



Abridged Version

APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-2022:

**Pathways to Strengthened Agri-food
Research and Innovation Systems in
Asia and the Pacific**



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The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) is a unique voluntary, membership-based, self-mandated, apolitical and multi-stakeholder organization in the Asia-Pacific region. It promotes and strengthens agriculture and agri-food research and innovation systems through partnerships and collaboration, capacity development and advocacy for sustainable agricultural development in the region. Since its establishment in 1990, it has significantly contributed towards addressing agricultural research needs and enhancing food and nutritional security in the region. The close links, networks, partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders that APAARI has developed over the years, as well as its goodwill, authority and focus on results, make the Association a valuable actor in the region. The ultimate aim of APAARI is to help realizing sustainable development goals in Asia and the Pacific. For more details, please visit: www.apaari.org

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Abridged Version

APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-2022: Pathways to Strengthened Agri-food Research and Innovation Systems in Asia and the Pacific

This abridged version is extracted from the main Strategic Plan 2017-2022 and provided to enable readers to obtain the overview of the Plan. Further details are in the main Strategic Plan. For soft copy of the main Strategic Plan, please visit: [apaari.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-2022.pdf](http://apaari.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/APAARI%20Strategic%20Plan%202017-2022.pdf).

Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural

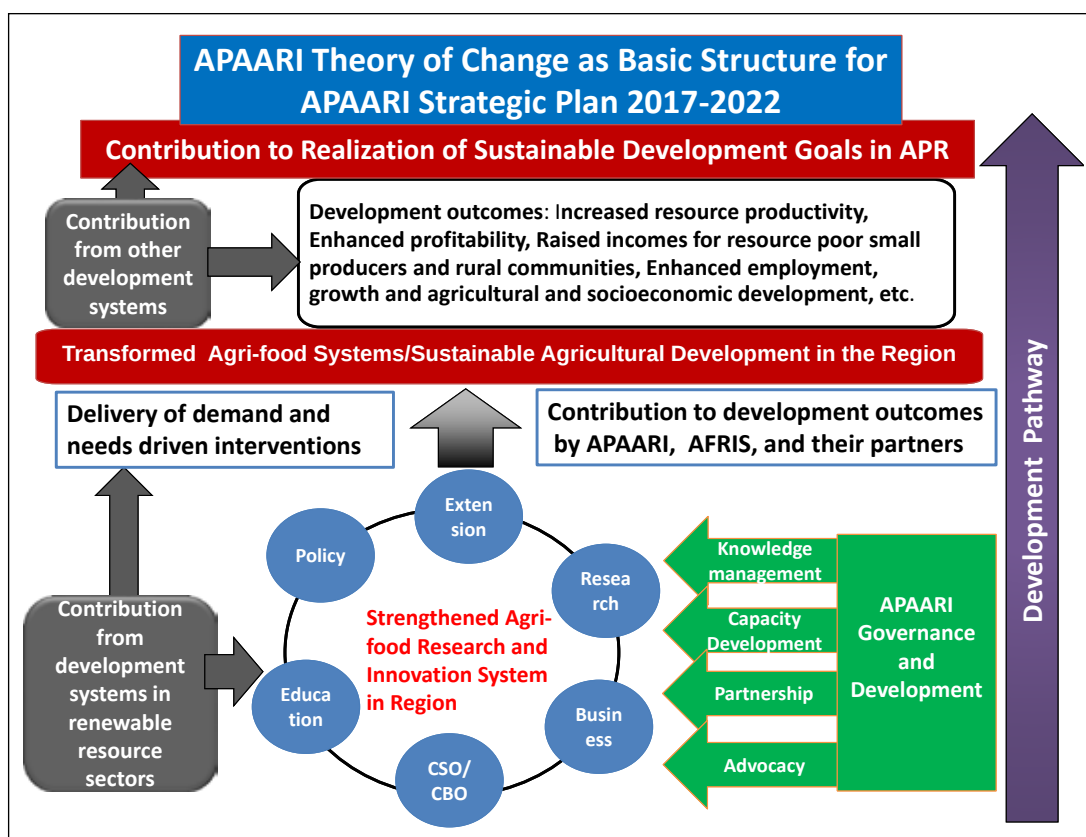


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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFS	Agri-food Systems
AFRIS	Agri-food Research and Innovation Systems
AIRCA	Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture
APAARI	Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APR	Asia-Pacific Region
APCoAB	Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASTI	Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators Project of IFPRI
COP	Conference of Parties
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FOs	Farmers' Organizations
GCARD	Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
KM	Knowledge Management
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PM&E	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UN	United Nations
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
USD	United States Dollar



Schematic presentation on APAARI theory of change, depicting the APAARI collective actions with partners and stakeholders, and the resulting development outcomes through the strengthened agri-food research and innovation systems, contributing to the transformed agri-food systems/sustainable agricultural development, and the realization of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Asia and the Pacific.

