

Plant genetic resources and seeds: enhancing capacities for climate change adaptation

India, 31 October - 18 November 2011



Course focus

Climate change threatens the food security of resource poor, subsistence farmers located in marginal environments. Although the green revolution boosted global food production, at the local level, benefits to small-scale farmers were limited. We must learn from this and look for complementary ways to work with those farmers who are now facing climate change. Rather than focus entirely on technology development and dissemination, innovative processes must be designed to enhance the adaptive capacities of small-scale farming communities. With experience using genetic diversity and through learning, small-scale farmers may become more responsive in their struggle to adapt to change.

On-farm management: achievements

The Second State of the World Report on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (FAO, 2010) indicates that since 2000, participatory approaches increasingly are used to implement on-farm conservation projects. It further identifies LI-BIRD in Nepal and the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in India as pioneers in promoting the on-farm management of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA). While this approach to the conservation and use of PGRFA is becoming increasingly adopted by NGOs, further mainstreaming within national programmes is needed.

Community Biodiversity Management and resilience

Community Biodiversity Management (CBM) emerged as a strategy to realize on-farm management of PGRFA. The strategy strengthens the capacity of rural communities to make decisions on the conservation and use of biodiversity in order to secure access to and control over their resources. In addition, CBM has the potential to build the capacity of local communities to make their own decisions on the use of biodiversity responding to change; herewith it becomes an instrument to realize *community based climate adaptation*. CBM, by both promoting the use of diversity and

enhancing communities in their social organization contributes to climate change resilience at the local level.

Aims and objectives

The overall objective of the training programme is to enhance the participants' capabilities to associate CBM as conservation and to use strategies of resilience towards climate change. The programme pays special attention to participatory and multi-stakeholder approaches, which are crucial to making it work. It further places CBM into local, national and international conservation and climate change policy contexts.

Training methods

The training is experience-based and task-oriented. Based on their own knowledge and experience, the participants are resource persons for the course. Senior experts from partner organizations introduce topics, after which participants generally work in small groups using their own work as case studies. The training includes field work in Jeypore district, in a site which is in the process of being recognized as one of the world's genetic resource heritage sites. M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation has been working in this area with tribal communities for more than 20 years. The course concludes with a design exercise, transforming lessons learnt into strategic action plans, in which participants integrate CBM and resilience in their working practice.

Target group

The training programme is designed for professionals who aim to promote the conservation and use of plant genetic resources for agriculture and aspire to link this with climate change adaptation. The professionals targeted originate from political, public, civil, research, education and/or development organizations.



Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have at least a BSc or the equivalent in training and experience
- Have at least three years of professional experience in a relevant field
- Be proficient in English

Programme

The training focuses on following topics:

- Climate change
- Agrobiodiversity
- Community empowerment and resilience
- Conservation strategies
- CBM methodology and practices
- Participatory learning and action research
- Multi-stakeholder processes and social learning
- Genetic resources and climate change policy frameworks

The first part of the training will be implemented at the MSSRF premises in Jeypore, Orissa; the second part is organized at MSSRF headquarters in Chennai.

The organising committee reserves the right to change the programme if necessary.

Partners

The training programme is organized by Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation (CDI, www.cdi.wur.nl/UK) and the Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands (CGN, www.cgn.wur.nl/UK), in cooperation with the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in India (MSSRF, www.mssrf.org) and Local Initiatives for Biodiversity Research and Development in Nepal (LI-BIRD, www.libird.org).

Certificate

Participants will be granted a Certificate of Attendance.

Fees

The fee for the three-week programme is **€3300**. The fee includes administration costs, lecture materials and excursions, but excludes board and lodging and travel expenses. The participants will be accommodated at the guesthouses of MSSRF in Jeypore and Chennai. A budget including all costs will be sent to you upon request.

Application

Interested candidates should apply to Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation for admission to the training. If you are admitted, you will receive an admission letter within a week. In case you are not admitted we will also inform you.

We strongly recommend early application.

For additional information and online application: http://www.cdi.wur.nl/UK/services/Courses/Overview_Courses_2012/

Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation is unable to assist in obtaining financial support. We encourage applicants to search for own funding.

