

A large, light green abstract graphic on the left side of the page, consisting of several overlapping, rounded, brushstroke-like shapes that resemble a stylized leaf or a cluster of grapes, mirroring the RIMISP logo's theme.

Evaluation Report International
Conference “Dynamics of rural
transformation in emerging economies”
April 14-16, New Delhi, India

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Informe del Programa Dinámicas Territoriales Rurales

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Evaluation Report International Conference “Dynamics of rural transformation in emerging economies”

April 14-16, New Delhi, India

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of an event assessment, conducted during the conference in India. It aims to inform the International Steering Committee and the Rural Territorial Dynamics Program coordinating unit on participants' perceptions about event organization and outcomes, as well as providing recommendations for future policy learning & cooperation investments.

Conference Objectives

1. The conference seeks to stimulate the emergence of new frameworks, approaches and strategies for dealing with the major challenges posed by the dynamics of rural transformation in emerging economies driven by domestic and international trends.
2. Through bringing together senior level policy makers and public sector administrators, academia and civil society, we seek to share models, experiences and innovations that work, including new and flexible approaches that leverage the forces of globalization for the benefit of the rural populations.
3. We seek to strengthen understanding between countries facing similar challenges and to build new networks between common interest groups.

Close to 200 people participated in this conference coming predominantly from the four emerging economies of Brazil, China, India and South Africa. In addition, participants came from other developing and emerging economy countries including Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Kenya, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Uruguay, Vietnam and Zimbabwe, as well as developed countries.

The conference had a cost of \$728.000 USD¹ and was organized by governmental bodies of the four

¹ Only direct cost and not accounting for time and travel expenses of participants.

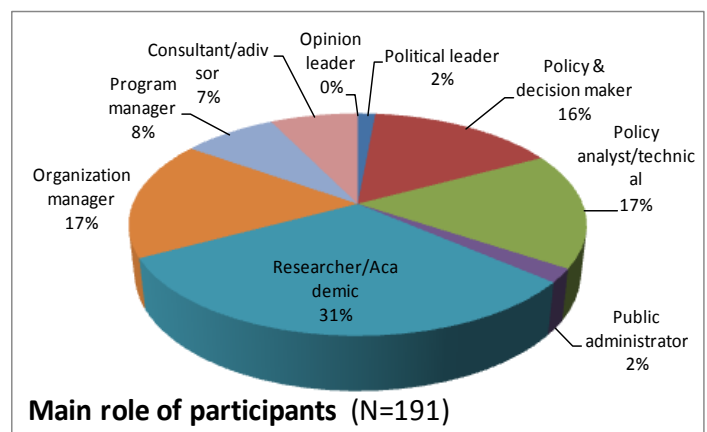
emerging economies: Brazil's Ministry of Agrarian Development, South Africa's Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, China's Development Research Center of the State Council (DRC), India's Planning Commission, and the Latin American Center

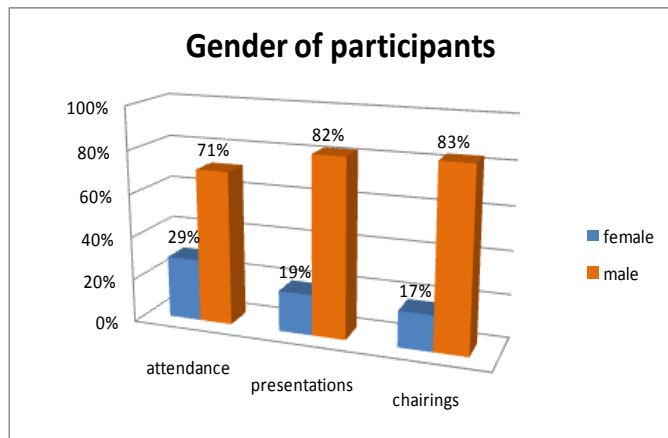
"The objective of the conference is the creation of cooperation and alliances among the emerging economies." Han Jun, Director General, Development Research Center of the State Council (DRC) - China

for Rural Development (RIMISP) from Chile.

