

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

(10 - 12 May, 2011)
SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh

PROCEEDINGS





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

(10-12 May, 2011)

SAARC Agriculture Centre, Bangladesh Agricultural
Research Council (BARC), Farmgate
Dhaka, Bangladesh

PROCEEDINGS

Organized by

**Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)
SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)
Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC)**

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

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Foreword

Effective sharing of agricultural research information and knowledge at all levels requires coherence in agricultural information management by all the concerned agencies and strengthening of Regional Agricultural Information Systems (RAIS) and National Agricultural Information Systems (NAIS) in order to create more impact and use of information and knowledge for agricultural research for development. There is a great need for improving coherence in information initiatives and strengthening RAIS in the Asia-Pacific region to make agricultural knowledge available and accessible at national, regional and global levels.

APAARI has been promoting the use of Information and Communication Management (ICM) in AR4D through its important program Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System (APARIS) by strengthening National Information Nodal Points (NINPs) of National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in the Asia-Pacific region. APARIS functions as a regional platform for sharing agricultural research information and establishes linkages with other regional and global agricultural networks. In order to promote use of ICT/ICM in agricultural research and innovation systems, it undertakes advocacy, capacity development programs and dissemination of success stories in collaboration with regional and international partners.

As part of Bridging Knowledge Gap activities under the GCARD Roadmap implementation, APAARI organized workshops for South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific regions, in close collaboration and support of GFAR and FAO, with an objective to strengthen NARS and improve capacities and skills of personnel to promote greater sharing of knowledge for outcalling of agricultural innovations at the regional level and contributing to CIARD initiative in the region. The Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) is a multi-stakeholder global initiative, lead by GFAR and FAO, working to make agricultural research information publicly available and more accessible.

Realizing the importance of strengthening agricultural information systems in the South Asian region, a three-day “Training Workshop on Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) and Strengthening RAIS in the SAARC Countries” was jointly organized by APAARI, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), GFAR, FAO and Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) at Dhaka, Bangladesh from 10-12 May, 2011. The objectives of the workshop were to: strengthen capacities and skills of Information and Communication Managers in the SAARC Member countries to improve their participation in the Regional Agricultural Information Systems (RAIS) activities, participate better in CIARD by using concepts, pathways, tools and applications developed and made accessible under the CIARD initiative.

Thirty two ICM experts from SAARC member states viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iran (observer) attended the workshop to share country experiences and actively participate in the group works, hands-on sessions and discussions.

The technical sessions revealed that while most organizations are ready in principle to share their information openly, they do not have the institutional and infrastructural capacities and resources, awareness and skills to do this effectively. A very important issue that emerged during these deliberations was that there is a significant awareness gap in understanding how new Social Media and Web 2.0 tools can be used by the national systems in agricultural research, education and extension. There is a need for increased advocacy to policy makers, research managers and ICM specialists as

well as users, especially researchers, teachers and extension agents, in the use of these new tools and applications. There is also a need to build capacities of those who can manage these new information services.

The proceedings synthesize workshop deliberations, outcome of group works and recommendations for strengthening agricultural information systems in the SAARC member countries and improving their participation in CIARD initiative for effective sharing of information and knowledge at national, regional and global levels. I am sure that these proceedings would be useful to all ARD stakeholders engaged in promoting ICT/ICM for AR4D in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere.



(Dr. Raj Paroda)
Executive Secretary
APAARI

Abbreviations

AIS	Agriculture Information Service (Bangladesh)
APAARI	Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
APARIS	Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System
AR4D	Agricultural Research for Development
AREEO	Agricultural Research, Education and Extension Organization (Iran)
AVC	Audio Visual Centre (Sri Lanka)
BARC	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council
CIARD	Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development
CIARD RING	CIARD Routemap to Information Nodes and Gateways
CoRRB	Council for RNR Research of Bhutan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAO RAP	Food and Agriculture Organization, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
GCARD	Global Consultation on Agricultural Research for Development
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ICM	Information and Communication Management
ICT/ICM	Information and Communication Technology/Information and Communication Management
IIT-K	Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur
iMARK	Information Management Resource Kit
NAIS	National Agricultural Information Systems
NARC	Nepal Agricultural Research Council
NARC	National Agriculture Research Center (Pakistan)
NARS	National Agricultural Research Systems
NCAP	National Centre for Agricultural Economics & Policy Research (India)
NFPCSP	National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program (Bangladesh)
NINPs	National Information Nodal Points
PARC	Pakistan Agricultural Research Council
RAIS	Regional Agricultural Information Systems
RSS	Really Simple Syndication
SAC	SAARC Agriculture Centre
SL CARP	Sri Lanka Council for Agricultural Research Policy
Wi-Fi	Wireless Fidelity

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

Introduction

A three-day “Training Workshop on Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) and Strengthening RAIS in the SAARC Countries” was organized jointly by SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), APAARI, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), FAO and GFAR at SAC, BARC Campus in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 10-12 May, 2011.

