Workshop on Information and Communications Management for Agricultural Innovation in Southeast Asia

27-29 September 2011
Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

Agriculture in Southeast Asia now faces new challenges. After achieving significant progress in improving agricultural productivity, the region's countries now have the challenge of further making agriculture and farming more market oriented and integrated in their economies. The region's agriculture is increasingly also becoming export oriented. Because of these trends, rapid agricultural innovation becomes not only essential but also critical for further growth and development. The region has benefitted from significant changes in its information and communications technology revolution with Internet access and Mobile Telephony use now almost ubiquitous even in rural agricultural communities. It is now time to take stock of how improved information and communications management in national agricultural research and innovation systems, the main generators of organized, structured agricultural information, are making use of these ICTs and contributing to agricultural innovation within their own countries as also in the region and elsewhere.

One of the key criteria for progress and innovation is of "openness" in sharing information and skills. This openness in sharing information is also necessary for rapid innovation in market and export oriented agriculture. The current use of Social Media and what are called Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 tools offer significant potential in bringing greater openness in sharing, exchanging and effectively using information for agricultural innovation.

The Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) movement (http://www.ciard.net), with more than 150 partners from across the World, is working collaboratively to make agricultural research information publicly available and accessible to all as also enabling effective use of this information for agricultural innovation. Its role in contributing further to agricultural development in the region needs to be considered.

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) which is mandated to promote the development of National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in the Asia-Pacific region has been fostering use of ICT/ICM in AR4D in the region through its program Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System (APARIS). APAARI as a key partner of the CIARD initiative has been facilitating the CIARD process in the Asia-Pacific region with the support of Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). As part of Bridging Knowledge Gap activities towards the transformation of AR4D systems, as described in the GCARD Roadmap, APAARI

organizes a series of sub-regional workshops with an objective to improve partnerships among NARS so as to strengthen capacities and skills of personnel to promote greater sharing of knowledge for outscalling of agricultural innovations and contribute to CIARD initiative. The present workshop is meant for the information and communication managers of NARS and organizations in Southeast Asian sub-region.

Objectives

The Workshop on Information and Communications Management (ICM) for Agricultural Innovation in Southeast Asia aims:

- To consider new dimensions in ICM for contributing to rapid agricultural innovation for market and export oriented agriculture that is fast emerging in Southeast Asia.

- To take stock of the current status of ICM in national systems of agricultural research and innovation and identify what technological, institutional and community participation related gaps need to be filled for improving availability, access, applicability and effective use of information for agricultural innovation.

- To promote greater involvement and participation of National Systems and Organizations in the CIARD movement and identify how the CIARD movement can further the cause of make agricultural research information publicly available and accessible to all as also enabling effective use of this information for agricultural innovation especially in the context of contributing to rapid agricultural innovation for an increasing market and export oriented agriculture.

Who should attend

The Workshop is for Information and Communication Managers who are nominated from National Agricultural Research and Innovation Systems and Organizations in Southeast Asia and especially those who are involved in the Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System (APARIS) activities and CIARD partners or likely to be involved in the CIARD RING. About 35 Information and Communication Managers from NARS, CGIAR Centers and other organizations in the Southeast Asian Countries are expected to participate.

Workshop preparation

Participants will have to prepare jointly at the country/ organization level and make brief (10 minutes) presentations of the current status and experiences of ICM activities from their systems/organizations that are contributing to agricultural innovation in their respective countries/regions with emphasis on the various technological, Institutional (Policy, Regulatory, Structural) and agricultural community participation issues and gaps they overcame or still face related to enabling greater availability, access, applicability and enabling effective use of information for agricultural innovation.

The participants are also expected to contribute through group activities in a Workshop mode how to promote further involvement and participation of National Systems and Organizations in the CIARD movement and identify how the CIARD movement can further the cause of make agricultural research information publicly available and accessible to all as also enabling effective use of this information for agricultural innovation especially in the

context of contributing to rapid agricultural innovation for an increasing market and export oriented agriculture in Southeast Asia.

Venue

AIT Conference Center, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Klong Luang, Pathumthani, (Suburbs of Bangkok), Thailand from 27-29 September 2011.

Other information to participants

- APAARI will send invitation letters to the participants nominated by the competent authorities to enable them to obtain necessary permissions, Thai Visa and to make travel arrangements.
- Sponsored participants are requested to purchase the least cost economy class return air-tickets in the shortest route to Bangkok and obtain Thai Visa at his /her end.
- Organizers will not arrange your visa and air tickets.
- Your accommodation will be provided at the AIT Conference Center in the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) Campus during the workshop period.
- For the sponsored participants, the organizers will reimburse the travel cost upon submission of original bills, provide accommodation at AIT and pay the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) at the workshop venue as per the norms of APAARI.
- Please bring original travel bills with you; however you may send photocopies or scanned copies of your travel bills to Mrs. Urairat, Administrative Assistant, APAARI at urairat@apaari.org in advance for easy settlement.
- Non-sponsored participants should bear all their expenditure including travel, accommodation charges and other expenditure.
- Participants shall inform their travel plans and flight details in advance to Mrs. Urairat, Administrative Assistant, APAARI at urairat@apaari.org;
- For any information, please contact: Dr S. Attaluri, APARIS Coordinator, APAARI, C/o. FAO RAP, Maliwan Mansion, 29 Phra Atit Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand; Tel: (662)697-4371-73; Fax: (662) 697-4408; Mobile: (668) 7554-2026; e-mail: attaluri@apaari.org

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