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Project acronym: **ISSCRI2**

**INTEGRATING SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INTO  
COTTON REFORM IMPLEMENTATION LINED  
WITH THE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK**

Program: **Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area**

Instrument : **Specific Support Action**

**Project Completion Report  
(Deliverable D 18)**

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## 1. Introduction

The ISSCRI Project (Integrating social science research into cotton reform implementation lined with the international outlook) is a Specific Action project, based mainly on meetings and on promoting the synergies between the scientists involved. It was to last from January 2007 till August 2008. The deadline was prolonged to February 2009, on request of the Project partners, essentially with the concern of making profit of regional and international cotton meetings to inform about the Project outcomes.

The ISSCRI Project ("Project") was built in early 2006, short after the New Cotton Regime (NCR) entered into force in European Union. It also was conceived a few months after the WTO Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong which claimed the integration of the African cotton countries' concern to phasing out cotton subsidies in the world.

The implementation of the Project was influenced by two important phenomena. The NCR has been cancelled by the European Court of Justice in response to the complaint introduced by Spain. The principle of the reform of the cotton policy in Europe was not questioned *per se*, but the European Commission was requested to adjust this reform by taking into account its impacts on the Spanish cotton sector. A new reform proposal was submitted by the end of 2007 and adopted at the end of the first semester of 2008.

In the other hand, till the end of the Project, the Doha Negotiations are not yet finalized. A new Chair for the farm talks was to be designated. In the opposite of the expectations by the time of conceiving the Project, there are no clear advances in the finalization of the Doha Round and it is hard to state to what extent the "Cotton File" will be taken into consideration.

The Project composition reflects the context at the time of its conception. The first component, or Work Package 1 (WP1), targets at implementing a participative approach to help to adjust the NCR by facilitating interactions between cotton sector stakeholders in Greece and Spain. The second component, WP2, is focussed on a better understanding of cotton policies in the world. The third component, WP3, corresponds to an initiation of collaborative works between scientists involved in socio-economic issues of cotton production.

The Project is coordinated by CIRAD, which is leading also WP2. The IFAPA, in Spain, leads WP1 while the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), in Greece, is in charge of the leadership of WP3.

The Project has been entirely implemented; all the deliverables scheduled have been achieved, significantly beyond what was contemplated. They are attached as appendixes to this completion report which corresponds to Deliverable D18. The main text in this report is

restrained to giving the main points in the implementation of the Project Management and of each Work Package.

## **2. Project management activities**

The Project was kicked-off in January 2007 in the framework of a workshop which took place from January 31st to Feb. 2nd, 2007, at CIRAD in Montpellier. The minute of this workshop was already attached to the First technical report. This latter, although not a deliverable *per se*, is also attached at the end of the compilation of deliverables.

All tasks assigned to Project partners were timely completed and pertain to the following deliverables:

- D1 Project presentation leaflet in four languages (English, Spanish, Greek, French)
- D2 First draft of the status indicating the functioning rules of the Cotton-specific social science oriented Research Network
- D15 Web site dedicated to the Project

The flyers have been helpful to inform about the Project in the framework of several international cotton events: the Fifth African Cotton Association annual meeting in Accra (Ghana) in early March 2007, the 4<sup>th</sup> World Cotton Research Conference, Lubbock, Texas (USA) in September 2007 then at the ICAC Plenary Session in Izmir (Turkey) in October 2007. The prolongation of the Project has permitted to attend the regional meeting of the Mediterranean network of cotton research in Alexandropolis (Greece) in September 2008 and the 67<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of ICAC in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in November 2008.

The Project website (<http://www.isscri.org>) has been made operational in early march 2007. This website is bilingual (French and English) and has enjoyed a conspicuous link at the website of the International Cotton Advisory Committee, ICAC (<http://www.icac.org>). This website will be maintained by the Project Coordinator, CIRAD, for at least two years beyond the Project completion. The structure of this website nevertheless might evolve to better comply with the CIRAD's activities in the area of cotton policies.

