Training Workshop on Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) and Strengthening RAIS in the SAARC Countries

10-12 May 2011

Venue: SAARC Agriculture Centre at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), Farmgate, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Jointly Organised by: SAC-APAARI- GFAR-FAO-BARC

CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

The impact that public knowledge and research can have on agricultural and rural development and natural resources management is limited because most of these outputs are not easily or widely accessible. Each organization follows its own approaches to share and exchange information and adopt different information management practices. There is a great need for coherence in agricultural information management by all the concerned agencies in order to create more impact and use of information and knowledge for agricultural research for development. Creating a global network of truly accessible outputs of research and innovation greatly increase the chances they can be put to use, locally, nationally, regionally and globally. Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) is a multi-stakeholder global initiative working to make agricultural research information publicly available and more accessible.

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 GFAR and FAO, through APARIS program by strengthening the National Information Nodal Points (NINPs) in the NARS in the region to actively engage in the CIARD initiative. As part of Bridging Knowledge Gap activities towards the transformation of AR4D systems, as described in the GCARD Roadmap, APAARI organizes a series of CIARD sub-regional workshop with an objective to improve partnerships among NINPs so as to strengthen capacities and skills of personnel to promote greater sharing of knowledge for outscalling of innovations. The present training workshop is first in the series, meant for the information and communication mangers of the NARS in the South Asian sub-region.

The SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh, which is mandated to promote agricultural research and development (R&D) as well as technology dissemination initiatives for sustainable agricultural development and poverty reduction in the South Asian region, has also been promoting agricultural information and innovations through its knowledge management and networking efforts in the SAARC countries.

In an Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on CIARD organized by APAARI, FAO and GFAR in September 2010 at Bangkok, in which SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) actively participated, it was recommended that more advanced training is needed by those who are involved or likely to be involved in the CIARD RING as well as APARIS activities. Within the SAARC countries, recognizing the strengths and capacities as also a common mission in information management, the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) and APAARI are organizing the present *"Training Workshop on Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) and Strengthening RAIS in the SAARC Countries"* from 10-12 May 2011 at Dhaka, Bangladesh with the support of GFAR and FAO.

The training workshop is aimed to strengthen capacities and skills of participants to improve sharing of information and knowledge through APARIS activities and to equip those who have been involved or likely to be involved in the CIARD to not only use CIARD concepts effectively but also advocate and build improved skills to participate better in CIARD and enable users to make more effective use of information including that accessed through CIARD.RING. It is also intended to train the trainers who in turn train users in their organizations and countries to enable them in improving skills to participate better in the CIARD activities. The Workshop will be hosted by SAARC Agriculture Center at the BARC Complex, Dhaka, Bangladesh from 10-12 May 2011.

About CIARD

The Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD http://www.ciard.net) is a multi-stakeholder collaborative initiative of all major actors in agricultural research for development related information management. It is working to make agricultural research information publicly available and accessible to all. This means working with all organizations that hold information or that creates new knowledge related to agriculture and to help them disseminate it more efficiently and make it easier to access their information.

The CIARD vision is ***"To make public domain agricultural research information and knowledge truly accessible to all."***

The organizations that participate in CIARD endorse the **Manifesto**, evaluate their information management practices against the **Checklist** of good practices, share and follow the **Pathways** towards better accessibility of information, contribute **case studies** and register their information services in the **RING** (http://www.ciard.net/ring). These tools and applications have been developed through a series of consultations among and consensus of CIARD partners.

Following the CIARD Checklist and Pathways and participating in the CIARD.RING contributes substantively to improving the management of agricultural information for public access at the Institute/Organization, National Agricultural Research System, regionally and

globally. When used jointly by all NARS organizations at the national level, information flows, because of use of standards, guidelines and pathways, within a country can be governed better and virtually aggregated enabling more effective use.

The CIARD.RING is a global **Routemap to Information Nodes and Gateways (RING)** for Agricultural Research for Development (ARD). It provides, through use of a metadata based directory a global signpost to publicly accessible agricultural information. Almost a million full text documents, 3 million bibliographic details and several databases are registered with CIARD.RING from all over the world. Similarly developed national RINGS using the CIARD.RING as a guide and template, can be used to collaborate better with other similar rings sub-regionally, such as in South Asia and regionally, as in the Asia-Pacific as also globally through the GFAR led CIARD.RING.