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1. Introduction

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) was established in 1990 with the overall objective of fostering agricultural research and development and contributing to addressing hunger, poverty, environmental degradation and sustainability of agricultural production in the Asia Pacific region (APR). In the past 25 years, APAARI has been promoting and strengthening agriculture and agri-food research and innovation systems (AFRIS) through partnership and collaboration, capacity development and advocacy for sustainable agricultural development. APAARI has contributed to addressing agricultural research needs and consequently enhancing food and nutrition security in the APR.

In 2014, the APAARI General Assembly sought to revisit the APAARI Vision 2025, and reprioritize its activities to meet the needs of a changing development context of the APR. In response, APAARI developed its Vision 2030, which outlines the Association's vision for strengthened research and innovations for sustainable agricultural development beyond 2015. The APAARI Vision 2030 aligns to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and suggests a strategic direction for the future of AFRIS development in the region.

Based on the framework provided by the APAARI Vision 2030 and the APAARI theory of change, the Strategic Plan has been designed by adopting an inclusive and structured process, comprising: i) inception deliberations and conceptualization; ii) online and e-consultations on the challenges, opportunities and needs for interventions; iii) advanced face-to-face consultation on articulation of strategies and activities; and iv) a number

of consultative interactions, seeking suggestions and interventions by the APAARI members, the agri-food research and innovations systems, and their partners and primary stakeholders.

2. Agri-Food Systems Development Outcomes

The strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan respond to the changing needs of the APR. Whilst the region has experienced rapid economic growth in recent years and consequently made impressive progress against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), large disparities persist and the poorest continue to be denied their share of the benefits. Eighteen per cent of the APR population (or 772 million people) still live on less than USD 1.25 per day. Rising incomes and purchasing power are placing pressure on food supplies, driving an increase in income inequality and raising questions of future sustainability. Many of the poorest people in the region are still small producers, hampered by low productivity and inadequate access to input and output markets. Gender inequality and disengagement of youth in agriculture also persist to hamper rural development efforts. The agri-food system (AFS) remains at the centre of the region's key challenges, making APAARI and this Strategic Plan crucial to realizing many of the newly designed SDGs.

The APAARI Strategic Plan has been developed, using the thematic thrusts described in APAARI's Vision 2030 and an analysis of the current development context. The eight thematic thrusts were distilled into four priority Themes as: i) Mobilization, management and use of natural resources for sustainability; ii) Management of risks and uncertainties; iii) Inclusive development and integration of value chains targeted at benefiting smallholders; and iv) Analysis, strengthening and formulation of public policies and overarching regulatory frameworks in support of the transformation and development of AFS.

The four priority Themes set out in Table below, provide the Association and its partners with direction on where they can best contribute to development outcomes, and ultimately the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Table. Priority themes and development outcomes

Theme	Development outcomes
1. Mobilization, management and use of natural resources for sustainability of AFS	1.1 Land and water resources are managed and used effectively for sustainable productivity and environmental protection. 1.2 Forests, agro-forestry and trees are utilized and integrated for the transformation and development of AFS. 1.3 Agrobiodiversity is effectively managed and utilized for increased agricultural productivity, efficiency and sustainability. 1.4 Biotechnologies and related regulatory systems are promoted and applied for improved productivity, nutritional quality, and sustainability of AFS. 1.5 Systems of sustainable generation and use of energy, including bio-energy and biomass are designed and adapted to local conditions.
2. Management of risks and uncertainties in the AFS	2.1 Policies and strategies for managing (minimizing) price and market risks in agriculture and AFS are developed and adapted. 2.2 Tools for coping with uncertainties arising from the effects of climate change, sea level rise, natural disasters and man-made catastrophes are developed and improved. 2.3 Systematic processes of and partnerships in biosecurity at borders and on farms in preventing and managing the spread of transboundary pests and disease are developed.
3. Inclusive development and integration of value chains targeted at benefiting smallholders	3.1 Small producers, rural communities and women are integrated with other value chain actors so they receive the benefits of integrated markets. 3.2 Innovative best practice for reduced harvest and postharvest loss and wastage is applied and integrated. 3.3 Smallholder agriculture is integrated into manufacturing and service sectors, especially agro-industries, agri-business and agri-services to ensure employment for rural communities.