For assessing the conference, several methods were used: i) a satisfaction survey applied to all participants (36 responses received out of 250), ii) short interviews with selected participants (17) during breaks, iii) session observations (14 out of 28 total sessions) by the M&E team and volunteers; and (iv) participant list analysis. Evaluation questions were focused around four key areas of interest: quality of event organization and delivery; quality of presentations and debate; fulfilled objectives; and outcomes in terms of innovative experiences, policy opportunities, networking and collaboration. Follow-up evaluation is planned within three months with a purposive sample of conference participants; hence this report represents an immediate post-conference review.

2. Participation





The conference brought together high level policy makers, analysts and researchers from public, NGO, academic, banking and development organizations offering a diversity of knowledge, skills and experiences on rural development related fields, including environmental services and natural resources; agriculture and food; and economic and social development. Participants shared models, frameworks and experiences drawn from emerging economy countries, including new and flexible approaches that leverage the forces of globalization for the benefit of rural populations.

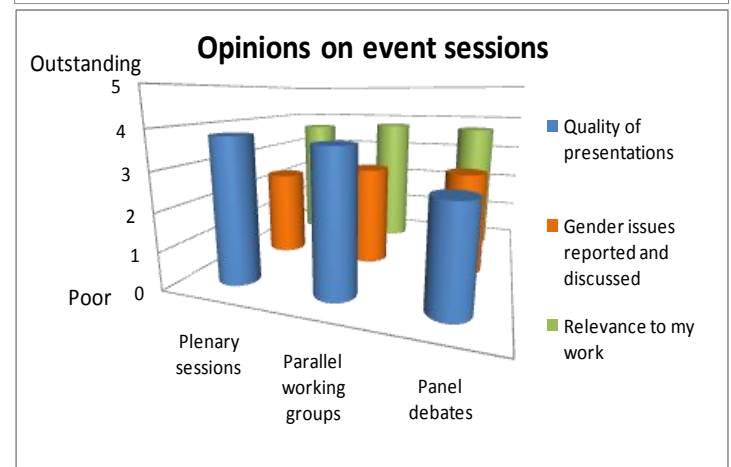
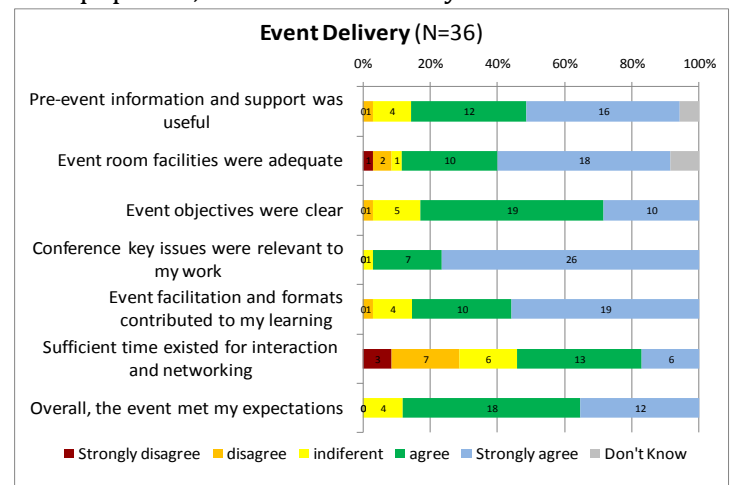
Conference participants included high profile political figures including the President of India; Ministers, Secretaries of State and national government representatives; provincial/regional administrators; natural resource managers; academics and policy think tank staff members; individuals from the private sector, including banking institutions and business associations; and staff of international, multilateral and other development agencies.

Participants were predominantly men from the four emerging economies, with 80% from India, China, South Africa and Brazil. Although high ranking women public officials, researchers and NGO representatives did attend, they composed 29% of participants and were in the minority, more visibly, at the level of presentations made (19%) and meeting facilitation/chairing (17%).

3. Delivery and organization

The conference was evaluated very positively by respondents. Not only were congratulatory comments received during interviews and through surveys in terms of utility (91% found it as a highly valuable investment for their work) but also of satisfaction (88% mentioned that they were satisfied with the conference).

