



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

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Trip Report: Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru

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Purpose of Trip: To assess the initiation of the following three SANREM CRSP projects, meet the project teams and their partners, learn about the implementation contexts, and develop linkages with USAID Missions.

- LTR-1: Decentralization Reforms and Property Rights: Potentials and Puzzles for Forest Sustainability and Livelihoods (Bolivia). PI: Elinor Ostrom, Indiana University
- LTR-3: Watershed-based Natural Resource Management in Small-scale Agriculture: Sloped Areas of the Andean Region (Ecuador & Bolivia). PI: Jeffrey Alwang, Virginia Tech
- LTR-4: Adapting to Change in the Andean Highlands: Practices and Strategies to Address Climate and Market Risks in Vulnerable Agro-Eco Systems (Peru & Bolivia). PI: Corinne Valdivia, University of Missouri

Sites Visited:

Ecuador:	INIAP, SigAgro, and EcoCiencia (Moore only), Quito ECOPAR, Quito Illangama and Alumbre Watersheds, Bolivar Province
Bolivia:	PROINPA, PROMIC and CERES Offices, Cochabamba Municipal Government and Market, Tiraque Toralapa Experiment Station, Tiraque Upper, middle and lower watersheds, Tiraque SANREM CRSP Annual Meeting, Cochabamba Climate and Global Change Seminar, La Paz Community of TIM-Ivirgarzama, Tropical Cochabamba (Moore only) Communities of Umala and Ancoraimas, Altiplano (Christie only)
Peru:	IPPS-UNALM, FDA, and CIP Offices, Lima (Moore only) INACET-UNA, Puno (Moore only) Communities of Apopata and Santa Maria (Moore only)

Synopsis of Observations/Activities:

This report is based on observations made during field visits and is not meant as a review of the overall research programs of each project. The three SANREM CRSP Long-Term Research Activities in the Andes have established strong research partnerships and initiated critical research activities. As a result, the SANREM CRSP is becoming recognized as an important research and development actor in the region. We can expect significant findings from each project that will have important implications for the other projects. However, given the multi-country/site nature of this comparative work, completion of early activities has been uneven.

We first met with the LTR-3 Ecuador team and later with their counterparts in Bolivia. In Ecuador, experimental field sites in the Illangama and Alumbre watersheds have been established and baseline data collection completed. Field trials in Ecuador currently focus on varieties, soil fertility management and run-off modeling, while those in Bolivia are focused on varietal and crop demonstrations. This difference is likely due to the greater interaction to date between US and Ecuadorian scientists than with those in Bolivia. However, interaction between the Ecuadorian and Bolivian teams has been developing. Soils work and watershed modeling are providing unifying research themes. A biodiversity study has been completed in Ecuador and there is also promising work being initiated on organizations, institutions and governance in the Ecuador sites. This work is particularly relevant to critical water assess and management issues throughout the Andes. The Bolivian team, on the other hand, has a coherent strategy for technology development and transfer, although its research accomplishments are lacking. They have established good relations with local authorities and community members in Tiraque providing a strong framework for introduction of watershed management innovations as the project progresses. Overall the LTR-3 team has built a set of strong partnerships, but the theoretical framework for the coordination and integration of research activities is not clear. What research components fit in the transdisciplinary systems research framework and which are extraneous? Once these framework questions are resolved, the relevance of cross-national comparisons will become evident.

The Bolivian site visit for the LTR-1 project only involved a single site and meeting with the partner organization, CERES, in Cochabamba, Bolivia. CERES recently completed initial baseline data collection for the community, TIM-Ivirgarzama. TIM-Ivirgarzama is an off-shoot settlement of the indigenous Yuracaré people who first established territorial claims in the tropical lowlands during the 1990s. Only recently settled, the visited community conducts low-intensity tree-based production systems (cacao, yucca, and cerebó, a recently introduced fast-growing hardwood species). Our visit to the community was the occasion for the CERES research team to present the initial findings from the recently completed baseline study, using a combined household survey and community-focused institutional protocol. While the presentation of the survey data to the community was clearly expressed, there was little opportunity for the community to provide feedback. The CERES research team is quite young and just beginning to master the establishment of participatory interaction with community members. One aspect that came out in a later discussion was that many in the community also had residences in town. Given the traditional mobility of the Yuracaré this multi-locality strategy may not be unusual. However, this strategy might explain the demographic predominance of women and girls in the survey findings. The implications of this strategy for a single-sited household survey methodology should be considered.

The LTR-4 team has multiple partners and numerous graduate students working on research relevant to developing alternative livelihood strategies for vulnerable agro-ecosystems of the Altiplano of Bolivia and Peru. This ability to leverage resources and inter-institutional collaboration are promising. Team diversity is reinforced by a strong conceptual framework. Baseline surveys have been conducted and data are being analyzed. Diagnostic activities with the communities have identified soils and water as the critical local factors whose impacts are shaped by climate and market change. Local perceptions of climate change were discussed, but these will need to be clearly documented across sites. Up to now, field work in Bolivia has only involved pest diagnostics, soil sampling, and potato, oca and quinoa variety trials. Soil fertility work will likely become the focus of on-the-ground activities in Peru. A major emphasis of the research is on empowering community actors to effectively develop innovative capacity in the face of climate and market change. In this respect the research design appears rather fortunate, one of the two sites in Bolivia and one of the two sites in Peru are already highly mobilized communities. The two others are relatively new to participatory research activities. Different participatory models have been applied in each community ostensibly providing a comparative framework. Early internal evaluation of the participatory methodologies is providing important feedback to the team. However, the conceptual work to integrate findings from both countries needs to be operationalized. The coalition building has been explicitly introduced and applied within the Peruvian communities, but does not appear to have been applied in conducting the research in Bolivia.

Gender Issues: At the SANREM CRSP annual meeting in Cochabamba, representatives from all five LTRs (50% of the attendees) participated in an extra-curricular session in which they shared information on current gender research and explored opportunities for future cooperation across projects. Opportunities for gender research addressed include a gender focus on soil fertility perceptions, knowledge, and practices. It is clear, however, that extra effort, institutional support, encouragement, and, in some cases, funding is required to achieve the potential expressed in the meeting.

The three projects discussed here have an opportunity to integrate gender as a cross-cutting theme and showed interest in doing so. Each project has extensive in-house expertise with gender issues, which, while promising, is not always manifested in the field. All three have developed abstracts for articles or proposals to carry out gender research in collaboration with other projects or with teams in different countries in their own research. Although it includes team members with expertise in the bio-physical sciences who are interested in learning how to bring social science approaches including gender to their work, LTR-3 requires greater gender sensitivity and institutional commitment among partner institutions. After the Cochabamba meeting, LTR-4 held a regional meeting in La Paz in which existing and future opportunities for gender research were addressed and integrated in their approach, particularly in relation to livelihood strategies and market access. This team showed greater attention to gender issues than the other two, with several graduate students focusing specifically on gender and women's participation in the project. One constraint that was identified was the importance of language as a barrier to participation. This barrier is particularly significant for indigenous women, who often do not speak Spanish although research and outreach activities are being conducted in Spanish, It is also a factor affecting the participation of research members who do not speak English; this

compromises their ability to work with projects outside the region and to access the significant resources supporting gender research. A plan was made for SANREM to collect and post articles in Spanish on the website so as to support future gender research.

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