4. Analysis, strengthening and formulation of public policies and overarching regulatory frameworks to support the transformation and development of AFS	4.1 Research into policy, socioeconomics and markets is supported to assist with developing and implementing policies and strategies to increase agricultural growth and development. 4.2 Policies and strategies for accessing and mobilization of land and water resources by smallholder producers and landless rural communities are developed and adopted.
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3. APAARI Programmes and Strategies

The main implementation focus areas of APAARI identified in Vision 2030 were also refined and updated into four programmes and two cross-cutting areas. These four programmes are: i) Knowledge management, ii) Partnership and networking, iii) Capacity building, and iv) Advocacy and two cross-cutting areas of i) Women and youth, and ii) Foresight and visioning. Each of these programmes and cross-cutting areas are adequately enriched with key strategies, specific strategies and indicative activities that can be pursued as both guidance and directions in implementing the Strategic Plan through subsequent biennial operational plans. Strengthening APAARI's contribution through improved governance and development of APAARI itself will be the key to transforming AFRIS in the region. Hence, this area is given special attention in the plan.

APAARI will undertake these activities over the life of this strategy to implement the core mandated functions of the Association, as given in Vision 2030 and set out in its constitution, in order to contribute to the development outcomes. The strategies under governance and development describe the internal organizational changes required so that APAARI can contribute more effectively in strengthening AFRIS in the region.

The key strategies, specific strategies and indicative activities under each programme area are summarised below.

3.1 Knowledge Management

Asia-Pacific agri-food systems increasingly depend on the use of knowledge to strengthen innovation processes, such as technology generation, adaptation and application. Stronger processes for collecting, analysing, organizing, accessing, using and sharing scientific information for knowledge creation, problem solving and decision making are required. Combined with partnership and networking, capacity development and advocacy, knowledge management can better facilitate engagement and collaboration that contribute to improved scaling up and out of successful agricultural practices, enhanced agricultural investment, and a higher level of trust among stakeholders.

APAARI will strive to use improved knowledge management as an overarching programme to strengthen AFRIS and is well positioned to do so. Through collective action, APAARI has a critical role in informing strategic investments, policies and programmes that can underpin sustainable agri-food systems. APAARI will contribute to knowledge management through the following strategies (Table 1).

Table 1. Knowledge management

Key Strategy 1.1 AFS made more knowledge intensive to effectively contribute to sustainable agricultural development	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
1.1.1 Promote processes for knowledge sharing, learning and collaboration between primary stakeholders	● Coordinate face-to-face interactions ● Facilitate participation of primary stakeholders in regional and global events ● Share timely information on learning opportunities among primary stakeholders
1.1.2 Promote tools for enhanced knowledge sharing, learning and collaboration	● Revamp the APAARI website and social media tools by updating and organizing content ● Create new tools for knowledge sharing, learning and communication e.g. online discussions ● Link with knowledge tools of members and partners to enable increased outreach
1.1.3 Promote innovative ways to use Information & Communication Technology (ICT) in AFS	● Share solutions and experiences in using ICT in agri-food systems for faster scaling up e.g. through workshops, meetings, policy dialogue and online tools ● Facilitate participation of primary stakeholders in ICT-related activities (including e-agriculture)
Key Strategy 1.2 AFRIS strengthened through more effective knowledge management	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
1.2.1 Enhance knowledge sharing and engagement to enable faster technology, innovation and policy development	● Facilitate face-to-face and on-line meetings for knowledge sharing and engagement ● Make knowledge-sharing and learning processes more interactive and learning oriented ● Facilitate engagement between farmers, scientists and policymakers to enrich policy debate ● Host multi-stakeholder consultations on technology and innovation

1.2.2 Develop skills and capacity of stakeholders in knowledge management	● Train and mentor primary stakeholders on the use of social media
1.2.3 Improve scientific data management to make it available for analysis and knowledge creation	● Support projects that improve data collection for research, compilation, management, analysis, evaluation and application e.g. Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) Project ● Improve APAARI publication quality, relevance, packaging and outreach

3.2 Partnership and Networking

The transformation of AFS and the realization of SDGs cannot be achieved by APAARI alone. Multiple organizations from the private, public and civil sectors need to be comprehensively linked at local, national, sub-regional, regional and global levels to bring about large-scale change. APAARI is well positioned to connect national bodies to each other, and to regional and global fora, fostering partnerships and networking through face-to-face events and online communities.