The early operation of the Project website has positively contributed to the awareness about the Project (cf Deliverable D16), in particular as the vehicle of a Newsletter whose diffusion was not envisaged in the Project. The objective of the Newsletter, in addition to inform about the ISSCRI Project activities, was to share the information on the stakeholders' interaction related to cotton policy issues in the world. This information is collected from electronic newspapers in more than twenty cotton countries (notably India, Pakistan, Brazil, Argentine,

Paraguay, Mexico, China, Australia, Egypt, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Venezuela, Peru and Angola). Fifteen issues were diffused between April 2007 and July 2008, reaching about 1350 people connected to cotton issues in the world. It is a pity that, in spite of several laudable feedbacks mainly from African subscribers, the diffusion of the Newsletter has stopped because it is very time demanding to the Project coordinator and its time requirement competes with the edition of the Proceedings of the international conference the Project organized in May 2008.

The Project coordination has benefitted from four meetings associating all or part of the project partners, in the framework of scheduled technical meetings: a) the kick-off workshop in Montpellier (France), in February 2007, b) the coordination meeting in Volos (Greece) after the national seminar there, in May 2007, c) the coordination meeting in Cordoba (Spain) after the ISSCRI cotton seminar in September 2007 and finally d) the ISSCRI International Conference in Montpellier (France), May 17, 2008.

The coordination meetings have permitted the needed interaction between partners to address the tasks ahead as well as on the compliance with the timing of the deliverable completion.

Three deliverables are directly connected to the whole management of the Project:

D16 Report on raising public participation and awareness

D17 Final Plan for using and disseminating knowledge

D18 Project completion report

The Table 1 summarizes the situation of completion of deliverables. Most of the scheduled deliverables have been timely achieved and adjusted to the new deadline of the Project. More significant delay has been recorded for several deliverables:

D5, and D7: related to the synthesis reports on interviews and seminars because the activities were implemented later in Spain

D9 : related to the continuation of the interaction process in Spain. The delay is connected to the delay in the adoption of the amendment of the NCR in Brussels.

D11: related to the report of the second presentation of the ISSCRI Project to African cotton sector stakeholders. This presentation took place at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the African Cotton Association in Zambia, March 2008 because there was no significant African regional meeting before that event.

D8: related to the contents of the data base to record scientific references related to socio-economic aspects of cotton production. The delay is consecutive to the decision to achieve an Internet tool for the data recording purpose, corresponding to a more valuable output than initially scheduled.

D14: related to the European cotton prospects after the NCR amendment. This delay is a consequence of the late amendment of the NCR.

Table 1. Deliverables: initial timing and their completion

Del. No	Deliverable name	WP No.	Nature	Dissemination level	Scheduled Delivery date	Actual Delivery date
D1	Project presentation leaflet in four languages (English, Spanish, Greek, French)	WP4	R	PU	M1	M2
D2	First draft of the status indicating the functioning rules of the Cotton-specific social science oriented Research Network	WP3	R	CO	M4	M4
D3	Data base conception for the record of R&D documents related to impacts of cotton production in Europe	WP3	O	CO	M4	M8
D4	Two national reports on the interviews of cotton stakeholders in Greece and Spain (in respective languages)	WP1	R	PU	M7	M10
D5	Synthesis of the outcomes of the interviews at the European level (in English; summary in French)	WP1	R	PU	M11	M18
D6	Two national reports on the national interaction seminars in Greece and Spain in English (summary in Greek and Spanish respectively)	WP1	R	PU	M11	M11
D7	Synthesis report about the first impacts of the new EU Cotton policy (in English)	WP3	R	PU	M11	M18
D8	Reports from the data base after recording the collected documents pertaining to R&D results on the cotton socio-economic issues	WP3	R	PU	M15	M25
D9	Presentation notes on the modalities for the continuation of the national interaction process in Greece and Spain	WP1	R	PU	M14	M14 & M26
D10	First Report on the presentation of the Project to African cotton stakeholders	WP2	R	RE	M11	M4
D11	Second Report on the presentation of the Project mid-way outcomes to African cotton stakeholders (taking into account the visit of the African cotton stakeholders to their counterparts in Europe)	WP2	R	RE	M11	M20
D12	Program of the International Cotton Conference	WP2	R	PU	M11	M8
D13	Report on the International Cotton Conference	WP2	R	PU	M16	M18
D14	Prospective report on the issue of the EU cotton policy adjustment in compliance with internal and external constraints	WP3	R	PU	M17	M26
D15	Web site dedicated to the Project	WP3	O	PU	M4	M3
D16	Report on raising public participation and awareness	WP4	R	PU	M11; M19	M13 & M25
D17	Final Plan for using and disseminating knowledge	WP4	R	PU	M19	M25
D18	Project completion report	WP4	R	PP	M19	M26

### **3. WP1 activities: Launching self-sustained national processes of interaction with EU Cotton Policy**

The activities were scheduled for the first year of the Project and they were executed entirely during the first year. These activities have been reported in detail in the First Technical Report, they are only briefly recalled in this completion report.