Objective of the Workshop

The objective of the workshop is to strengthen capacities and skills of Information and Communication Managers (ICM) in the SAARC countries to improve their participation in the Regional Agricultural Information Systems (RAIS) activities, participate better in CIARD and develop as trainers to support ICM managers of CIARD partners in their organizations and countries. The specific objectives are:

1. To activate National Information Nodal Points (NINPs) to participate in the APARIS activities and in the implementation of APAARI Communication Strategy
2. To improve collaboration of member countries with the SAARC Agriculture Centre's (SAC) knowledge management and networking programs in the region
3. To enable ICM managers to become active members of CIARD
4. To develop trainers to train users in improving skills to participate better in CIARD and enable them to participate effectively in the CIARD.RING as also make more effective use of information including that accessed through CIARD.RING
5. To quip participants in advocating and supporting implementation of CIARD and CIARD.RING concepts at national levels to develop national CIARD.RINGs
6. To prepare participants to become resource persons at National and Regional levels for supporting effective use of CIARD pathways, applications and CIARD.RING

The workshop will provide a platform for the participants to explore mechanisms to strengthen Regional Agricultural Information Systems (RAIS) through collaborating in the APARIS and SAC Information System in the region and enable them to actively participate and contribute to the CIARD initiative in the SAARC region

Workshop Participation

A maximum of 30 participants are expected. The workshop participants will be those invited by SAARC Agricultural Centre (SAC) and APAARI in the following two manners:

1. Through invitations by SAARC Secretariat to its Member States (One participant from each member state).

2. Through invitations by APAARI to its Member NARS in the South Asian region.

Priority for training will be given to Information and Communication Managers of organizations that have been registered for CIARD and participating in the CIARD.RING or likely to be involved in the CIARD. RING as well as APARIS activities. Other selection criteria will also include level of activity and potential of the participant to act as resource person at National level.

	About CIARD Membership and Registering Information Services	

Participants should be registered members of the CIARD (http://www.ciard.net) and participating in the CIARD RING. If not, they are requested to register their organizations and services in the CIARD RING immediately at http://ring.ciard.net . This is a pre-requisite to participants for attending the training workshop.

Important Instructions to Participants

- SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka will send invitation letters to the participants nominated by the competent authorities to enable them to obtain necessary permissions, Bangladesh Visa and to make travel arrangements, if necessary.
- Sponsored participants are requested to purchase the least cost economy class return air-tickets in the shortest route to Dhaka and obtain Bangladesh Visa at his /her end.
- For the sponsored participants, the organizers will reimburse the travel cost upon submission of original bills and pay the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) at the workshop venue as per the norms.
- Organizers will not arrange your visa and air tickets.
- Please bring original travel bills with you; however you may send photocopies or scanned copies of your travel bills to SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka in advance for easy settlement.
- SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka will arrange accommodation to participants in the available hotels in Dhaka during the workshop period. The exact address of the hotel accommodation will be informed by SAC directly to the participants.
- Non-sponsored participants should bear all their expenditure including travel, accommodation and other expenditure.
- Participants shall inform their travel plans and flight details in advance to SAC for making arrangements.
- For any information, please contact: **Dr M.N.Alam, Senior Program Specialist, SAARC Agriculture Centre, BARC Complex, New Airport Road, Farmgate, Dhaka – 1215, Bangladesh; Tel. +880-2-8113378, 8113380, 8113386; Fax. +880-2-9124596, Mobile : +8801712044762; e-mail: drmnalam@hotmail.com**
- For further information you may contact: **Dr S. Attaluri, APARIS Coordinator, APAARI, C/o. FAO RAP, Maliwan Mansion, 29 Phra Atit Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand; Tel: (662)697-4372; Fax: (662) 697-4408; Mobile: (668) 7554-2026; e-mail: attaluri@apaari.org**

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<u>Tentative Program</u>

The Workshop will also be technically supported by FAO and GFAR Secretariat. The Workshop will have practical sessions using Computers and the Internet.

1st Day – 10 May 2011

Opening Ceremony

- Strengthening Regional Agricultural Information Systems (RAIS):
  - Role and Participation of NINPs/ NARS in the implementation of APAARI Communication Strategy
  - How NINPs/ NARS contribute to APARIS Web space - Development of databases on:ARD Institutions, Contacts of ARD experts, ARD Projects and Policy Documents.
- Strengthening SAARC Agriculture Centre Programs
  - How SAARC Member States collaborate and contribute to SAC's KM and Networking programs in the South Asian region
- CIARD Concepts (including Manifesto & Guidelines) Revisited
- How to advocate CIARD and its activities
  - To Senior NARS Decision Makers
  - To ICM managers in national organizations
  - To the User Community
- Using CIARD Pathways
  - Why Pathways
  - How to effectively use Pathways (aimed at researchers)

2nd Day – 11 May 2011

- Using Pathways
  - How to Use effectively Pathways (aimed at ICM Managers)
  - How to Use effectively Pathways (aimed at Extension Agents and in Education)
- CIARD.RING

3rd Day – 12 May 2011

- CIARD RING
- Participating in CIARD Virtual Fair

Conclusion.