The objective of the workshop was to strengthen capacities and skills of Information and Communication Managers in the SAARC Countries to improve their participation in the Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS) activities, participate better in CIARD and develop as trainers to support ICM managers of CIARD partners in their organizations and countries. The workshop focused on improving capacities for Information and Communication Management (ICM) for agricultural research and innovation systems at national level through concepts, pathways, tools and applications developed and made accessible under the CIARD initiative. The concept note of the workshop is at Annexure-I.

The workshop was attended by 38 participants from SAARC member states viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iran (as an observer) including resource persons from APAARI, GFAR, FAO, SAC and IIT-K. List of participants is enclosed at Annexure-II.

Inaugural Session

The Chief Guest Professor M.A. Sattar Mandal, Vice Chancellor, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh inaugurated the workshop in a function chaired by Dr. Wais Kabir, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC). Stressing the need for dissemination of agricultural information among farmers Prof. Sattar Mandal said that information should be used in right time for developing the agricultural sector. Dr. Ajit Maru, Senior Knowledge Officer, GFAR Secretariat highlighted that smallholder farmers in the region are facing challenges due to several reasons including climate change, depletion of natural resources and inadequate market opportunities and stressed the need for greater sharing of information on agricultural research and innovations among South Asian countries through collaborative efforts at national, regional and global levels. Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Director, SAC in his speech welcomed all the participants and shared the important activities of SAARC Agriculture Centre in sharing agricultural research results in the region. Dr. S. Attaluri, APARIS Coordinator, APAARI in his remarks mentioned that agriculture in South Asian countries faces similar problems and there is need to share the experiences for better solutions and emphasized need for coherence in information management. Mr. Gerard Sylvester, Knowledge and Information Management Officer, FAO RAP expressed that information is dynamic and it should be put to use in right time for better results.

Dr. Wais Kabir, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), in his speech welcomed all the participants and emphasized the need for use of ICTs for providing real time information to the farmers. He invited participants to introduce themselves and asked for their expectations of the workshop. Majority of the participants expressed that the workshop would orient

them on changing needs in agriculture, complexity in information flows, experiences of different countries, orientation of CIARD and different appropriate tools for better management of agricultural information resources in the region. Dr. Md. Nurul Alam, Senior Program Specialist, SAC proposed the vote of thanks in the inaugural session.

Technical Sessions

The program was organized into three technical sessions relating to different topics on the themes of RAIS and NAIS; CIARD and CIARD RING. Program is at Annexure-III.

Day 1 : Strengthening RAIS and NAIS

Forenoon:

The technical sessions began with the presentation by Md. Nurul Alam, Senior Program Specialist, SAC on the topic Role of SAARC Agriculture Centre in exchanging Agricultural Information in the South Asian region. He explained the mandate and programs of SAC and highlighted the role of SAC in dissemination of agricultural research information in the SAARC countries. Dr. S. Attaluri, APARIS Coordinator made presentation on the APAARI activities and the role of APARIS program in strengthening NARS and Regional Agricultural Information Systems, implementation of APAARI Communication Strategy and shared the first hand outcome of the ICT/ICM status report followed by discussions.

In the discussions following this session, the participants recognized the progress made in the national systems for agricultural research and innovation in ICM with many recalling earlier APAARI, FAO and GFAR jointly organized events in over a decade advocating improved ICM and contributing to building capacities and how their systems, with this support, have made progress from not having even a basic website to now most agricultural research and innovation institutions in the region having functional, regularly updated web spaces with relevant and useful information for a wide variety of users from policy makers to consumers.

Afternoon:

A group exercise to brainstorm on users of agriculture related information, their needs and gaps in exchange of this information in South Asia was conducted.



