

Solar Irrigation for Agricultural Resilience in South Asia (SoLAR-SA)

1st Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting

22 January 2020 | Time: 15:30 -17:30

Venue: Yellow River Basin Auditorium, IWMI Headquarter, Colombo, Sri Lanka

A) Attendee

Name and Designation		Yes/No
Marylaure Crettaz Corredor, Head of SDC, Swiss Embassy, New Delhi	Chair, PSC	Yes
Mark Smith, Deputy Director General, IWMI	Co-Chair, PSC	Yes
Aditi Mukherji, Regional Project Leader, SoLAR-SA, IWMI	Member Secretary, PSC	Yes
Divya Kashyap, Senior Advisor and Project Manager SoLAR-SA, SDC	Regular Member, PSC	Yes
Alok Sikka, IWMI Country Representative, India	Regular Member, PSC	Yes
Tushaar Shah, Emeritus Fellow, IWMI (Special Advisor to the SoLAR Project)	Regular Member, PSC	No
Rajesh Kumar, Program Director, International Solar Alliance (ISA)	Co-Opted Member, PSC	Yes
S.M. Monirul Islam, Deputy CEO, IDCOL, Bangladesh	Co-Opted Member, PSC	Yes
Akhilesh Magal, Head of Advisory and Consulting, GERMI, India	Co-Opted Member, PSC	Yes
Laxman Prasad Ghimire, Senior Office, Solar and Wind Energy, AEPC, Nepal	Co-Opted Member, PSC	Yes
Muhammad Tahir Anwar, National Project Coordinator, FWMC, MNFS&R, Pakistan	Co-Opted Member, PSC	Yes
Claudia Sadoff, Director General, IWMI	Invitee	Yes
Md. Enamul Karim Pavel, Head of Renewable Energy, IDCOL	Invitee	Yes

Abbreviations: AEPC: Alternative Energy Promotion Centre, Nepal; FWMC, MNFS&R: Federal Water Management Cell of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Pakistan; GERMI: Gujarat Energy Research and Management Institute, India
 IDCOL: Infrastructure Development Company, Bangladesh; ISA: International Solar Alliance; IWMI: International Water Management Institute; SDC: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

B) Agenda, Discussions, and Decisions

1) Welcome remarks

- The 1st PSC meeting, chaired by Marylaure Crettaz Corredor, started with a welcome remark from Claudia Sadoff, Director General, IWMI. She reminded that the areas of works that we are pursuing in SoLAR is rapidly evolving. Therefore, PSC can play a role by bringing those aspects and giving critical feedback to the project team through frequent communication.

- Marylaure Crettaz Corredor highlighted SDC's expectation of PSC as a monitoring system/platform for the project, reviewing periodic reports, providing critical feedback, and approving annual work plan. This is also an opportunity to bring partner's view to the project.

2) Approval of Annual Work Plan

- The PSC members suggested to incorporate feedback provided during inception workshop, and it was agreed upon.
- For regional training program planned in India in 2020 (in collaboration with ISA or GERMI), it was suggested to finalize the agenda and invitation well in advance to allow all country members to participate.
- It is suggested to organize training program at a place where participation of all partner countries is ensured. Partnership with regional organizations like SAARC was suggested for facilitation in visa processing.
- In addition, it was suggested to insert timeline and responsibilities in the figure/graph with project goals and outcomes/outputs.
- The work plan is approved with suggestions. The PMU would update the work plan as per the spirit of suggestions from PSC members.

3) Status of MoUs and letter of support with partners

Aditi Mukherji, Regional Project Leader, updated on the status of signing MoUs and letter of support with partners. A summary is provided hereunder;

- MoU with ISA signed – broad umbrella MOU, with emphasis on joint trainings and workshops.
- Letter for support received from two Nepal partners: AEPC and NEA
- Draft MoU prepared between IDCOL and IWMI – discussions are on, expected to be signed by Feb-Mar, 2020
- Discussions on with GERMI, India for signing MoU with IWMI – it will be signed shortly
- Discussions on with FWMC and PARC on MoUs – process is on, expected to get signed by Mar, 2020

4) Updates on new staff hire

Details on the new staff hire plan and status is outlined hereunder.

