BTOR SDIP INCEPTION WORKSHOP, CANBERRA, 24-26 FEBRUARY 2014

- Participating organizations: IOD PARC, DFAT, SAWI, CUTS, ACIAR, CSIRO, ICIMOD
- Participation from CUTS: Bipul Chatterjee, Manab Chakraborty, Prithviraj Nath

DAY 1:

Day 1 was mostly about getting to know about what each partner is doing and where and forming an initial common understanding about SDIP

- It started off with a brief introduction to the purposes and processes of the Inception Workshop followed by short presentations from each partner about their work and expectation s from SDIP. (Partner presentations to be sourced from IOD PARC)
- CUTS raised its query about the shared space between SDIP and SATFP (previously TFIP) and flagged that more clarity on this will be welcome. This was later clarified by DFAT that though a more concrete idea about the shared space will emerge in some more time, broadly overlaps are envisaged between the two portfolios at three levels:
  - Engagement of partners in the both the portfolios in terms of overlapping and related areas/issues of interventions
  - SDIP is envisaged to enable SATFP
  - At partner activity level in the two portfolios, though the overlaps will be minimal, but activities in one will inform the other
- This was followed by an exercise by partners to express their understanding of SDIP on the following:
  - What is SDIP
  - What are the risks and challenges
  - What will success look like for each Partner, for DFAT and for each partner & DFAT collectively
- This understanding was to be depicted through pictures and metaphors. All partners prepared charts, pictures and diagrams to illustrate their understanding on the above three points.

- There were discussions on the innovativeness of the portfolio approach. Team DFAT explained that the Portfolio is basically a framework of partners which DFAT is investing in to work collectively towards portfolio goals of SDIP wherein complex adaptive systems will drive development change. It was also discussed that the portfolio wil follow three core principles of partnership:
    - Equity- leading to Respect
    - Transparency- leading to Trust
    - Mutual Benefits – leading to Engagement
- Partners were asked to list out all ongoing/recent projects/initiatives that and indicate the geographical location of such initiatives on a map of South Asia.
- This produced a very interesting output and helped map commonalities across partners in terms of both geography and issue-wise. (photograph attached)
- The map generated a lot of conversations on possible pathways for collaborations, cooperation and synergies between SDIP partners
- A comprehensive diagram was shared on the layers of Development Change that SDIP is attempting. This included the Goals, SDIP targeted Outcomes (necessary conditions), the Domains of Change (Snapshots) and the Points of Portfolio engagement by partners.
- The Long Term Impact/ Goals are:
    - Reduced Energy Poverty: Access to adequate supplies of modern (commercial energy sources)
    - Access to adequate water supplies to service multiple needs
    - Sustained increase in agricultural productivity and farm incomes
- The targeted outcomes are:
    - Accelerated development of large hydropower infrastructure
    - Increasing usage of reliable and repeatable tools and scientific methodologies for water resource management
    - Accelerated uptake of proven climate resilient agricultural practices

Key Takeaways from Day 1:

- Better understanding about SDIP Partners and pathways of possible collaborations between them

- Better understanding about SDIP, especially the Portfolio approach
- Introduction to the layers of Development Change – Goals, Targeted Outcomes, Domains of the Change, Points of Portfolio Engagement

DAY 2:

Day 2 focused on understanding the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework and the "State of Pulse Change"

- The purpose of M&E will be to ensure:
  - continuous improvement in the management of the portfolio, accountability and learning
  - capture & communicate results, track the dynamics of change and demonstrate
  - capture the extent of change which is to be measured against the "Snapshots"
  - capture the pace of change which is to be measured against "Necessary Conditions"
- A Results Framework will be used to "feel the pulse" every 2-3 years
- The partners Annual Dialogue will look at tracking the movements in the change space and form an informed collective view
- It was felt important to:
  - Design a framework to define water security
  - Defining the components of energy security and how each of those components/elements influence reduction in energy poverty
- This was followed by an exercise where partners were asked to list all ongoing/recent projects/ initiatives that have linkages or relevance to the SDIP space/impact areas
- Another exercise was done to list out all important (outside/external to the Portfolio) players in the South Asia region in the water, energy and agriculture space by indicating whether each of them were enablers (positive change in the SDIP perspective) or otherwise. The same was mapped on a geographical map of South Asia.

- The Snapshots were then reviewed and refined by all participants to understand and come to a consensus on the "Necessary Conditions" and "Domains of Change" that are acceptable as a "Baseline" in the water, energy and agriculture space.

- This exercise generated a lot of discussions and debates with regards to definition of water security, elements contributing to positive change towards reduction of energy poverty, etc.

- As an exercise six groups were formed and each group was further divided into two sub-groups to deliberate on a few key "Necessary Conditions" and "Snapshots".

- The discussion on "Necessary Conditions" revolved around reaching a consensus on which are the important /high priority ones, the low priority ones and to add to the existing set if necessary based on their relevance to the SDIP Goals. This session generated interesting inputs, additions and deletion to the lists.

- The deliberations on "Snapshots" additionally dwelt on understanding the extent of "activity" happening around them and the "temperature" surrounding the issue/domain. (Details to be sourced from IOD PARC).

- There were also deliberations on existing and reliable sources of data on both the "Necessary Conditions" and "Domains of Change". Concerns were expressed about lack of gender disaggregated data and it was suggested that primary data collection could supplement whatever limited sources of such gender disaggregated data exist.