#### **3.1. Reminder on the scheduled activities and approach**

The ISSCRI Project mainly targets at contributing to the promotion of cotton sector stakeholders' interaction related to the cotton policy in Europe, within the international context of critique against the high level of support provided to European cotton growers. The WP1 pertains to an attempt of the social scientists to play some role in the stakeholders' interaction process in the two European cotton countries. This initiative is composed of three phases. The first phase corresponds to the implementation of individual interviews with various stakeholders of the cotton sector, nevertheless without statistical ambition. This phase is destined to prepare the second phase of national seminar grouping the various stakeholders, by identifying the issues most relevant to be dealt with collectively. The third phase is destined to identify, along the cotton sector stakeholders, the conditions to sustain the interaction process.

#### **3.2. Implementation of interviews of stakeholders**

The discussions between the project partners have led to retain a common frame to implement the interviews in Greece and in Spain. It was considered two main groups of stakeholders: the cotton growers and non-grower stakeholders. The interview frame was finalized at the end of February 2007, enabling the conduct of the interviews afterward. In practice, the interviews were actually conducted during March-April in Greece. In Spain, the conduct of the interviews was less concentrated and has lasted till September 2007.

The execution of the interviews has led to the following deliverables:

- D4 Two national reports on the interviews of cotton stakeholders in Greece and Spain
- D5 Synthesis of the outcomes of the interviews at the European level

#### **3.3. National seminars on cotton policy**

The two national seminars did not take place in the row. In Greece, the seminar took place as scheduled before summer 2007. In Spain, owing to the longer time it took to implement interviews of the stakeholders, the seminar was organized after summer.

The execution of the two seminars has led to the following deliverables:

D6 Two national reports on the national interaction seminars, in Greece and Spain.

D7 Synthesis report about the first impacts of the new EU Cotton policy.

It is worth noting that the modalities, attendance and outcomes from the seminars are quite different in the two countries because these countries have distinct histories in the area of interaction between stakeholders.

In Spain, the ISSCRI seminar comes out as one among other gatherings or exchanges which have yet taken place involving more or less completely all the categories of cotton sector stakeholders. The ISSCRI seminar likely was particular in gathering all categories of stakeholders (political authorities, researchers, technical information organizations, farmers' organizations, cooperatives, ginners, input suppliers) and have each of them present their views very formerly.

In Greece, the local context in the monitoring of the cotton sector appears to be far much less favourable. After the Cotton Board was dismantled by early 2000s, farmers have the feeling that no one is dealing with the cotton sector in the country. The implementation of the ISSCRI Project has been welcome and has permitted the set up of an organisation, called Thessaly Stakeholders' Cotton Forum, destined to facilitate the continuation of their interaction. The set up of this Forum is clearly a tangible outcome of the implementation of ISSCRI Project.

### **3.4. Assistance to the interaction process**

The organization of a national multi-stakeholder seminar is a first stage of the assistance to the interaction process. The second stage is to assist in determining conditions enabling the interaction process continuation. Owing to the differences between Spain and Greece in terms of cotton sector monitoring, the real contribution in promoting stakeholders' interaction varies.

In Greece, the continuation of the interaction is expected through the set up of the formerly mentioned Thessaly Cotton Stakeholders' Forum. The Project has provided the needed efforts to have the first meeting of the Forum. Nevertheless, if there is no change in the Greek Government's attitude in the monitoring of the cotton sector and if there is no support, in technical and financial terms, to backstop the new Forum, it is doubtful that there will be real continuation of the interaction process.

In Spain, the interaction process existed before the ISSCRI implementation, with political appropriation, there is no doubt that the process will continue and the Project has provided valuable inputs to it. After the amendment of the NCR in mid-2008, the Spanish Government is conducting actions to optimize the impacts of the reform. It is worth noting that the Project partner in Spain is particularly called upon to follow-up and to measure these impacts.

The activity of assistance to multi-stakeholder interaction pertains to the deliverable D9, in the shape of two distinct national notes. The one regarding Spain has been delivered recently, it takes into account the change in the multi-stakeholder interaction, more oriented now to provide assistance to accompany the reform implementation which is implying a dramatic reduction of the ginning sector (up to 80% according to estimations).

