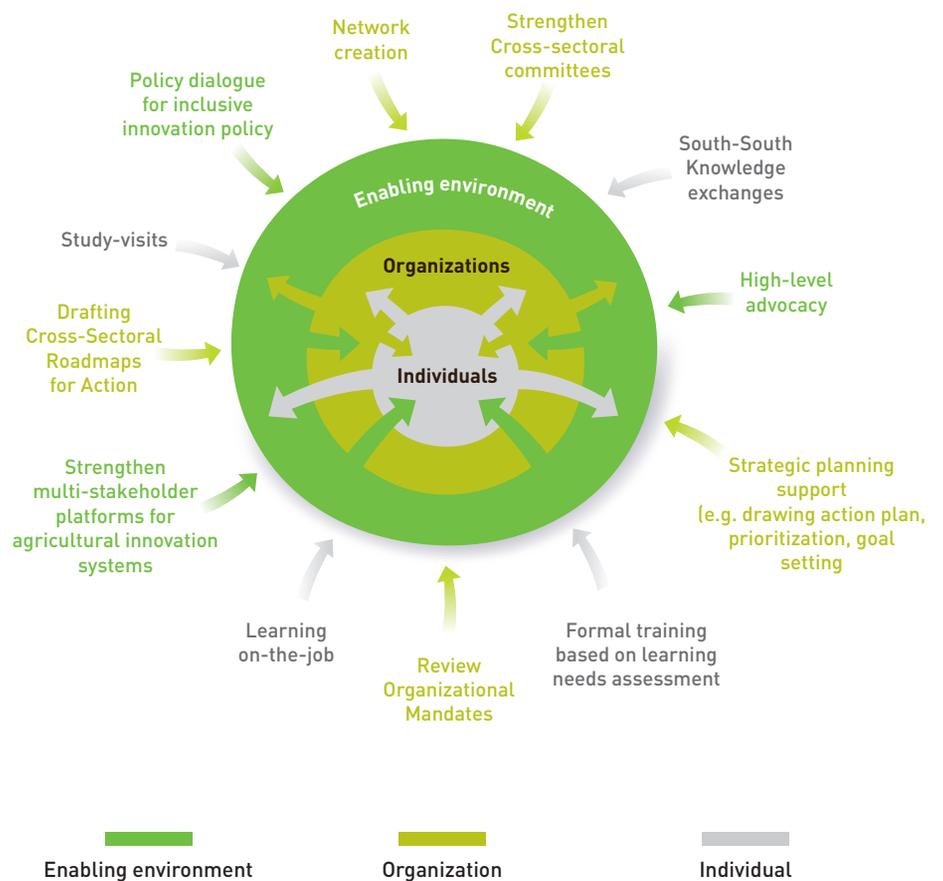
The interventions proposed are based on the CDAIS experience and the [FAO CD materials](#) and include a mix of diverse activities, actions and processes aimed at addressing the three levels of capacity development (i.e. individual, organizational and the enabling environment) as well as both functional and technical capacity gaps.

The entry point of CD intervention is the innovation partnership which is composed by actors (individuals) who also represent organizations, networks and, in most cases, local government. Therefore, although the immediate level of intervention could be perceived at individual level, emphasis should be put also on the other two levels, given that the innovation partnership provides a space for linking organizations and fostering dialogue with policy makers.

Purpose of the study

This tool provides a set of common capacity development interventions (a menu) for the innovation partnerships, organizations and enabling environment levels.

The figure below illustrates a combination of different CD options across three CD dimensions:



Source:FAO Capacity Development

The **three dimensions** are described as follows:

DIMENSION	AREAS	OBJECTIVE/GOALS
Individual	Awareness, Understanding, Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills.	Understanding the importance of the AIS; Strengthened functional skills of the actors.
Organizational and institutional	Functioning and Performance of organizations and institutions including mandates; Terms of References (TORs); information sharing; coordination; collaboration; budget and funding; Multi-Stakeholder processes.	Cross-sectoral coordination strengthened through multi-sector innovation platforms.
Enabling environment	Governance; institutional linkages; implicit and explicit rules; laws and policies; political economy.	National agricultural innovation policies and regulations reviewed and institutional incentives set up.



How to use the tool

The table below can be used as a reference “menu” of possible CD interventions based on the assessed needs to support country teams to strategize on most appropriate CD interventions. The CD interventions derive from the needs expressed during the capacity needs assessments. For example, the following needs emerged in the CDAIS assessments: proposal writing and resource mobilization; record keeping and documenting; negotiation; leadership; collaboration; application of standards in agriculture; market information; skills in specific technical issues (i.e. land; inputs; processing); management skills; collaboration; networking, strengthening multi-stakeholders partnerships².