SOCIAL NETWORKING ANALYSIS (SNA)

CSIRO discussed the Social Networking Analysis and how that can be used to analyse relationships, level of contact and communication pathways between institutions, people and groups in a network. This helps in understanding both the strong and weak nodes of communication in a particular group or network. It helps identify important people, prospective communication needs and helps in decision making in terms of communications and collaborations. It can be adapted for analyzing a plethora of networks and may be useful to the SDIP portfolio. It was agreed that partners will use the SNA while engaging in the SDIP portfolio which is ultimately expected to help towards better attainment of organisational outcomes of SDIP.

- Better understanding about the framework for M& E
- Better understanding about the portfolio partners take on the Snapshots and Necessary Conditions
- Refining of the Baseline
- Introduction to SNA

DAY 3:

Day 3 focused on the Communication Strategy and the Processes and Practicalities of M&E. It also had the "Open Space Session" where concerns/questions raised by partners during the previous two days of the workshop were deliberated and discussed.

COMMUNICATION:

- The day started with discussions on the communication strategy for SDIP. In addition to the communication strategy note already distributed by DFAT, it was mentioned that it will be important to include DFAT's name as the supporter of the portfolio in formal communications, events, communiqués specifically related to initiatives planned under SDIP. This will also be subject to the quantum of support from DFAT for a particular event/initiative.
- Communication of results will be vital
- It was decided that an Intra-Partner communication platform will be created and hosted by IOD PARC where portfolio partners can add their own partners after due discussions and considerations.
- CUTS proposed that it can host an e-forum for SDIP portfolio partners wherein ideas, initiatives, developments, etc can be shared and discussions can be happen.
- During deliberations later on it was proposed that in addition to the Intra-partner communication platform, there can be periodic newsletters /brief two-pagers for dissemination to policy makers and other key stakeholders.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PORTFOLIO:

- It was felt that the effectiveness of the portfolio with regards to the organizational outcomes could be assessed in terms of how the partnerships are developing around the annual dialogue and what unintended developments are happening around the portfolio (for e.g. explicit partnering amongst the portfolio partners).
- It will also be important to carefully observe the system to understand:
  - o Basis for assessing contribution assuring that the intended change is already happening
  - o Capturing unexpected benefits and consequences
  - o External conversations that are happening around the SDIP space
- The portfolio also needs to facilitate greater complimentarity with other bilateral and global programmes in South Asia
- The portfolio should also support partners (especially for Australian partners) to move from localized to regional activity in South Asia
- It should also help build capacity of partners in the extended network on SDIP issues

EVALUATION:

The following are to be tracked with regard to Evaluation of the portfolio:

- Change in anticipated gains – extent, variability and significance
- Casual factors behind change or lack of change
- Unexpected outcomes
- Process Tracing will also be a useful tool for qualitative analysis by drawing descriptive and casual inference from diagnostic pieces of evidence. This will involve:
  - o Interpretation of diagnostic depending on understanding the context
  - o Capturing periodic Snapshots at specific time/moments of the investment timeline
  - o Characterising the process through appropriate analysis and sequencing

o Supplementing it with quantitative data to generate a fine grained description

Overall the SDIP will look at achieving:

- o Policy and Governance Reforms
- o Developing regional Networks for Policy Dialogue & Coordination
- o Technical Assistance and capacity Building
- o Technology Transfer and Demonstration

OPEN SPACE SESSION:

The Open Session discussed and deliberated on some of the following concerns and questions raised by partners:

- How do we demonstrate SDIP's contribution to Economic Growth?
- How do we leverage partnership linkages between trade and SDIP pillars (e.g. ACIAR/CUTS)?
- Partnering – SDIP includes different types of partners e.g. SAWI: how do we do it
- How do we build on opportunity to link with IAWSTP (India Australia Water Science & Technology Partnership)? Is this something we should do?
- How do we demonstrate impact of multi-disciplinary (i.e. beyond science approaches)?
- How do we ensure coherence of SDIP M& E and Reporting?
- How will partners build flexibility to respond/innovate to finding/experience of SDIP and other partners as SDIP evolves/progresses?
- How do we build linkages and synergies across water/food/energy aspects of SDIP (A key aspect for ACIAR in its SRFSI, agriculture intensification initiatives)?
- What are the anticipated changes in complementary DFAT programs specifically e.g. Australia Awards (scholarships/fellowships)- both current and update on processes?

- How does China fit into the trans-boundary discussions: a key player potentially excluded- do we have the right balance of effectiveness and practicality?

- How can the SDIP partners contribute to building more accurate "framing of the regional challenge (from SDIP perspective) – for building the M&E framework?

- How can Social Network Analysis (SNA) be used within SDIP to improve impact?

- How do we measure the collective impact of SDIP portfolio (i.e. to demonstrate it is more than sum of its individual parts)?

- Is it useful to draw information from the South Asia water Governance (SAWG) program in order to avoid duplication/source data (noting that approach is very different- traditional programming vs SDIP approach)

(Gist of discussions and suggestions to be sourced from IOD PARC)

NEXT STEPS:

DFAT:

- Development of Quality Assessment Indicators (QAI)
- Validation/Refinement of the Monitoring Framework (both development and Organisational Outomes)
- Define Change Path Indicators
- Validation of the Snapshots/ Baseline by end of March 2014
- Contribute towards /Facilitate the Annual Dialogue (to be organized tentatively in August last week)
- Develop and Refine the M&E Strategy (objectives, approach, systems & resources, utility)

Partners:

- Contribute to steps to be taken by DFAT
- Organise/participate/facilitate the Annual Dialogue
- Contribute towards the validation of the Snapshots 9Quick & dirty Diagnostic study for CUTS)

- Contribute ideas and thoughts on the content for Annual Dialogue
- Undertake internal M&E

Key Takeaways from Day 3:

- Better understanding regarding M& E, Communication Strategy
- Better clarity regarding next steps
- Rich discussion on concerns and questions raised by partners