

SANREM CRSP Technical Committee Teleconference Minutes

2 to 4 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Sept. 25, 2007

Participants

Chair

Gerald Shively, Purdue

Members

Jeff Alwang, Virginia Tech

Jacqui Bauer, Indiana

Elizabeth Jiménez, Universidad de La Cordillera

Elinor Ostrom, Indiana

Manuel Reyes, North Carolina A&T

Alex Travis, Cornell

Corinne Valdivia, Missouri

Ex officio

Theo Dillaha, Virginia Tech

Deanne Estrada, Virginia Tech

Keith Moore, Virginia Tech

Guests

Chris Kosnik, USAID

Harry Rea, USAID

Action items

Biotech proposals. The TC agreed tentatively to fund the soil meta-genomics and thermo-stable vaccine proposals at about 88 percent of the requested budgets, subject to the following conditions.

- The PIs will confirm that they can work with the reduced budget and obtain meaningful results. (Theo will confer with Karen Garrett.)
- USAID can confirm that proposals meet the USAID biotechnology definition. (Chris Kosnik will check with the biotech office.)
- The ME can confirm that proposals meet all SANREM budgetary, host-country support, cost share, indirect cost, and other requirements.

Host-country graduate student support proposals. PIs have until Friday, Sept. 28, at 5 p.m. EDT to update their host-country graduate support proposals. The format is:

- student's name, gender, nationality
- degree program, institution, thesis title/topic
- student research objectives and contributions to the LTRA, and
- short paragraph describing
 - 1) student's research objectives
 - 2) how research will contribute to LTRA objectives
 - 3) *how research will respond to EEP comments*
 - 4) itemized budget. (tuition, supplies, travel).

The TC will evaluate proposals primarily on how well the research objectives contribute to LTRA objectives and respond to EEP suggestions for the LTRAs.

Agenda

Chair Jerry Shively called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. Minutes of the Sept. 13 meeting were approved with a clarification that \$50,000 to \$60,000 in cross-cutting funds would be designated for gender activities.

Responding to a request from Elizabeth Jiménez for e-mail addresses of all host-country researchers for communication across countries and projects ... concern that communication with some partners is already difficult, so more e-mail might be counter-productive. Brief discussion followed concerning the role and responsibilities of the TC host country representative. Elizabeth requested that the role be clarified. Her belief is that the TC host country representative should represent all the host country partners and to do that, she need to be able to communicate with them. Several PIs indicated that they had trouble communicating with their host country partners and were concerned that additional communications from the TC host country representative would make the matter worse. General consensus was that TC host country representative should not communicate with host country partners but should represent them directly using her opinions.

Review of biotech proposals. The three proposals' budget requests total just under \$190,000. The amount available is \$125,000. Shively asked whether the activities can be undertaken with less funding. Corinne Valdivia said Karen Garrett (LTRA-4) has responded by cutting the number of sites proposed for her research on diagnostic tools for plant and animal disease. She also will come up with more funding from other sources. Her proposal responds directly to the SANREM CRSP External Evaluation Panel's recommendations, would incorporate soils research, would be consistent with biotech and cross-cutting objectives, and would yield published results in a year. Elinor Ostrom said the proposal appears the best-developed, well-researched and could have long-run spinoffs if done well. Chris Kosnik said this proposal appears to be the most forward-looking and ground-breaking of those offered and to have the most potential impact beyond SANREM.

Dillaha asked to discuss all three proposals before making decisions. Alex Travis (LTRA-2) said his proposal would extend work in Zambia in the past year with a vaccine against Newcastle disease, which is endemic and kills 70 percent to 100 percent of chickens in villages affected, a major impact on food security and family incomes. His proposal is for a broader-based field trial as well as extension of work already done, yielding two years of results that could be published.

In support of the third proposal, from PROINPA, Dillaha said it would upgrade laboratory equipment and techniques to develop improved varieties of potatoes. The proposal does not give specifics about equipment to be purchased or methods to be developed. Shively said it does not appear that it would expand their capabilities significantly. Kosnik asked whether the TC can request clarification on the proposal before deciding how to allocate the funds. He suggested seeking input on all the proposals from USAID on whether they meet its criteria for biotech research. Dillaha said advice has been requested but not granted. Kosnik agreed to ask USAID's Josette Lewis for clarification and feedback.

