Measuring Performance of CGIAR Genebanks

Activity 6.4.2
GPG2 Project Coordinator
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Overview

- ✓ How do we know we're doing a good job with our genebank?
- ✓ How do we know whether it matters?
- ✓ How do we know we're doing a good job as a part of the global genebank system?

Some initial thoughts

- Simple but meaningful
- Oriented towards a handful of key indicators that can truly assist genebanks to monitor and improve their performance
- Can be used as a basis for management decision making (both World Bank accountability, CG accountability and public accountability)

Some initial thoughts

- Applicable both in CGIAR genebanks and non-CG genebanks
- Use, to the greatest extent possible, existing collected data and data being collected in other GPG2 activities and/or normal genebank operations
- Capture data that can be visualised in a display and monitored over time

Some initial thoughts

- Focus on quantitative indicators (but these may be supplemented by qualitative)
- Individual indicators in the set of performance indicators will change over time
- It is easier to develop a set of “perverse” indicators than to develop a set of useful indicators

Major activities

- 2007
  - Background paper prepared
  - Workshop held
  - Draft Indicators and system developed
  - Info mgmt system developed
  - Germplasm user survey and self assessment by genebanks
  - Performance reports completed

Major activities

- 2008 and 2009
  - Fine-tuning, refinement of Indicators
  - Performance reports
  - On site audits
  - Reports produced

J. Robison’s paper

- “The indicators should address, *inter alia*, aspects of information availability, risk management frameworks, best practice protocols, availability and viability of germplasm, security, distribution and use of material and coverage of the genepool.”

“Key questions might be:

- What constitutes quality in genebank operations?
- What information is needed to make monitoring and evaluation useful for all stakeholders?
- How can best use be made of the currently available information?
- What are the gaps in the information that need to be filled in order to design and implement a useful performance indicator system?”

Danger of Performance Management Systems: The problem of “perverse” indicators

- “Use of performance indicators, particularly in the public sector, has come in for a lot of criticism. This has mainly been because performance indicators are often based on the wrong assumptions of how well they reflect the intended performance, being only proximate measures of the quality they intend to indicate, and are prone to measurement errors. The literature is replete with examples of unintended consequences of the application of performance indicators.”

Example initial indicators that could serve in a Y/N function:

- Development or lack of development of
  - Risk management frameworks
  - Best practices
  - Unified delivery protocols

- “Manuals of protocols for genebank operations are recognized as being very useful, but for several reasons they do not ensure that best practices are adhered to.”

Difficulties in introducing a Performance Management System

- Previous experiences with “perverse indicators”
- Data collection
- Exisiting situations –
  - Differences in already implemented QMS
  - Reliance on implicit information/methods

- **12.1 Efficiency and effectiveness through transparency – issues of overall management**
- *12.1.1 Publicly available, up-to-date web-based information system*
- *12.1.2 Risk management framework, including contingency plans*
- *12.1.3 Best practice protocols – generic genebank standards*

- **12.2 Germplasm – issues of use, availability and viability**
- *12.2.1 Use of CGIAR germplasm and associated information – clients*
- *12.2.1 Physical security - germplasm and genebank structures*
- *12.2.2 Plant and seed health - quarantine procedures*
- *12.2.3 Quantity of germplasm - multiplication and availability*
- *12.2.4 Regeneration and storage - germplasm integrity and viability*
- *12.2.5 Distribution of materials - germplasm, DNA and data*
- *12.2.6 Extent of the germplasm - genepool coverage*

- **12.3 International collaboration – partnerships**
- “.. diagnostic and baseline indicators could be used by setting targets at different levels to those set for CGIAR genebanks.”

- “Performance indicators, moreover, even if not misused, intentionally or inadvertently, have a tendency to deteriorate, sometimes for very valid reasons.”

- “….in order to develop a set of performance indicators it is necessary to decide what is important.”