APAARI intends to build partnerships and networks through the following strategies (Table 2).

Table 2. Partnerships and networking

Key Strategy 2.1 Innovative and strategic partnerships and networking strengthened	
Specific strategies	● Indicative activities
2.1.1 Facilitate technical cooperation in key Themes	● Initiate and implement strategic partnerships for effective resource mobilization, policy support, knowledge generation, and technology transfer ● Coordinate the development of partnership proposals
2.1.2 Develop public-private-community partnerships to improve efficiency of adaptation and application of agricultural technologies and innovations	● Bring public, private and community sectors to expert consultations and policy dialogue ● Facilitate engagement between public, private and community stakeholders

2.1.3 Facilitate networking and collaboration between national, sub-regional, regional and global-level organizations within AFS	• Facilitate engagement of national stakeholders at regional and global events • Promote engagement of national stakeholders in existing agri-food networks
2.1.4 Facilitate partnership with sub-regional and regional organizations	• Create new ways of coordinating and delivering support to AFRIS through sub-regional organizations, such as ASEAN, SAARC and SPC • Facilitate collective development actions through regional organizations, such as ADB, APEC, UNESCAP and FAO
2.1.5 Facilitate networking and collaboration between AFS and regional and global multi-sector development partners to collectively work towards development outcomes	• Facilitate engagement with regional and global partners working in development sectors such as health, rural development, infrastructure and finance • Promote partnership with regional and global initiatives, such as G20, The World Economic Forum, Committee on World Food Security, COP 21 and GCARD
2.1.6 Map primary stakeholders to enable better targeting and stronger engagement in collective action	• Identify potential stakeholders and assess their possible contribution to and benefits from AFRIS • Assess the contribution from and benefits to APAARI members

3.3 Capacity Development

Capacity is the ability of the individual or group to perform their responsibilities. For effective and timely development outcomes, the transformation of AFS in the APR needs to be built on scientific advances, improved and validated technologies and adoption at scale. This can only be achieved by developing and strengthening capacity at three levels; individual, organisational and institutional.

APAARI is well positioned to contribute to strengthening capacity by working with its members, partners and other stakeholders to collectively identify and improve individuals, organisations and institutions in areas where capacity is lacking. APAARI intends to contribute to capacity building through the following strategies (Table 3).

Table 3. Capacity development

Key Strategy 3.1 Institutional arrangements for effective delivery of outcomes from AFRIS strengthened	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
3.1.1 Strengthen institutional capacity for the development of agri-food research and innovation system	● Use online and face-to-face interactions to create a culture of discussion and communication amongst members, partners and other stakeholders ● Encourage the sharing of resources – knowledge, human, technical and financial – to strengthen institutional arrangements ● Share successful models to reinforce capacity in leadership, governance, transparency, accountability, integrity and human resources
3.1.2 Strengthen databases on human capacity to enhance sharing of talent	● Create and improve existing databases ● Share opportunities for training, scholarships, and staff exchange programmes
Key Strategy 3.2 Organizational capacity for good governance, effective management and delivery of research and innovations enhanced	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
3.2.1 Improve capacity of leaders and research managers in monitoring, evaluation and impact pathway analysis	● Coordinate training programmes on planning, M&E and impact pathways ● Develop and share guidelines on M&E and impact pathways
3.2.2 Develop and use improved skills and competency in managerial and organizational roles	● Coordinate training in e.g. leadership, management, governance, transparency, accountability, enabling infrastructure, communication, advocacy, and human resources
3.2.3 Develop basic skills and competency of researchers in small, island and mountainous countries, and new/emerging organizations	● Create learning opportunities for small, island and mountainous countries and new/emerging organizations ● Facilitate participation of disadvantaged stakeholders in training programmes ● Provide post-training mentoring
3.2.4 Address organizational capacity development needs in knowledge management, partnership and networking and advocacy	● Facilitate training, consultations and publications to develop organizational capacity in knowledge management, partnership, networking and advocacy