Session on changing scenario of agricultural information flows and CIARD

In the plenary session, group leaders presented the group work. The following types of users and their information needs were identified by all the groups:

Users	Information needs
Farmers	Adaptable practices, Market information, Production technologies, On-line help
Scientists/Researchers	Information on research, Scientific information, new advancements, Feedback from the farmers, Research literature, On-going research
Extensionists	Information on demand driven technologies, Markets, Weather information and forecasting
Faculty members	Books, Journal articles, Current research projects, Review of literature
Students	Books, Journal articles, Review of literature, Employment opportunities
Policy makers	Information on plans and policies, rules and standards
NGOs	Research findings, Success stories
Entrepreneurs of the industry	Market opportunities, latest technologies

The gaps identified were in national and institutional policy, inadequate financing of information activities in National Research Institutes and Agricultural Development Organizations, inadequate capacities, awareness and skills, inadequate coherence and integration of information and its management at institute and national levels including lack of coordinating units and structures and inadequate leadership and championing of information management especially at senior management and policy making levels.

There were inclusive discussions that led to further understanding new developments occurring in the use of ICTs. These including mobile computing through the use of mixed media, reduction in costs of IT tools and use, widespread broadband, high speed connectivity through Wi-Fi even in rural areas, new more efficient tools and applications useful to agricultural communities, “cloud” computing (where data and applications are stored in massive storage “clouds” or spaces that are accessed through the internet) and “crowd” computing (where communities contribute together provide the data, tools and application to collectively deal useful applications for a community and society). The implications of Web 2.0 which offers interactivity in sharing information in the World Wide Web and has spawned Social Media applications in sharing agricultural information, the coming Web 3.0 or the Semantic Web and Web 4.0 or the “Symbiotic” Web for the national systems in generating, managing and sharing information were discussed in some depth. It was recognized that new Web technologies can solve many of the current issues in extension for farmers and small producers and processors such as offering customized advice and a basket of options for solutions to their specific problems. A very important issue that emerged during these deliberations was that there is a significant awareness gap in understanding how new Social Media and Web 2.0 tools can be used by the national systems in agricultural research, education and extension. There was a need for increased advocacy to policy makers, research managers and ICM specialists as also users, especially researchers, teachers and extension agents, in the use of these new tools and application as also the need to build capacities of those who can manage these new information services.

An interesting debate also took place following the plenary presentations on the issues of actors in agricultural information dissemination viz., generators, publishers (aggregators/amalgamators) and disseminators; channels of information that included print, electronic, mass media and other outreach activities.

Awareness on the social media tools such as Blogs, Twitter, Youtube, Facebook, Flickr, RSS etc., was also raised among the participants on how they support effective sharing of agricultural information.

Emphasis was reiterated several times by the participants on the need for understanding and advocating new developments in the use of ICTs such as mobile computing through the use of mixed media, reduction in costs of IT tools and use, widespread broadband, high speed connectivity through Wi-Fi even in rural areas, new more efficient tools and applications useful to agricultural communities, “cloud” computing and “crowd” computing as they offered a new potential for communicating with all producers and users of agricultural information.

Dr. Ajit Maru, GFAR, summed up the session indicating the changing scenario of agricultural information flows at the national, regional and global levels and how CIARD concepts such as following the pathways, standards and exposing information collections through CIARD RING when implemented can contribute to make agricultural research information publicly available to all.



Group discussions

Day 2 : CIARD Pathways and CIARD Framework

Forenoon:

The workshop on its second day focused on the CIARD movement. The forenoon technical sessions focused on the CIARD vision and checklist as well as on how agricultural research and innovation institutions can be effective, participative members of CIARD using CIARD concepts and contributing to CIARD activities such as Pathways, the CIARD RING and the CIARD Fair.

Some CIARD Pathways such as those contributing to the development of “open” access repositories with examples from Bangladesh, India and FAO, were illustrated in depth. Ms. Valeria Pesce, GFAR made presentation on CIARD Pathways and clarified several queries of participants. Mr. Flavio Belloni, NFPCSP, FAO, Bangladesh has made presentation on the AgriDrupal Document Repository of the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program (NFPCSP), Bangladesh. Dr. T.P. Trivedi, ADG, Directorate of Knowledge Management, ICAR, India has made presentation on “open” access to scientific journals published by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Mr. Nitesh Kumar Singh, IIT-Kanpur has made a presentation on Agropedia and Agrotag.