Harry Rea said two proposals might be funded with the biotech allocation and the third by other SANREM means. Travis said his proposal could proceed with 80 percent of the requested funding, but 60 percent would require significant reduction in scope of the work. Valdivia said Garret would have to address the issue of a smaller allocation for the LTRA-4 proposal. After more discussion, the TC voted to drop the PROINPA proposal from consideration and, with input from USAID and the researchers, recommend the other two proposals at 80 percent of their budget requests. Of the funds, 50 percent should go to host-country partners or be expended on their behalf; and there is a 25 percent cost share.

BioTech Follow-up: After the TC meeting, the ME followed up with USAID and they indicated that thermo-stable vaccine activity was did not meet biotech requirements unless it involved transgenic vaccines. Alex Travis withdrew his proposal because it did not. ME informed Karen Garrett that her proposal would be funded at \$125K.

Funding for host-country graduate students. Shively said \$50,000 is designated to fund host-country graduate students, while requests total \$70,000. Main criteria for ranking the requests are that the work responds to EEP comments, is tied to the respective long-term research activities, and shows impact within two years. Dillaha requested that any revisions to the proposals be made quickly so they can be redistributed to TC members for ranking. PIs Valdivia, Jeff Alwang, and Manuel Reyes asked any for feedback that would improve their proposals. Keith Moore said the TC overall would appreciate it if the PIs could reduce the number of their funding requests to facilitate prioritization.

Host Country Graduate Student Support Follow-up: Revised applications for host country graduate student support were sent out to TC members on Oct. 1 with TC votes due to ME by Oct. 5 COB. Below are the rankings. All students except for one will be funded.

Student	Score	Amount, \$
Nahunda Katowa	2	\$10,000
Mirco Peñaranda	2	\$6,900
Nadezda Amaya	1.8	\$3,000
Justina Condori	1.8	\$7,500
Charmaine Pailagao	1.8	\$2,500
Rene Pereira Romero	1.6	\$3,500
Tisna Prasetyo	1.6	\$4,000
Nelsa Olila	1.4	\$4,000
Isidra Bagares	1.4	\$4,000
Luis Orlando Escudero	1.2	\$4,000
Carlos Lenin Montufar Delgado	1	<u>Not funded</u>
	Total	\$49,400

Work plans for 2008. Moore said the draft table of contents for the SANREM annual report is included with the meeting agenda for feedback and to show how the LTRA reports fit into the overall program. He noted that most PIs have yet to submit their research strategies and confirmed that all PIs know that Oct. 15 is the deadline for annual reports and supporting information. Dillaha said the annual report will include a brief discussion of new cross-cutting

initiatives. He said the next year's budget is to be announced Friday, Sept. 28, by USAID, so PIs should hear on Monday, Oct. 1, exactly what their funding will be.

E-mail communication among researchers. Responding to a request from Elizabeth Jiménez for a list of host-country researcher e-mail addresses, Moore noted that the SANREM directory needs to be updated and asked that PIs send a new list within two months of how to contact co-PIs. Regarding her request, Jiménez said she believes information exchanged among researchers would benefit their work, make them more interested in each others' research, and that would be the objective of all e-mails exchanged. Moore said host-country researchers might gain a better understanding of the whole SANREM program if they could communicate with others in the same situation. Such exchanges also could disseminate knowledge of technologies and institutional relationships that individuals could pursue. Jacqui Bauer supported the concept in theory but said she would prefer that communication to LTRA-1 researchers be channeled through her. She and others expressed concern about researchers being overwhelmed by requests for information. After lengthy discussion, Shively suggested adding to the SANREM website a place where researchers could communicate on topics of mutual interest. Dillaha said a new scholar site set up in the past week has such tools, including a wiki. He agreed to send more information to the TC after the SANREM annual report is completed.

ME Follow-up: ME is not convinced that we discussed this adequately and would like to revisit the issue at the next TC meeting and also discuss at the next SANREM Board meeting as this is also a policy issue. ME believes that there are benefits the TC host country representative communicating with host country partners and therefore providing more representative host country partner perspectives to the TC.

New CTO. Kosnik said goodbye to the TC, explaining that Harry Rea is succeeding him as CTO for SANREM. Shively and others thanked him for his service and wished him well.

2008 annual meeting. Shively tabled discussion of the proposal to hold the 2008 annual meeting in the Philippines. The TC will consider that and any competing proposals after the annual report is completed.

Adjournment. Shively adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.