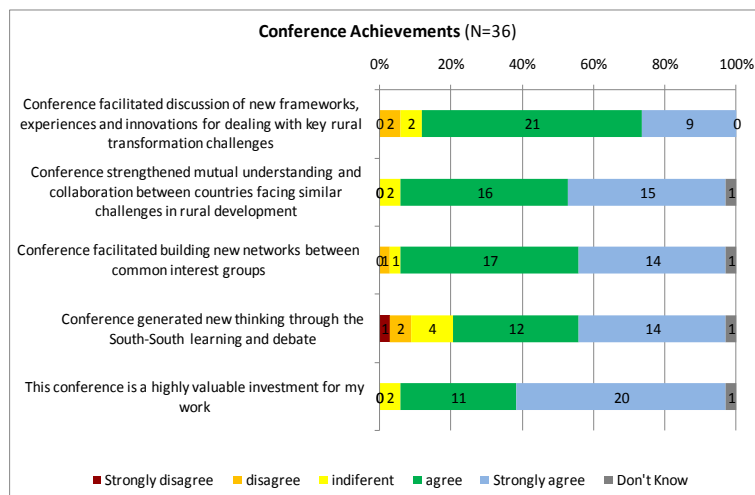
Respondents overall appreciated information on event objectives and program as well as support material, provided before the event. A few missed more detailed information on papers and presentations as well as on hotel accommodation in Delhi. In terms of logistics, participants found the conference facilities adequate for the type of meetings and sessions held, with good room infrastructure and services. However, some remarks (10% of comments received) were made on the promptness and readiness of translation equipment, and the too formally structured sessions.



"Countries are not dialoguing, only presenting what they have done or have in place, but not getting into the details of implementation of policies and what is possible to attain." Conference Participant

It is worth noting that 97% of respondents found the conference quite *relevant to their work*, particularly the identified key issues for discussion and the sessions' varied formats. In effect, 85% noted that conference facilitation and formats were adequate and that they contributed to participant learning, with overall good event organization and management that promoted good experience sharing. Nevertheless, a third (29%) of participants mentioned that too much time was devoted to long, dry and (in some cases) irrelevant presentations (e.g. IFAD, OECD) within a tight schedule, with time impacting for in-depth discussion, interaction and networking. Lax time management of specific facilitators and poor preparation of presenters could have contributed to this.

Presentations' main focus was on RD issue diagnosis, broad trends and policy achievements under a predominantly statistical, economical approach. While minimal attention was given to political processes and institutional failures, for instance. Gender issues were also overlooked: despite that they were superficially mentioned in 2 working group sessions (Human development and social inclusion + Governance, policy and institutions), there were few presentations and discussions on gender dynamics of rural development in the emerging economy countries. It is widely documented the significant role of women in family farming, microfinance services, small entrepreneurship and social program participation in rural areas.



4. Key achievements

Conference objectives were widely achieved, not only in terms of opportunities offered to participants for sharing models, experiences and rural development

"Gender was the missed point in the conference: hardly a couple of presentations mentioned an idea or specific indicator. But it was certainly never discussed in depth."

Conference Participant

frameworks among the four emerging economies, but also in terms of building networks and strengthening mutual understanding. In terms of value, 91% of respondents found the conference a highly valuable investment for their work. In particular they greatly appreciated organizers' efforts in bringing different-background and front-line thinkers and practitioners together for face-to-face discussions, not only the best from within the four focus countries but also from other nations and various organizations.

As for the most innovative, interesting experiences, Brazil's many advanced programs stood out for respondents. They mentioned in particular, Brazil's public policies such as Zero Hunger program, family farming support and rural insurance programs (climate and market change), where sub-national governments play a role. Also mentioned were China's

incentives to promote nature conservation and rural migration along with an agricultural program for alternative energy generation.

As a central lesson learned during the event, respondents pointed out that rural development emerged as a complex, multivariate phenomenon beyond the issues of agricultural and land reform. Also, that specific pre-conditions and key factors for rural development policies are needed, such as social cohesion, efficient governance structures along with the inclusion of small producers and land holders. Respondents also acknowledged that presentations stimulated their own reflection and thinking about their national and local rural development challenges.