#### **4. WP2 activities: Contributing to international mutual understanding on cotton production**

The objective of the WP2 in the ISSCRI Project is to help to achieve a better understanding of cotton policies at the international level. Since African countries have also criticized the subsidy policy of the EU, during the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancun in September 2003, the first task was to explore the possible role of the Project to facilitate some mutual understanding between African and European cotton stakeholders. The second task was to organize an international conference dealing with issues related to cotton policies in the world.

##### **4.1. Intermediating between Europe and Africa cotton sectors**

The purpose was to inform about the ISSCRI Project implementation and its possible intermediation, if required, to facilitate the exchanges of views between European and African cotton stakeholders. This task has led to the following deliverables:

D10 First Report on the presentation of the Project to African cotton stakeholders

D11 Second Report on the presentation of the Project mid-way outcomes to African cotton stakeholders

It came out very quickly, from the first presentation of the Project to African cotton stakeholders, that there was no desire of establishing connection with European cotton stakeholders. This was particularly clear with the people involved in the Doha negotiations. Establishing such connection seemed to them not compatible with their strategic approach which was exclusively addressing the formal and diplomatic procedures to have subsidies phased out.

In the European side, the cotton stakeholders in Spain and Greece globally did not neither show any interest to go and visit African cotton producing countries.

ISSCRI partners have taken notice of the respective positions of the European and African cotton stakeholders and acknowledge that they cannot do more in their potential facilitation role.

This situation was anyway somehow anticipated in the Project and only a few means were allocated to the task. In compensation, the release of the ISSCRI Newsletter has contributed to extend the scope of better understanding about the similarities of cotton policy issues in the world as well as the variety of responses. This release also makes clear our orientation in facilitating mutual understanding, trying to be as much neutral as possible in dealing with cotton policy issues.

## 4.2. ISSCRI conference

The international conference scheduled in the Project has got institutional support and sponsorship from ICAC (International Cotton Advisory Committee) as well as the "Region Languedoc-Roussillon", the administrative region where the Project coordinator is located. The conference took place in May 13-17, 2008 in Montpellier (France). The theme retained was "Rationale and evolution of cotton policies" making the ISSCRI Conference the first research conference addressing explicitly the issue of cotton policies.

The conference actually has reached its international ambition with more than twenty countries represented (precisely twenty one) by eighty three participants. About a dozen of participants from other five countries were left behind because of problems to obtain visa on time. Simultaneous translation English/French was provided. The Project has succeeded to provide financial support to enable the participation of the authors coming from developing countries. The financial contribution of ICAC and Region Languedoc-Roussillon, of around € 4,000 each, was very helpful in this regard. The decision of asking for payment of registration fees has prevented financial losses in the organisation of the conference.

The organisation of the conference has led to two deliverables:

D12 Program of the International Cotton Conference

D13 Report on the International Cotton Conference

In addition to the above mentioned deliverables, the proceedings of the conference, in English, are published by the Life Science International Journal ([http:// www.isphyderabad.com.pk](http://www.isphyderabad.com.pk)) in hard copies. They should be accessible too through the journal website for free download.

A selection of eleven communications is being reviewed to constitute a special issue on cotton policies in the French journal "Cahiers Agricultures" ([http://www.john-libbey-eurotext.fr/fr/revues/agro\\_biotech/agr/sommaire.md](http://www.john-libbey-eurotext.fr/fr/revues/agro_biotech/agr/sommaire.md)). All communications are being rewritten to provide original articles or syntheses. The review process by an impact factor journal is taking more time than anticipated. The publication should nevertheless materialise by the end of 2009.

## **5. WP3: Setting up a cotton sector specific research network on socio-economic issues**

The tasks associated with WP3 are to set up the nucleus of a research network dedicated to cotton policy and to start collaboration through the analysis of the impacts of the NCR in Greece and Spain.

### **5.1. Network set up**

The ISSCRI Project has ambitioned to gather scientists working on the socio-economic issues related to cotton production. It was contemplated to set up a specific network of scientists. It is a rare attempt to assemble social-scientists of various countries around a specific crop, cotton.

The interaction between the Project partners has led to decide to move gradually towards the network set up. Since it was difficult to anticipate how many people would feel interest in joining the network, in addition to the scientific associations they may already have joined, it was decided to postpone the decision on the status of the network (association, club, and forum?).