Afternoon:

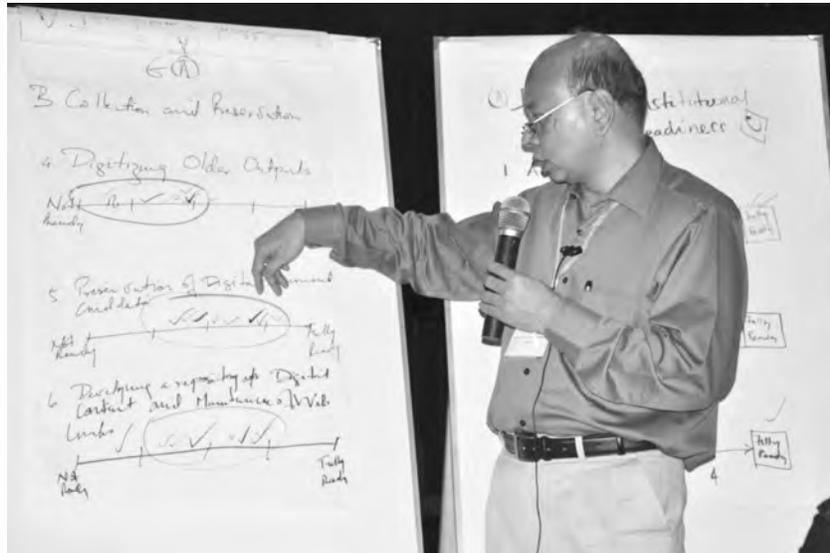
In a group exercise, all the participants who had been asked in advance to furnish information on the aspects of: 1. Institutional Readiness, 2. Collection Development and Preservation, 3. Making Content Available on Web in a prescribed format used the same inputs to individually and collectively discuss readiness to enable open access to information in the public domain. Each group after discussions with the assistance of a facilitator on the above aspects identified their position on a five point scale (1 = Not Ready to 5 = Fully Ready).



Group presentation

The plenary session revealed that while most organizations are ready in principle to share their information openly, they do not have the institutional and infrastructural capacities and resources, awareness and skills to do this effectively. Most of the capacities needed are around the use of Web 2.0 tools and applications.

At the end of 2nd day, Ms. Valeria Pesce, GFAR has demonstrated CIARD Pathways that included IAALD Web 2.0 channels, EGFAR and Agrifeeds. She also made presentation on pathways on RSS and Web 2.0 technologies and shared on how to set up value added services that query across platforms.



Group presentation

Day 3 : Virtual Fair and CIARD RING

Forenoon:

The workshop on its third day had a hands-on session on the CIARD RING starting from an explanation of the concept of the RING and how it contributes both to sharing information at national level and to integrating the information flows within a national system for agricultural research and innovation. During the session, it was impressed upon the participants that the greater and more active the participation in the RING, the greater will be the sharing of information related to agriculture across the world.



Practical session on CIARD RING

Afternoon:

The workshop ended with a discussion on “open” data access following a video presentation of Dr. Tim Berners-Lee and a presentation of the CIARD Virtual Fair by Mr. Gerard Sylvester, FAO RAP.

Workshop Recommendations

- A very important issue that emerged during the workshop deliberations was that there is a significant awareness gap in understanding how new Social Media and Web 2.0 tools can be used by the national systems in agricultural research, education and extension.
- There is a need for increased advocacy to policy makers, research managers and ICM specialists as well as users, especially researchers, teachers and extension agents, in the movement towards “openness” of agricultural information and the use of new tools and applications in this movement.
- There is also a need to build capacities of those who can manage these new information services. It was suggested to organize training programs on these topics for better sharing of agricultural information.
- It was felt necessary to organize follow-up training on technical matters of the CIARD RING for the participating organizations for better contributions and participation.
- It was suggested that developing knowledge and information repositories is crucial for storing and disseminating agricultural research information in the region. Technical guidance and assistance in developing such repositories with the help of suitable systems is very much needed by the participating countries.
- There is a need for appropriate advocacy to emphasise the institutional issues such as policy, strategy, emphasise changes in work processes and information flows and investment in improving availability, access, applicability and effective use of agriculture related information in the region.

Concluding Session

The Chief Guest Dr. S.K. Ghulam Hussain, Member-Director (Policy Planning & Evaluation), BARC and Governing Board Member, SAC gave the closing address. He also presented certificates to all the participants. Dr. Hemal Fonseka, Senior Program Specialist, SAC proposed vote of thanks at the end.