Respondents indicated various ways in which they were anticipating applying such learning, including: advocating for rural development initiatives for small farmers, embedding the notion of rural development in development plans and offering ideas to national and local plans. However, the policy applications of conference insights and contacts for collaboration remain an open question that merits further investigation in the coming months.

Meanwhile, all four emerging economies are facing increasing changes and challenges, being in the midst of policy formulation and evaluation. South Africa's government is undergoing land reform, whereas India and China are rethinking their own four-year national development plans, in which rural policies play a key role for guiding development and sustaining future growth, with an impact that goes beyond their national frontiers. Thus, there are intermittent policy opportunities available in the countries, which offer specific opportunities for South-South collaboration and assistance.

An increased awareness and commitment to rural development can be considered a core output of the conference. The conference endorsed a Conference Statement which includes a South-South collaboration agenda, centered on human development and with particular emphasis on public investments, institutional frameworks and governance systems

along with effective public programs and policies that reach the poorest in rural areas. However, the question remains of how these declaratory statements and parallel (informal and official) multi-stakeholder processes are going to be guided and facilitated as well as to the specific collaboration activities to carry on over the coming months. So far and based on the conference's declaration, IFAD's South Asia Office is preparing a corporate SS-cooperation program (approx. \$1.5 million) be presented to its executive board by September 2010.

"We come out of this conference with greater knowledge on our countries ['s realities], capacities to coordinate and articulate us in better ways as well as with stronger bonds for mutual understanding among the four countries. " Francesco Pierri, International Advisor to the, Minister of Agrarian Development - Brazil

The conference raised attention and specific coverage of media. The speeches given by India's President and other ministers at the inaugural session were noted by the Press Government Bureau of India, InLaw News, Zee News, The Hindi, The New Kerala, and the Qatar Tribune, among others. A press release from UNDP office also mentioned the conference as a venue for presenting Brazil's Food Security and Procurement program to small farmers.

A portion of respondents regretted that non-academic, un-official voices somewhat lacked during the conference. In particular, experiences from and in collaboration with the private sector, civil society organization and social movements: their vision on trends and challenges and the initiatives they are implementing. Further participants were eager to learn more on real-life implementation failures, institutional and political challenges of rural development, as well as on the role of women and the youth in such reform and programs.

For Rimisp, this conference represents a significant initiative of the DTR program, not only because of the amount of investment needed (\$ 220,000² by RIMISP plus \$573,000 contributed by other partners and donors) but also as a policy enabling process working together with the major global emerging economies. In this case, RIMISP as chair of the International Committee and as a key player supporting the technical planning of the conference has exercised exemplary organizational skills including connecting with high ranking policy makers, research and funding partners, organizing and delivering a high quality international event, and facilitating multinational dialogue and collaboration. However, the initiated process needs to be sustained and substantiated in the months to come.

"These four countries have a responsibility with the world as they not only are national players but also global ones. " Julio Berdegué,
Executive Director, RIMISP - Chile

Although the presence of other Rimisp-supported DTR projects in the conference appeared weak (limited to one presentation of DTR research findings), Brazil's showcasing of good experiences and the participation of their policy makers gave the event a clear Latin American presence. It also exemplifies how the DTR Coordination Unit is able to extend beyond the academic research domain and step into the policy, institutional and political arenas of rural territorial development. The same type of capabilities may need to be exercised by other DTR partners in the LAC region as several rural development dynamics are being researched while policy changes are to be promoted.

² This figure includes \$80.331 of staff time, as in-kind contribution.

Annex 1. Responses received on Evaluation Survey (N=36)

Event delivery

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following	Strongly disagree	disagree	indiferent	agree	Strongly agree	Don't Know
Pre-event information and support was useful	0%	3%	11%	34%	46%	6%
Event room facilities were adequate	3%	6%	3%	29%	51%	9%
Event objectives were clear	0%	3%	14%	54%	29%	0%
Conference key issues were relevant to my work	0%	0%	3%	21%	76%	0%
Event facilitation and formats contributed to my learning	0%	3%	12%	29%	56%	0%
Sufficient time existed for interaction and networking	9%	20%	17%	37%	17%	0%
Overall, the event met my expectations	0%	0%	12%	53%	35%	0%