The Deliverable D2 explains more elaborately the approach to set up the targeted network.

The idea of network establishment has been mainly disseminated through the ISSCRI website and through the information provided by the Project partners in Spain and Greece. It was realized that there was not so much reaction from fellow scientists. This outcome may result from the fact that there are not so many researchers on social sciences involved on cotton production, or not so much specialised on cotton. Another reason could be the lack of tangible products to attract researchers to join in the network.

The Project partners hence have thought that the proposal of a common tool could help. This observation gives more rationale to achieve the development of a scientific document referencing tool which was actually contemplated in the Project.

This tool has been developed and made operational by the last semester of the Project implementation period (cf. *infra*). The network constitution can be promoted again although the Project has finished. Indeed, the Project coordinator has been designated to act as the head of the Working Group on cotton economics within the Mediterranean Cotton Network. This position is favourable to contact more colleagues to join in the network that the Project has tried to set up.

## **5.2. Original computerized tool for document referencing**

It is not always easy to find out references dealing with specific societal issues related to cotton production. Although there are many literature reference data base that can be consulted, they are all classifying publications according to keywords which are not very clear on the socio-economic issues they pertain to. The ISSCRI Project targets at setting up a new tool to overcome these shortfalls, by carrying out a hierarchic thesaurus connecting keywords to societal topics.

The Project has committed to firstly develop the tool through using a common data base software (Microsoft Access), the expected product was to be used separately in France, Spain and Greece to give rise to three data bases whose consolidation would correspond to a regional data base. The development task was conducted and has led to the COLIRE tool (for COtton LIterature REferencing tool), as an Access application. The reports on the data base conceived pertain to deliverable D3.

The transcription of COLIRE into an Internet tool was explored along its conception. The outcome achieved was sufficient to enable the Project coordinator to convince his institution, CIRAD, to supply extra financial means to develop a first version of the Internet tool. The development started in February 2008, it was finalised in August 2008. It was operational through Internet from September 2008, enabling each partner of the Project to record most relevant scientific documents regarding the socio-economic topics of cotton production.

The new document referencing tool is called SLIRE (for Scientific LIterature REferencing). It is designed to operate for as many research networks as possible, having their own specific hierarchic thesaurus split down from their common research themes. CIRAD has got intellectual property protection for SLIRE, allocated by the "Agence pour la protection des programmes".

Deliverable D8 informs in detail about the SLIRE tool as well as the contents of the corresponding data base after it has been fed by the Project partners. SLIRE is indeed operating at <http://www.slire.net/slire> although there is room for its improvement. Information about this tool is provided at the ISSCRI website <http://www.isscri.org/necso/colire> where the users' manual is available.

### **5.3. Partners' collaboration in research**

Although the Project is implemented as a Specific Action instrument without production of primary research, its operation nevertheless has permitted several sequences of collaboration in the research area.

The most specific outputs of this research collaboration correspond to the reports analysing the impacts of the NCR. For the WP3, this was particularly the case for Deliverable D14 (Prospective report on the issue of the EU cotton policy adjustment in compliance with internal and external constraints) which provides a vision of the possible impacts of the NCR after its amendment in mid-2008.

Although scheduled in the framework of the WP1, two reports of synthesis are also illustrative of the research collaboration the Project permitted to launch, they pertain to the deliverables:

D5     Synthesis of the outcomes of the interviews at the European level (in English; summary in French)

D7     Synthesis report about the first impacts of the new EU Cotton policy (in English)

## **6. Conclusion**

The Project has started on time and most of the scheduled tasks have also been executed timely adjusted to the postponed deadline of the Project. All deliverables the Project partners have committed to deliver have been achieved. Some achievements go beyond commitments:

- The diffusion of the ISSCRI Newsletter has permitted to capture the diversity of cotton policies in the world as well as the dramatic features of the reactions of the cotton sector stakeholders in few countries.
- The Project has organised the first international conference focussed on the issue of cotton policies. The publication of the conference Proceedings in English and the forthcoming publication of a special issue on cotton policies in a French Journal contribute to disseminate one of the Project major achievements.
- An original Internet tool has been developed to implement the referencing of scientific documents within researchers' networks. It can be use by any researchers' network having common research theme that can be split down in hierarchic thesaurus.

The Project coordinator is proceeding to further disseminate the Project outputs through the CORDIS Project information and dissemination service. It commits to maintain active, for at least two more years, the two website that the implementation of the Project has led to set up.