Participants’ Feedback

An open-ended question “what would you do for improving access to information in the public domain in your organization in the next 3 months, 6 months and 1 year” received the following response:

In 3 months:

- Joining CIARD RING; uploading information services and products
- Linking institutions to CIARD RING (ICAR, India)
- Updating of websites with current information

- Improving access to information
- Advocating for registration in CIARD RING within the organizations (ICAR, India)
- Providing public domain access to information resources
- Convincing senior management, colleagues and staff about the benefits of open access to organization's information
- Motivating seniors and policy makers
- Choosing suitable system for building repositories
- Compiling and uploading research articles
- Initiating digitization of documents
- Connecting all scientists to local area network
- Developing infrastructure.

In 6 months:

- Adding more relevant contents for users
- Building repositories
- Preparing human resources and their capacity building
- Improving access to already available information resources of the organization (PARC, Pakistan)
- Collecting and disseminating more agricultural research information and make it available through CIARD RING (PARC, Pakistan)
- Following CIARD Checklist
- Increasing bandwidth for speedy Internet connectivity
- Digitizing data/information
- Making the information accessible to the open community
- Willing to organize seminar/workshops with the support APAARI, GFAR and SAC
- Digitizing information of SAARC region and making it available on the website and providing access through CIARD (SAC, Bangladesh)
- Installing Web 2.0, RSS and other interactive tools on the website
- Promoting the concept of open access
- Advocating the institutions for registration and getting their feedback.

In 1 year:

- Participating in the CIARD RING with resources and services
- Participating as a member of CIARD RING to improve agricultural information flow
- Improving access to information by using standards developed by FAO, CIARD and GFAR etc.

- Adopting new technologies and tools for better knowledge management and sharing
- Providing public domain information to global agricultural community
- Initiating national community for information sharing and exchange
- Initiating creation of national information grid and link to CIARD RING
- Linking NARS information in the SAARC region with SAC and ultimately with CIARD
- Improving and repackaging information services
- Engaging full time professional webmaster.

General Suggestions for Improvement:

- Emphasis should be given on practical sessions
- Hands-on practice to individual participants may be ensured
- Follow-up training workshop is necessary
- Training on AgriDrupal for building repositories
- Workshop duration may be increased
- Technical training on creation of blogs, RSS and other applications on the website needed
- CIARD team may arrange introductory lectures in different organizations of SAARC countries
- Similar training programs may be organized in SAARC countries for popularizing the CIARD services and benefits
- Continued interaction/communication between participants and resource persons should be established on regular basis
- More time should be allowed for sharing country experiences
- Workshop may be extended to other regions
- More interactions by the participants

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 managers 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" on 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 Centre at the BARC Complex, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 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 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 equip 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 Agriculture 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.

Annexure-II

List of Participants

BANGLADESH		
1.	<p>Mr. Md. Abeer Hossain Chowdhury Director (Computer and GIS) Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) Farmgate, Dhaka - 1215, Bangladesh Cell: +880 1819 686449 E-mail: dir-computer@barc.gov.bd</p>	
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Program

Day 1 (10 May, 2011) : Strengthening RAIS and NAIS

08:30-09:00	Registration	
09:00	Guests take their seats	
	<p>Chief Guest: Dr. M.A. Sattar Mandal, Vice Chancellor, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh</p> <p>Chairperson: Dr. Wais Kabir, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council</p>	
09:00-09:10	Welcome address by Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Director, SAC	
09:10-09:15	Address by Dr. S. Attaluri, APAARI	
09:15-09:20	Address by Dr. Ajit Maru, GFAR	
09:20-09:25	Address by Mr. Gerard Sylvester, FAO RAP	
09:25-09:40	Remarks by the Chief Guest	
09:40-10:00	Remarks by the Chairperson	
10:00-10:05	Vote of thanks by Dr. Md. Nurul Alam, Senior Programme Specialist, SAC	
10:05-10:30	Group photo followed by Coffee Break	
10:30-11:30	Role of SAARC Agriculture Centre in exchanging Agricultural Information in the South Asian region.	<i>Dr. M.N. Alam, SAARC Agriculture Centre</i>
11:30-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening RAIS and NAIS: How APARIS assist ICM4ARD efforts in the region. • Implementation of APAARI Communication Strategy for exchange of information in the region. 	<i>S. Attaluri, APAARI</i>
12:30-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>	