Achievements

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:	Strongly disagree	disagree	indiferent	agree	Strongly agree	Don't Know
Conference facilitated discussion of new frameworks, experiences and innovations for dealing with key rural transformation challenges	0%	6%	6%	62%	26%	0%
Conference strengthened mutual understanding and collaboration between countries facing similar challenges in rural development	0%	0%	6%	47%	44%	3%
Event objectives were clear	0%	3%	3%	50%	41%	3%
Conference key issues were relevant to my work	3%	6%	12%	35%	41%	3%
Event facilitation and formats contributed to my learning	0%	0%	6%	32%	59%	3%

Your opinion on event sessions

Please rate different sessions of the conference in the scale of 0 to 5, for the three criteria at the right: Being 0= poor and 5=outstanding		Quality of presentations	Gender issues discussed and reported	Relevance to my work
		0 - 5	0 - 5	0 - 5
D a y 1	A. Inaugural session	4,0	2,4	3,8
	B. Strategic vision presentations	3,8	2,5	3,5
	C. Country overview presentations	3,8	2,7	3,7
	D. Parallel thematic working groups:	3,7	2,7	3,8
D a y 2	D1. Human development and social inclusion	3,6	2,9	3,8
	D2. Jobs and economic diversification	3,6	2,6	4,1
	D3. Agriculture and food	3,9	3,2	4,0
	D4. Environmental services and energy	3,5	1,9	3,4
	D5. Urbanization and rural-urban linkages	3,8	3,0	3,8
	D6. Governance, policy and institutions	3,8	2,6	3,5
	E. Panel Debates	2,7	2,7	3,7
	E1. Benchmarking for rural change	2,8	2,0	3,4
	E2. Identifying research gaps	2,5	1,8	2,9
	E3. Process of learning and networking	2,8	2,2	3,0
E4. Rapid change in rural transformation and the small holder agriculture sector	3,0	2,4	3,3	
E5. Rural policy making in uncertainty and risk	2,4	2,0	3,0	
D a y 3	F. Other countries' RD experiences	3,8	1,9	3,5
	G. Closing session	3,7	2,2	3,7

General information of survey respondents (demographics – n=36)

Gender	Male	Female					
	67%	33%					
		100%					
Age	Younger than 30	Between 30-49	Between 50-69	Older than 70			
	0%	67%	33%	0%			
				100%			
Type of organization you represent	International or multilateral organization	National Government	Sub national Government	International NGO	Research NGO or think-tank centre	University or training centre	
	4%	48%	15%	0%	11%	11%	
	National NGO	Media & communication organization	Business association	Business organization	Community organization	Other	
	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	
						100%	
Main Role in your country	Political leader	Policy & decision maker	Policy analyst/technical	Public administrator	Researcher		
	0%	13%	28%	9%	16%		
	Organization manager	Program manager	Consultant/ advisor	Opinion leader	Other		
	6%	16%	9%	0%	3%		
					100%		
Country of participant	South Africa	India	China	Brazil	Other		
	25%	39%	11%	10%	15%		
					100%		

Annex 2. Comments and suggestions received during the conference

2.1 Event delivery

- Conference was achieved, a lot clearly; there is a lot that still needs to be learned going forward.
- Very good and I believe that the report showed really all decision made
- Need for more time for discussions that are less rushed. The discussions should encourage participants to make recommendations with practical implements. A civil society voice is necessary.
- The conference was loaded with academics, did not have the rural people, everything was about them and not with them. The conference could have exposed delegates to some concrete experiences of rural life at least.
- Presentations preparations must be guided by structure questions to have more focused discussions.
- While there was little information before the event, once the event begun, it was smooth and well managed with lonely info on logistics.
- Good, but could be better--> predominantly economists.
- It was interesting but no one could help talking of everything instead of focusing. We need to build our agenda and discuss priorities looking to the future.
- This has to be an arrival lessing and sharing platform.
- Too much time on presentations-not enough time for discussions in group or networking staying in same hotel would have helped.
- The conference worked on a variety of non agreed conceptual understanding e.g. small scale, and viability. I would have liked to see more grounded economic analyses of what is presently working.
- Main problem - 6 simultaneous groups made it impossible to attend some sessions many of which I would have liked to participate in.
- Sound equipment was problematic. The ablution facilities unhygienic and disappointing.
- Sharing experiences was useful and best practices will definitely copied. The presentations were professional and in most instances very practical and helpful.
- Delay information on accommodation papers.
- Well organized event, conferences and parallel sessions
- It's good, need more specific.
- Very nice
- Well managed, well timed, no big hassles given size of the group conference participants. All displayed high levels of professionalism.
- For a first conference of this kind, it was good but some things can be better. There was not enough time to interact with delegates and network. The security and venue was poor. Last day of conference should be shorter to allow for delegates to sight-see. Would be necessary to host the next one in a rural area.
- The event was fairly well managed.

