



## REDUCE PHL NEWS

*April 2014*

The PHL Innovation Lab is off to a good start! All the target countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana and Guatemala) have developed Work Plans for Year 1, and they have been submitted to USAID. The Performance Management Plan has also been developed and submitted to USAID. All of these documents are available on K-State Online. Currently the country teams for Ethiopia, Ghana and Guatemala are finalizing their PHL assessment survey questionnaires and making their initial in-country visits.

### First Trip to Guatemala

The first trip of the PHL Innovation Lab team to Guatemala was made by Dr. Venkat Reddy, Dr. Andreia Bianchini, and Dr. Carlos Campabadal. It included the initial meeting with the main in-country collaborators, SHARE (local NGO) and the Universidad del Valle (local private university) to fully explain the project, discuss the upcoming activities and learn about the current post-harvest situation of the targeted regions to develop the project. Also, it included a visit to the USAID Guatemala Mission for engagement and discussion of the project. With the help of SHARE's extension group, the team visited two of the potential sites in the Huehuetenango region (Guatemalan Western Highlands) called Chiantla and Todos los Santos. These visits allowed the team to have a more in depth understanding on the cultural usage of maize and the current post-harvest practices. Finally, at the end of the trip, the team had a technical meeting with SHARE to discuss in more detail the logistics and procedures for the evaluation and assessment of these two regions.



### Update from the Bangladesh Team

The Local Project Coordinator and a PH Engineer have been hired. The former is based in the

IRRI-Bangladesh Office in Dhaka, the latter in the CSISA Jessore hub office. This will not only save the project costs but allow us to leverage existing infrastructure and other projects where post-harvest needs.

We are moving ahead with engaging local partners, including Bangladesh Agricultural University, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, NGOs such as Practical Action and local networks of women's groups, farmer associations, and, of course, the private sector (millers, seed processors, and agro-machinery fabricators, etc.)

Literature review of past research projects and extension materials have been completed. PHL Survey and Rapid Assessment tools are underway (FGDs, in-depth interviews in combination with field visits).

We have been able to acquire a pilot flatbed dryer from another USAID funded project, CSISA (Cereals Systems Initiative for South Asia). Currently this flatbed dryer is housed with a collaborating seed processor. More "fine-tuning" and adaptive work is required to optimize this technology.

Drying is the most important technology that we can implement to control the moisture of harvested paddy, as well as parboiled paddy. Currently we are discussing with millers how to dry high moisture parboiled paddy. Lots of questions and concerns about the application still remain. Exposure visits to the site have been done (Feb), and March 19-22. Two batches of fresh wet parboiled paddy have been dried to date with good results. There is interest in establishing 4 more pilots, invested by private sector processors, who want to give this a try with Innovations Lab technical support. We are able to catch the main Boro season for this year, which can help to show progress in terms of outputs and research by year's end. These dryer trials have received media coverage.

## Upcoming Travels

Dr. Venkat Reddy, Dr. Subi Bhadriraju and Dr. Rizana Mahroof are planning their first visit to Ethiopia April 25 - May 3 to meet with the USAID Mission office and the local country team member, Dr. Fetien Abay, Mekelle University.

Members of the Ghana team are planning their first visit May 15 - 31. They will meet with Mr. Kwabena Adu-Gyamfi, the internal country coordinator (ICC). The Ghana PHL team and the ICC will meet with the USAID mission on May 15 before going to administer the PHL survey to the target stakeholders.

## Next Leadership Team Videoconference

The next leadership team videoconference is scheduled for Wednesday, May 7th at 5 pm CT. We plan to use Zoom so that team members can shared power point slides with their updates.

## Reduce PHL Website is Live!

The Innovation Lab's website [www.reducePHL.org](http://www.reducePHL.org) is now live! We hope you enjoying viewing the site to learn more about what is happening with the project. We will be adding more information to the site as the project progresses.

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