14:00-14:40	National Agricultural Information Systems (NAIS): how CIARD concepts contribute.	<i>Ajit Maru, GFAR</i>
14:40-15:40	Group Work on Identification of Users; User's Needs and Gaps in Exchange of Information in South Asia (4 Groups)	<i>Facilitation by S. Attaluri, Gerard Sylvester, Valeria Pesce</i>
15:40-15:55	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:55-16:55	Plenary: Presentations by Groups followed by Discussion	<i>Ajit Maru, GFAR</i>
19:00-	Dinner	

Day 2 (11 May, 2011) : CIARD Pathways and CIARD Framework

09:00-09:30	<p>Presentation of the Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why pathways; how pathways relate to the Checklist • Existing pathways and submitting new pathways • List and short introduction to all existing pathways 	<i>Valeria Pesce, GFAR</i>
09:30-10:00	<p>Presentation of Pathways on repository development and dissemination. Introduction to AgriDrupal</p>	<i>Gerard Sylvester, FAO RAP</i>
10:00-10:45	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NFPCSP AgriDrupal document repository (Bangladesh)</i> • <i>ICAR Journal in Open Access (India)</i> • <i>Agropedia</i> 	<p><i>Flavio Belloni, NFPCSP, FAO, Bangladesh</i></p> <p><i>T.P. Trivedi, ICAR, India</i> <i>Mr. Nitesh Kumar Singh, IIT-Kanpur</i></p>
10:45-11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:00-11:30	Coherence and Integration of Information Initiatives through CIARD	<i>Valeria Pesce, GFAR</i>
11:30-12:30	<p>Group Work (4 Groups) on How to Adapt CIARD Framework to Improve Information Management in your Organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Readiness - Collection Development and Preservation - Making Content Available on Web 	<i>Facilitation by S. Attaluri, Gerard Sylvester, Valeria Pesce</i>
12:30-13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:30-15:00	Plenary: Group presentations followed by Discussion	<i>Ajit Maru, GFAR</i>

15:00-15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:30-16:30	<p>Presentation of <i>Pathways on RSS and Web 2.0 technologies</i>:</p> <p><i>Examples: IAALD Web 2.0 channels, EGFAR.</i></p> <p>Presentation of the pathway “<i>Set up added value services that query across platforms</i>”</p> <p>Agrotag</p>	<p>Valeria Pesce, GFAR</p> <p>Mr. Nitesh Kumar Singh, IIT-Kanpur</p>

Day 3 (12 May, 2011) : Virtual Fair and CIARD RING

	The CIARD RING	
09:00-09:30	Introduction	Valeria Pesce, GFAR
13:00-13:30	<p>What is the RING; why the RING</p> <p>What you can do with the RING</p> <p>The RING and interoperability</p>	
09:30-10:15	<p>Detailed overview of the metadata and the registration process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of all the fields • explanation of the technical fields (standards and technologies) <p>example: registration of a service</p>	Valeria Pesce, GFAR
10:15-10:40	<i>Coffee break</i>	
10:40-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands on practice: participants register their own services (or edit services they have already registered) 	
12:30-13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
	Virtual Fair	
13:30-13:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why the Fair • What type of services are in the Fair; how to propose a new service 	Gerard Sylvester, FAO RAP
13:50-14:15	<p>Presentation of selected services in the Fair that can help achieve some of the pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iMARK • AIMS • Creative Commons • Short introduction to the RING 	Gerard Sylvester, FAO FAP; Valeria Pesce, GFAR
14:15-15:00	Open Session/Feedback from Participants	
15:00-15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	

	<p>Chief Guest: Dr. S.K. Ghulam Hussain, Member-Director (Policy Planning & Evaluation), BARC and GB Member, SAC</p> <p>Chairperson: Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre</p> <p>Rapporteurs: Dr. Hemal Fonseca, SPS (Crops), SAC Dr. Ibrahim. Md. Saiyed, SPO (NRM), SAC</p>	
15:30	Guests and participants take seats	
15:30-15:45	Remarks by Dr. S. Attaluri, APAARI	
15:45-16:00	Remarks by Dr. Ajit Maru, GFAR	
16:00-16:15	Remarks by the Chief Guest	
16:15-16:30	Remarks by the Chairperson	
16:30-16:40	Vote of Thanks by Dr. Hemal Fonseca; Senior Program Specialist (Crops); SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)	
16:40-17:00	Refreshments	