While planning capacity development initiatives, it is recommended to apply the following main steps of the FAO Good Learning practices for effective capacity development, [Learning Module 2](#)):

- Assess the context and needs
- Select and deliver the delivery modes (refer to the table below)
- Monitor and evaluate the CD initiative

² More information on how to increase effectiveness and performance of multi-stakeholders platforms are available in the Committee of Food Security (CFS), High Level Panel of Experts Report on Multi-stakeholders partnerships: <http://www.fao.org/3/CA0156EN/CA0156en.pdf>

Overview of CD for AIS interventions

AIS LEVEL	HOW? INTERVENTION*	TO WHAT 4+1 CAPACITIES THE INTERVENTION REFERS	EXAMPLE OF THE APPLICATION
<p>Individual/actors</p>	<p>On-the-job learning (including coaching) based on effective learning practices</p>	<p>Capacity to Collaborate</p>	<p>During the Capacity Needs assessment the actors realized that they were lacking some key soft skills (functional capacities) that prevented them to acquire knowledge and technical skills. In particular the members of the innovation partnership needed to strengthen their ability to negotiate better prices for inputs and to better plan and manage their businesses. Negotiation skills training modules and practical sessions with a mentor were designed. Business management training sessions were also delivered and the innovation partnership was assisted to develop a business plan.</p>
	<p>Exposure/study visits (e.g. from one farmers' organization to another)</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process/ Navigate complexity</p>	
	<p>Technical advisory support by rural advisory services/ extension</p>	<p>Capacity to Collaborate</p>	
	<p>Training on business planning and management</p>	<p>Technical Capacities</p>	
	<p>Training on understanding group dynamics</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process</p>	
	<p>Technical advisory support by rural advisory services/ extension</p>	<p>Technical Capacities</p>	
<p>Organization/institutional + networks + multi-stakeholder</p>	<p>Creation of multi-stakeholder processes</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process/ Navigate complexity</p>	<p>The network analysis done during the capacity needs assessment and interviews with staff of key organizations involved in the innovation partnership highlighted that those organizations lacked overall coordination and information sharing. Therefore the project team helped the organizations in the review of their mandates, communication, knowledge sharing, inter and intra coordination.</p>
	<p>Strengthen innovation partnerships (platforms)</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process/ Navigate complexity</p>	
	<p>Training module on Internal and external communication</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process /Capacity to reflect and learn</p>	
	<p>Optimizing organizational structures</p>	<p>Navigate complexity</p>	
	<p>Coaching and mentoring of trainers</p>	<p>Capacity to reflect and learn</p>	
<p>System/Enabling Environment</p>	<p>Review of existing policies and legal framework addressing agricultural innovation</p>	<p>Capacity to reflect and learn</p>	<p>During the capacity needs assessment and project implementation, actors of the innovation partnerships reported several constraints and challenges related to policies, regulations and generic institutional constraints. These challenges could not be dealt through interventions targeting individual capacity strengthening nor through organizational assessments. These bottlenecks needed the involvement of policy actors at local level and often also at national level. Consultations at both levels were organized to discuss major issues affecting the enabling environment. This resulted in the formulation of recommendations for actions by various departments and ministries: identification of permanent locations for selling organic vegetables; access to quality seeds/breeds at local level; facilitate access to loans with suitable conditions for farmers.</p>
	<p>Policy consultations at local level</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process</p>	
	<p>National Policy dialogue process involving innovation partnership stakeholders and decision makers</p>	<p>Capacity to engage in strategic and political process</p>	

* These interventions are associated to specific capacity needs in this table as they mostly address those gaps. However the facilitators and project team members would need to assess if could be desirable for other capacity needs.



Conclusion

In the Capacity Development Strategy phase, this tool can help facilitators to have an overview of the different options in terms of capacity development interventions the innovation partnership can consider.

It is important to note that a combination of different CD interventions is key to strengthen the partnership and ultimately the AIS. Although individual capacity strengthening is the most immediate and measurable intervention, the other two levels are equally important and should not be neglected to achieve more sustainable results.

The table proposed should not be seen as prescriptive: facilitators should understand clearly the gaps and through dialogue, observation and joint reflection with the innovation actors, select the most suitable combination of CD interventions.





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For further information

Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP):

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Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation

Systems Project (CDAIS): <http://cdais.net>

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Common Framework products:



*Conceptual
Background*



*Guidance Note on
Operationalization*



*Synthesis
Document*

*The implementation of the TAP Action Plan is supported by the EU-funded project
Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS).*

*The Common Framework documents are also available in French and Spanish
on the Common Framework pages of TAPipedia.*



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