2.2 What is the most valuable key lesson you take home from the conference and will likely share with others?

- That OECD should interface more with these four countries to support them and to learn from them
- Rural development is not about agriculture. People are migrating away from rural areas thus diversifying into non agriculture activities
- The dynamic process of rural transformation in those emerging countries
- Affirmation that empowerment of rural people themselves so that they can take full responsibility and enjoy power to change their own situation is key to success.
- Transformation can happen in the lives of the rural people for better if governments do not see rural people only as votes to keep them in power.
- The success of family farming in Brazil and the government strong investment in rural economies including the diversification.
- Excellent time management and cross-sharing across countries.
- The non-negotiables: NREGA presented by BK Sinha.
- Experiences of the countries in development challenges with different instruments.
- Rural diversification and small scale small-holder in Brazil China and India are generally at too small scale (2-6ha) to be financial viable family farms.
- Dilemmas of rural development. The used of alternative energy in Brazil and China.

- Rural development is everyone's business. There is no formal definition of rural.
- The issue of family farming and the support mechanism
- Strength in diversity building a better understanding of similarities.
- Cooperation among emerging economies on rural transformation initiated and the networking required to set it up.
- The difference between China & India and other researchers from other parts of the world and their researches about rural development.
- Lots of initiative and programs in Brazil.
- Commonality of experiences with other participant countries.
- More questions than answers. However valuable lessons have been learnt.
- Innovative policy and experiences of rural development.
- Rural development is not just about agrarian reform. It must address: institutional, infrastructure, investment, income, distribution, innovation.
- Divergent views on rural development and how people think development should take place but the problems are the same in all countries but at different scale: the challenge would be to manage development expectations in all these countries.
- Issues around smallholder family farming. Importance of state in agricultural sector.
- For me; almost all what I heard about India, South Africa and China was new, so more than lessons learned I learned about the reality of these countries

2.3 What was the most innovative framework, approach or experience on rural development that caught your attention during the conference?

- Chinese thinking about land reform
- Social cohesion
- Reforming and improving rural governance structure
- The Brazilian model of rural development (however in all models. I am not happy about women involvement)
- Possibility of a Brazilian model for my country.
- The insurance program from Brazil small holder marketing models and the value of technical support.
- Dr Mihir Shah's presentation on the initial to set the tone for the following two days.
- The Brazilian experiences on coordinated land reform in the face of pressure from agribusiness and needy family farms.
- ZERO POVERTY approach from Brazil.
- China's diverse use of agriculture for energy.
- That the definition of small or family farming is debatable depending on where each respective country is in terms of development.
- Family farming and credit approaches from Brazil.
- The Brazilian Family farm concept.
- Thinking together, working together, and sharing experiences (lessons) together.
- Climate insurance of Brazil.
- Climate and price insurance in Brazil. Conservation incentives in China.
- Session on microfinance
- TVE'S in China.
- Discuss of smallholder family farm.
- It was the family farming model of Brazil. It ensures that the smallest with benefit and as such its impact is huge.

2.4 Inspired by the conference, which decisions, actions or changes are you mostly likely to take forward in the following months?

- Consider using examples of India with regard to a) Mahatma Gandhi programme b) Brazil experiences in dealing with strong commercial sector.
- I'll be engaged in more information sharing and fact finding activities about the four countries.
- To support boldly or even pressurize the dept rural development and land affairs to change the strategies for empowerment based of course on what the people want.
- Push for more organized communities around clear commodities.
- Taking into consideration the lessons of the four countries development, see how to secure a learning process.

