Trip Report: Nepal and India
1-15 December 2010

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Purpose: (1) to initiate Nepal component of the project,
(2) to visit potential Nepal cooperating tribal village communities, Li-Bird and IAAS,
(3) to brief Nepal USAID Mission on the initiation of the SMARTS project,
(4) to facilitate finalizing of OUAT subaward with the new OUAT Dean and,
(5) to discuss and arrange for collection of farm socioeconomic data in Tentuli, Bhubaneswar.

Sites Visited: Nepal: Kathmandu, Pokhara, Rampur, Tanahun and Gorkha; and India: Delhi, Bhubaneswar.

Description of Activities
Nepal: Traveled to Li-Bird, our local partner’s headquarter in Pokhara, Nepal and met with the new executive director Dr. Shreeram Neopane and his staff to discuss the proposal, its objectives, revised budget and to establish the village work site locations. I then visited Tribhuvan University (TU) and met with the Dean of the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Sciences and his team to discuss the revised proposal and budget. I toured TU’s research farms, soil laboratory equipment and on campus accommodation to report back to the US team regarding equipment, facilities, and to assess needs for upgrade or additions. For the next 2 days I visited 2 of the 3 villages that the SMARTS project will be working in. The villages are Tanahun and Gorkha. I trekked to Gorhka and observed the farming practices and discussed cropping patterns and livelihoods with the Li-Bird community. Finally, prior to leaving Nepal, the Li-Bird Executive Director, the Li-Bird project coordinator and I met with the USAID Director of General Development Office, Dr. Patterson to brief him about our project.

India: Met with the new Dean of OUAT, Dr. Dibakar Naik to discuss finalizing the paperwork for wiring the funds for the project. Also, I discussed with Dr. Pravat Roul, our host country PI and Dr. Naik that we need a socioscientist on the project and Dr. Naik who is an agricultural
economist agreed to join the project. Met with a potential graduate student and interviewed her. I also interviewed a candidate for the project coordinator’s job. This individual would be crucial in terms of gathering information for planning and organizing workshops and research. Met with the rest of the US team in Bhubaneswar and made preparations for them to visit one of village site, Tentuli, to collect more farm data and visit the CAPS experiments at the KVK.

**Suggestions and Recommendations**

Nepal: Our partners Li-Bird and TU are very cooperative and competent. The community advisor appears to have great rapport with the members in the tribal villages. The livelihoods and cropping patterns are challenging and will be suitable for practicing CAPS approach. The maize planting season is different from India. Usually, the first maize planting is in April and second planting in July so I recommend that we attempt to plant some experiments in farmer’s fields in April and to immediately begin seriously planning for our March trip to plan to establish research plots as soon as possible. The villages are small and quite isolated from the towns, which makes transportation of marketable goods more difficult. The villages are not too far from each other, although reaching them from the paved highway requires trekking for about 2 hours. To collect survey information from the villages would require staying in the village as the travel time to the village is quite time consuming and it is not efficient to be trekking up and down the village to collect information and observe the village life and cropping pattern. The slopes of some of the farm plots can be as steep as 70 degrees.

India: With the new Dean, activities are picking up at a quicker pace. There is definite interest on Dr. Naik’s part to make sure the project is a success. Our discussions are often solution-oriented. With the local team in place, the project will be able to move along faster and information and data will be gathered continuously throughout the year.
List of Contacts Made:

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Appendix: Log of Activities

1 through 3-12-2010
- Traveled from Honolulu to Kathmandu, Nepal

4-12-2010
- Traveled from Kathmandu to Pokhara, Nepal (Li-Bird Headquarter). Met with new Li-Bird executive director Dr. Neopane, technical advisor Dr. Rana, Li-Bird program director, Mr. Subedi and Mr. Thapa, SMARTS program coordinator
- Discussed project objectives, revised budget, site locations and collaborative relations with Tribuhuvan University (TU)/IAAS (Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science)/LiBird and roles of Fellows, IAAS etc.

5-12-2010
- Travelled to Rampur, Chitwan, where TU/IAAS is located.
- Met with TU/IAAS faculty regarding collaboration on research activities on their campus; visited their laboratory facilities; discussed the role of Fellows and office space and housing for visiting faculty and students. Specifically met with Dr. Sundar Man Shrestha, Dean of IAAS, Dr. Karki, Asst Dean for Administration, IAAS, Mr. Chaudhary, Director of Research and Publication, IAAS, Dr. Dangol, Deputy Director of Research and Publication, IAAS and Dr. Shrestha, Assoc. Professor of Aquaculture, IAAS
- Traveled to the Tanahun site.
- Visited first field site in Tanahun with Dr. Neopane, Mr. Thapa and Li-Bird Project Officer/Community Advisor, Mr. Prakash Limbu. Discussed cropping patterns, livelihoods etc.

6-12-2010
- Travelled to Gorhha site.
- Visited 2nd field site in Gorkha with Mr. Thapa and Limbu. Trekked for 3 hours one way to field site and observed fields and village life. Discussed potential housing of SMARTS team in the remote project villages when we begin to collect information in March, 2011.
- Prepared PowerPoint for presentation to Nepal USAID Mission.
- Returned to Kathmandu, Nepal

7-12-2010
- Met with Mr. Denjam regarding his role in the project.
- Met with Dr. Bill Patterson (Director, General Development Office, USAID) and briefed him on the SMARTS project. Dr. Neopane and Mr. Thapa were also at the meeting.

8-12-2010
- Traveled to Delhi
- Met with Mr. A.S. Dasgupta from USAID Mission in India to brief him of SMARTS project progress
9-12-2010
- Traveled from New Delhi to OUAT in Bhubaneswar

10-12-2010
- Met with the new Dean of OUAT, Dr. Dibakar Naik. Along with Dr. Roul, host country PI; Drs. Dash and Mishra, host country collaborators, we discussed the need for an agricultural economist; the need to have speedier completion of official documents; and also confirm arrangements (lodging, translators, transportation etc.) for the UH team to visit the field and experiment sites for observations and data collection when they arrive on Dec. 12, 2010.

11-12-2010
- Met with the Vice Chancellor of OUAT to update him of the SMARTS project.
- Discuss with the Dean regarding his participation as the agricultural economist on the team.

12-12-2010
- Attended SMARTS project coordination meeting (with the rest of the UH team, Dr. Idol, J. Halbrendt and C. Lai) held at OUAT regarding upcoming project tasks and trip to Keonjhar.
- Interviewed Ms. Aliza Pradhan, graduate student from OUAT as a potential Ph.D. candidate at UH/NREM. Also interviewed one candidate for the local project coordinator.

13-12-2010
- Met with OUAT comptroller to discuss subaward agreements, mode of transferring funds, invoicing and expenditures reporting.

14-15-12-2010
- Traveled back to Hawaii, USA