- Post-doctoral fellow (Internationally recruited staff) – full time position, to be based in India or Nepal, to provide overall support and to lead the evidence generation component of the project. Position advertised, person expected to be on board latest by June, 2020.
- National Researcher (nationally recruited staff)– half time for this project, based in India, advertised, expected to join by April, 2020.
- Research Officer (nationally recruited staff) – half time for this project, based in Nepal, advertised, candidates being shortlisted, expected to join by April, 2020.
- National consultant, Bangladesh (nationally recruited) – full time for this project, based in Bangladesh, advertisement closes on 24th of January, 2020, expected to join by April 2020.
- Research Officer (nationally recruited staff) – half time for this project, based in Pakistan, to be advertised, expected to join the team by June 2020.

It was mentioned that a total of 18 IWMI staff would be involved in this project and will contribute anything between 5 days to 220 days (post-doc is full time staff). A detailed budget with all staff time, and number of days they would be involved has been already submitted as part of the project proposal to SDC.

5) Project management/implementation modalities for Bangladesh

- IWMI does not have office in Bangladesh. Archisman Mitra from IWMI-India, as the interim country lead, is coordinating with IDCOL team to implement Bangladesh program.
- In addition, there is a plan to hire a full-time consultant, who will work with the interim country lead, and take on all the project management responsibilities in Bangladesh.
- This full-time consultant will be either hosted by another CGIAR centre, or by IDCOL – discussions are underway.

6) Status and composition of Country Project Management Committees (C-PMCs)

Aditi briefed on the concept behind provisioning of C-PMC for the understanding of the PSC members. The terms of reference (TOR) for C-PMC has been framed and will be circulated among the member soon. The C-PMC formation and functioning, as of now, varies across the country as summarized hereunder.

- Bangladesh: Discussions underway with IDCOL for suggestions on forming a C-PMC in Bangladesh. IDCOL has suggested the list of potential organizations that could be included in the C-PMC as follows. They will now reach out to them, and help form the C-PMC, and the IWMI full time consultant will be a member of the C-PMC, along with interim country lead and Regional Project Leader. These are the organisations suggested:
 - IDCOL
 - Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority
 - Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council
 - Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation
 - Department of Agricultural Extension
 - Barind Multipurpose Development Authority
 - Rural Electrification Board
 - Power Division
 - Bangladesh Water Development Board
 - IWMI full time consultant in Bangladesh
 - IWMI interim Bangladesh lead
 - IWMI RPL
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- India: This is the list of proposed members, invitations to be sent out shortly and first meeting of C-PMC to be held in February 2020.
 - Alok Sikka, Country Representative, IWMI India and Chair
 - Tushaar Shah, Emeritus Fellow, IWMI
 - R.C Jain, Government of Gujarat and GWRDC
 - R.K Vala, GUVNL/Government of Gujarat
 - Akhilesh Magal, GERMI/Government of Gujarat
 - Divya Sharma, SDC, India
 - Aditi Mukherji, Regional Project Leader, SoIAR and Principal Researcher, IWMI
 - Shilp Verma, Country Lead, India, SoIAR and Researcher, IWMI
 - A representation from MNRE was proposed by Marylaure and it was agreed to.

- Nepal: A 12-member C-PMC has been formed; the first meeting was held on 14th of January 2020; and minutes of the meeting has been already signed (Annex 1). The composition of C-PMC in Nepal is provided hereunder:
 - Manohara Khadka, Country Representative, Nepal- Chair
 - Laxman Prasad Ghimire, Representative, AEPC
 - Sagar Mani Gyawali, Representative, NEA
 - Hari Ram Shrestha, Representative, DWRI
 - Prakash Kumar Sanjel, Representative, DOA
 - Aditi Mukherji, Regional Project Leader, SoLAR and Principal Researcher, IWMI
 - Binaya Raj Shrestha, Representative of SDC-Nepal
 - Kumar Raj Shai, Representative of NFIUWAN
 - Avishek Malla, Representative, Private Sector
 - Bimal Pokhrel, Representative, National Association of Rural Municipality in Nepal (NARMIN)
 - Ashok Byanju, Representative of Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN)
 - Vishnu Pandey, Nepal country lead, SoLAR and Researcher, IWMI- Member Secretary

- Pakistan: This is the list of proposed members, invitations to be sent out shortly and first meeting of C-PMC to be held in February 2020.
 - Mohsin Hafeez, Country Representative, Pakistan -- Chair
 - Muhammad Tahir Anwar, DG and National Project Coordinator, FWMC
 - Bashir Ahmad, CEWRI-PARC
 - Khalid Jamil, CEWRI-PARC
 - Sardar Moazzam, NEECA, Ministry of Energy
 - Malik Akram DG, ONFW, Agriculture Department, Punjab
 - Representative SAARC Energy Centre, Islamabad
 - Representative, Alternative Energy Development Board
 - Arif Anwar, Principal Researcher, IWMI Pakistan
 - Azeem Shah, Country Lead, SoLAR project, Pakistan and Researcher, IWMI- Member Secretary.

