

Solar Irrigation for Agriculture Resilience in South Asia (SoLAR-SA) Project Country Project Management Committee (C-PMC) | 2ND Meeting

Date: 5th August, 2020 | Time: 11:30 – 13:00 hrs | Venue: IWMI-Nepal Office & Zoom

A) Attendee

Dr. Manohara Khadka	Chair C-PMC; IWMI Country Representative	Yes
Dr Laxman Pd. Ghimire	Member of C-PMC; Representative of AEPC	Yes
Mr. Sagar Mani Gyawali	Member of C-PMC, Representative of NEA	Yes
Mr. Dinesh Rajauria	Member of C-PMC, Representative of DWRI	Yes
Mr. Prakash Kumar Sanjel	Member of C-PMC, Representative of DOA	Yes
Mr. Binaya Raj Shrestha	Member of C-PMC, Representative of SDC	Yes
Mr. Kumar Raj Shahi	Member of C-PMC, Representative of NFIWAN	Yes
Mr. Ashok Byanju	Member of C-PMC, Representative of MuAN	No
Mr. Bimal Pokhrel	Member of C-PMC, Representative of NARMIN	Yes
Mr. Avishek Malla	Member of C-PMC, Representative of Private Sector	Yes
Dr. Aditi Mukherji	Member of C-PMC, Principal Researcher, IWMI	Yes
Dr Vishnu Pd. Pandey	Member Secretary, C-PMC, Regional Researcher, IWMI	Yes
Ms. Gitta Shrestha	Invitee, National Researcher, IWMI	Yes

Abbreviations: AEPC is Alternative Energy Promotion Center; NEA is Nepal Electricity Authority; DWRI is Department of Water Resources and Irrigation; DOA is Department of Agriculture; SDC is Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; NFIWAN is National Federation of Irrigation User's Association, Nepal; MuAN is Municipal Association of Nepal; NARMIN is National Association of Rural Municipality in Nepal; IWMI is International Water Management Institute

B) Agenda, Discussions, and Decisions

1) Welcome remarks

Manohara Khadka, Chair of C-PMC and Country Representative of IWMI-Nepal welcomed all C-PMC members to the 2nd C-PMC meeting. She also welcomed Mr. Dinesh Rajauria, who replaced Mr. Hari Ram Shrestha from DWRI, as new member of C-PMC. She briefly outlined how SoLAR-SA fits to the IWMI-Nepal's portfolio of projects, re-called the project's governance structure and highlighted the role of C-PMC. Finally, she introduced agenda/program of the 2nd C-PMC meeting.

Manohara's welcome remark was followed by a briefing on SoLAR-SA project's outcomes, outputs, regional activities, and Nepal-specific activities.

2) COVID-related adjustments in plans and activities

Vishnu Pandey shared updated work plan revised in the context of COVID-related restrictions in the field movement. They include addition of new activities as well as adjustments in timing of some of the activities. They are reflected in the presentation material provided in **Annex-1**. The work plan was revised in April, 2020 in line with the overall IWMI initiative to map changes in the work plans due to COVID-19.

3) Progress in implementing year-1 work plan

Vishnu Pandey, Member Secretary of C-PMC, presented deliverables related to year-1 work plan as well as status of project implementation. It's detailed in **Annex-1**. The presentation was followed by a discussion session. Vishnu shared that except some delay in some of the activities due to restriction in field movements, most of the activities are moving smoothly despite of difficulties due to pandemic. Highlights of some of the deliverables completed in the last six months are;

- Submission of a draft report on “A rapid assessment of AEPC’s subsidy delivery mechanism”
- Preparation of draft of GESI (Gender and Social Inclusion) analysis framework
- 2 opinion pieces (OpEDs) related to Corona and possibilities for agriculture sector are published and 2 more related to SIPs are developed and under review
- Draft report on targeting sites for piloting grid connected SIPs prepared; two potential sites identified.
- Preliminary draft of training curricula prepared, 1st draft for circulation with C-PMC members is expected to be ready by mid-August.

During the discussion session, several queries/suggestions were raised by the C-PMC members. Aditi and Vishnu responded to those queries. Key discussion points and/or feedback received from the C-PMC members and response are summarized hereunder.

Query	Response
Where are the study locations in Province 1 & 2? What were the basis for selecting the study area? Who are the stakeholder we engaged or planning to engage?	Using appropriate set of selection criteria, 2 Palikas selected as potential site for piloting grid-connected SIPs are Chhipaharmai in Parsa and Belakha in Udayapur. We are now evaluating existing resources to decide whether we can go for both or only one.
What kind of irrigation system are we considering (e.g., groundwater or surface water)? What are command areas of those systems? What type of cropping patterns are we proposing?	This project is not implementing any new solar irrigation pumps (SIPs) rather trying to use existing solar panels and pumps to connect to grid system using micro-grid system. It is primarily because SDC was more interested in second generation question than installing SIPs and/or testing SIP technologies.
When can we re-start the pending work? NEA is smoothly conducting field activities and therefore this project also may consider doing so.	It depends up how COVID-19 situation unfolds. We are preparing in a way that we can mobilize to the field within 1-2 weeks from the day the COVID-19 becomes normal. Regarding possibility for early resumption of pending works, we will discuss with

	project management unit (PMU), look for IWMI's compliance guideline for COVID-19, and share updates to the C-PMC members via email.
How many pumps did we visit during March field visit? Did we visit only accessible sites or remote sites as well during field visit?	We visited many pumps, but for details, need to refer field visit report. We will share that report so that C-PMC members will be aware on details of the locations visited during the field study in March, 2020.
Will it be possible to present key findings from rapid assessment of subsidy in this C-PMC meeting?	We are scheduled to present it first with AEPC very soon. We can share that presentation and report after that presentation is over.
What is the status of Innovation Fund call?	In response to Innovation Fund (IF) call, 87 proposals were received by the deadline. 30 were rejected as they did not meet some of the submission criteria. Out of remaining, 15 were shortlisted for evaluation by the Technical Committee. From Nepal, more than 15 proposals were submitted, and 3 are shortlisted for evaluation by technical committee, We are expecting submission of review by the technical committee by 7 th August, presentation by selected 6-7 proposals on 12 th August, and notification for selected proposals by 17 th August. We will share the selected proposal/institution to the PMC members.
It would be good to present financial progress too in addition to technical progress in the C-PMC meeting.	We are relatively at lower side than targets in terms of financial spending. PMU (housed in IWMI Delhi) is regularly reporting to SDC as per their reporting template.
For the 3 rd C-PMC, it is suggested to present progress in terms of log-frame indicators, especially outcomes level as well, as the current progress report mainly is activity/output based.	It sounds a good idea. We will try to incorporate it from next meeting onwards.

4) Any other business

- It was advised to share all the reports as well as draft of training curriculum to C-PMC members for their feedback/inputs.
- Mr. Avishek Malla offered to utilize SunFarmer's farm in Chitlang for training purpose, if that is suitable for the purpose. The farm has various technologies installed in it.
- We encourage local municipalities (i.e., Palikas) to submit applications for the SIP innovation grant call for the next round.

5) Concluding remarks and vote of thanks

Manohara Khadka summarized discussion of the meeting, thanked all the participants, and formally closed the second C-PMC meeting.

Minute was prepared by Vishnu Pandey, Member Secretary, C-PMC