Summary of discussion – field tour in Fergana and Andijan provinces (Uzbekistan)

17-18 March 2014

(1) Based on ongoing or previous research of the Centers, the team visited 4 locations and interacted with farmers in 3 WUAs in Fergana and Andijan provinces. They also met with the representatives of *khokimyats*, the local governments in both provinces. The approach and plans introduced by the team were welcomed.
(2) A key observation was that farmers demonstrated readiness to experiment with new crops/varieties and technologies in their fields. They specifically mentioned the lack of expertise in terms of agronomists, water specialists and breeders at the level of WUAs. Integrated Pest Management was recognized as a key component that needs to be more explicitly included in the Dryland Systems CRP research agenda.
(3) It was agreed that Centers with projects in the Fergana Valley would share available bio-physical characteristics from their locations with all team members. This would be helpful for selecting representative research areas with high potential for out-scaling, and for planning interventions.
(4) There was some discussion as to whether different Centers -- members of the CRP DS may choose different locations in Fergana Valley according to their research focus and required conditions. Other members suggested that focus should be on systemic, integrated research in one or two representative research areas.
(5) It was agreed to identify a list of small equipment required in Fergana Valley soonest possible. In this respect, the importance of meteorological data collection locally in the WUAs was asserted. Placement of small meteo stations requires special permission from local government, and the *khokimyat* of Andijan verbally promised to provide support. Access to the database of SIC ICWC will also facilitate interventions specifically on efficient irrigation scheduling. Provision of meteo stations to the local partners needs to be verified against the CRP DS research agenda (logframe).
(6) It was suggested that Project Implementation Units need to be organized ineach Action Site (possibly in each country component of an Action Site), and Action Site Coordinators need to be nominated to support implementation, facilitate partnerships and monitor research activities.