7) Innovation Funds – Plan for launch and plan for reaching out to Swiss Institutions

- Divya briefed on the concept of Innovation Funds (IFs). Since the field of solar is evolving very fast, it was thought that it might be a good idea to keep aside a small amount of fund that can be used by the project to support some innovations in the areas of solar irrigation. Therefore, this project has kept aside 400,000 USD as Innovation Fund to support innovative ideas across the areas of technology, financial models, and institutions. Projects will be selected on a competitive basis, with attention to ensure that all participating countries get at least one innovation project.
- To operationalize the IF, the project will set up an expert panel, from outside the project team, to help set up the selection protocol including defining the selection criteria and evaluating the proposals and provide it to PSC for feedback. Scalability and replicability could potentially be important criteria for selection of proposals.
- Project Management Unit (PMU) will support the expert panel with the required administrative processes such as drafting roadmap, preparing and issuing call for proposals, etc.
- It is always encouraged to collaborate with Swiss-based companies or entities, where possible, so that there would be excellent cross-learning. The project could also explore synergies with other finding entities, for example, working together with IFs of Gujarat Government, private/public incubators, etc. in order to leverage additional

funds for enhanced impact /outreach. If required, the project could offer clarity on potential areas of innovation in the call for proposals.

- The ideas on innovation could come from anywhere in the world but needs to be tested in one of project countries.
- SDC and PMU will work together to streamline the procedure for moving ahead with the IFs as per the spirit of the feedback provided by the PSC members.

8) Groundwater management component including possible tie up with Swiss partners

- SDC suggested to explore the possibilities to include partners related to groundwater study from other parts of the world to provide learnings and feedback to our groundwater-related studies.
- The SDC as well as PSC members will share links of relevant partners as well as materials that they are aware of.
- Mark Smith mentioned that a good place to start is the Swiss Water Partnership and its many members (<https://www.swisswaterpartnership.ch/>)
- The point was well taken, and PMU will explore further for the possibilities to collaborate/learn.

9) Links with International Solar Alliance: plan/roadmap for the project to partner with International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- MoU with ISA has been signed on 21st January, 2020. It is a broad umbrella MoU, with emphasis on joint trainings and workshops, capacity building, and knowledge exchange. The MoU also covers opportunities for exploring experience sharing in other parts of the world through ISA platforms. The MoU also opens up possibilities for developing new joint proposals in the areas of mutual interests. The PMU will explore the possibility of holding this year's regional training in collaboration with ISA. Based on the learnings, both sides will explore some potential mechanisms to materialize this partnership.

10) Project communications

- The PMU is in the process of developing project webpage. Project brochure is prepared, which will be improved in due course.
- SDC will communicate it's branding requirements, and it was suggested to make sure SDC's logo is in all communication materials/products, designing the various products/materials in an appropriate way so that SDC gets better visibility.
- The PSC suggested PMU to prepare appropriate communication plans and implement accordingly.

10) Any other business

The next PSC meeting will be held within the next 6 months (sometime in June/July 2020).

Since there were no items under any business, the PSC meeting was concluded with vote of thanks from Mark Smith, Co-Chair, PSC.

Action Items

- PMU will finalise the Year 1 workplan considering the comments received during the launch workshop and develop it as an excel sheet clearly outlining the various activities and their timelines, interim milestones and deadlines and share it with all the PSC members.
- PMU to prepare modality for working in Bangladesh
- PMU will prepare an advertisement for the Innovation Funds and share with PSC for their feedback.
- PMU will also suggest a shortlist of potential candidates to constitute the Expert Committee for operationalising the IF
- PMU will prepare a brief communications plan and share with SDC
- SDC will connect PMU with relevant partners for groundwater-related studies.

Minute was prepared by Vishnu Prasad Pandey, Country Lead of Nepal SoLAR component, and also Member Secretary, Nepal CPMC