- Explore opportunities to make business and government work together.
- Integrating migration with development.
- Biofuels.
- That there are implications whether one chooses the elephant or dragon model.
- Approach of family farming.
- Strengthening rural urban linkages.
- Getting connection more with colleagues from emerging economies to exchanging ideas on rural development.
- More international communications on rural development, esp. focusing on environment and farmer's livelihood.
- The presented papers in English are just abstracts. We need more detailed information.
- Will influence my understanding on macro economic policies in country, in global context and impact my research.
- As a researcher, I'll follow up on research gaps emanating from the conference.
- Give more attention to rural development and discuss problems with related person, such as official and activist of rural NGO.
- That agriculture must drive or at least become a key aspect of rural development. Diversification and non-farm activities.

2.5 Should you organize a conference like this in the coming months, what would you do differently to improve it?

- Better framework conditions (i.e. a shared definition of rural)
- Focus on fewer topics and ensure that they are well debated and achievable results are attained
- If I organize a conference like this, I'll focus on one or two key issues on rural transformation and hold more in-depth discussion.
- I organized an annual rural development conference of Walter Sishlu University. What shall I do? I will invite one or two speakers to contribute this South-South dialogue. I appreciate the technical support and structures in time management.
- I would bring some rural people to talk for themselves. I would cultivate a paradigm shift toward the youth to begin to appreciate transformations of rural life and support them with modern technology so that they can do better than their parents
- Use one hotel only for another combining conference and accommodation.
- Pre discussions about outcomes to avoid using the limited time in discussions
- Have in-depth case studies and more coverage around the four thematic areas. More private sector participation.
- Pre-conference tour of points of interest in New Delhi
- Increase engagement in plenary i.e. set up round table discussions
- A site visit in country
- Placing the speakers in the parallel sessions relevant to the thematic logics
- Not for an individual, however. I would like to participate in such conferences.
- Better organization.
- Keep less number of themes, try to avoid parallel session. Would like to keep it more focused. Also emphasize workable conclusions.
- More focusing and more specific.
- Get other developing nations to participate.
- Sure, I would strengthen the mutual understanding of different groups.
- I would invite the non-governmental sector. The south/south/south/north participation.
- Maybe a biannual (every 2 years)- it can provide a lot of opportunities to learn and engage with different sectors of people maybe to rotate between these emerging countries but host it in a rural area.
- Allow additional time for discussion included a field trip to rural area.

Annex 3. List of interviewed participants

1. Dr Neva Makgetla, Lead Economist, Planning Division, Development Bank of South Africa (State owned enterprise)
2. Ms Jie Chen, Research Fellow, Deputy-Director of Rural Development Division, Research Center for Rural Economy, MOA (Government research institution)
3. Dr Samuel Kariuki, Academic sociologist, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
4. Dr Yupeng He, Senior Research Fellow, Professor, Division Director, Research department of Rural Economy, Development Research center of the state Council, China
5. Ms Nelisiwe Sithole, Head of the Department, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration, South Africa
6. Ms Indira Hirway, Director and Professor of Economics, Center for Development Alternatives, India
7. Mr Xiaoshan Zhang, Senior Research Fellow, Director General, RDI, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China
8. Ms Sarah Ahmed, Senior Program Specialist, Agriculture and Environment, IDRC, India
9. Shilpa Phadke, Consultant, World Bank, India
10. K S Gopal, Director, Centre for Environmental Concerns, India
11. Dr Han Jun, Senior Research Fellow, Professor, Director General, Research Department of Rural Economy, Development Research Centre of the State Council (DRC), China
12. Raffaele Trapasso, Acting Head of the Rural Development Unit, Public Governance and Territorial Development, Directorate OECD, France
13. Timothy Maaje, Municipal Manager, Mopani District Municipality, Limpopo province, South Africa
14. Prof. J. George, Director, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University, India.
15. Dr Thomas Elhaut, Director, Asia and Pacific, IFAD, Italy.
16. Dr. Francesco Pierri, International Advisor, Ministry of Agrarian Development, Brazil.
17. Mr. Fabricio Lima, Economist, Ministry of Agrarian Development, Brazil.