Key Strategy 3.3 Technical competency developed	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
3.3.1 Build capacity of researchers and policy makers in technical areas	• Coordinate training in conservation agriculture, conservation and use of neglected species, options for recycling agricultural biomass, coping with uncertainties and/or cost-effective inputs and services for primary production • Facilitate policy dialogue on land and water resources, market integration and biotechnology • Organize expert consultations on developing/ adapting options for improved land and water management, agro-forestry, on-farm conservation of underutilized crops, biotechnology, recycling agricultural biomass, climate-smart technologies and/or on-farm harvest and postharvest strategies
3.3.2 Improve collaboration in areas requiring regional cooperation	• Organize policy dialogue on standards and regulations on agrobiodiversity, integration of value chains and/or cost-effective production of inputs and services • Facilitate sharing of expertise in technical and managerial areas, such as managing agrobiodiversity and transboundary pests and disease

3.4 Advocacy

Economic growth originating from agriculture has been shown to be 2-4 times more effective at reducing poverty than growth originating from other sectors. Despite this trend, in the regions where hunger and poverty are the most widespread today, there are declining or stagnant levels of investment in agriculture. Increasing investment and improving understanding on the crucial role of agri-food research and innovation in development requires advocacy.

APAARI can play a role in advocating for investment in agricultural research at a regional level, and is well positioned to lead this coordinated action through the following strategies (Table 4).

Table 4. Advocacy

Key Strategy 4.1 Understanding of the role of agri-food research and innovations in AFS and socio-economic development improved	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
4.1.1 Increase political recognition of the role of agri-food research and innovation as a major driver of socio-economic development	● Monitor the contribution of agri-food research and innovation to socioeconomic development through data analysis ● Conduct studies and policy research on issues related to agri-food research and innovation ● Share results with policymakers through events, online and publications, such as policy briefs
4.1.2 Improve the voice and engagement of disadvantaged stakeholders involved in AFS	● Improve representation of disadvantaged stakeholders in regional events ● Provide face-to-face and online opportunities to share issues and success stories ● Facilitate documentation and dissemination of experiences of disadvantaged stakeholders
4.1.3 Strengthen capacity for advocacy	● Develop an advocacy resource kit ● Provide training on different advocacy tools
4.1.4 Engage social and broadcast media to strengthen advocacy efforts	● Ensure participation of journalists from national, regional and/or global media in APAARI events ● Promote APAARI events through social media ● Encourage primary stakeholders to use APAARI blog for greater outreach
Key Strategy 4.2 Investment in agri-food research and innovations improved for development of AFS	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
4.2.1 Enhance understanding of agri-food stakeholders and policy makers on the need, scope and return of improved investment	● Use events, policy dialogue and communication campaigns to sensitize agri-food stakeholders and policy makers on the need, scope and return (actual and potential) of improved investment ● Facilitate socioeconomic and policy studies
4.2.2 Assess the status, trend and priority for investment, and use the data to attract investment and improve decision making	● Work with IFPRI to plan and implement the ASTI project ● Assess and use investment data for improved advocacy to mobilize investment for priority areas

4.2.3	Develop advocacy tools and on-going dialogue on promoting investment	• Develop advocacy tools, such as policy briefs and fact sheets, to promote improved investment • Establish a resource group to facilitate dialogue on improved investment
4.2.4	Assess and develop skills and capacities for mobilizing investment	• Coordinate training on mobilizing investments • Develop guidelines to feed into the advocacy toolkit
4.2.5	Assess and adopt innovative funding and partnership mechanisms	• Document and share experiences with innovative funding and partnership mechanisms in APAARI-supported events • Initiate innovative partnerships e.g. with the private sector, regional and sub-regional organizations

Cross-Cutting Areas

3.5 Women and Youth

Agriculture is underperforming in many Asia-Pacific countries. One reason for this is the “gender gap” in agricultural productivity. Across the Asia-Pacific, women are food producers and entrepreneurs, but they can rarely access productive resources, markets and services as easily as their male counterparts. This hinders their productivity and reduces their contribution to the agriculture sector and to the achievement of broader economic and social development goals. Women are also underrepresented in agricultural research and forums for decision making.

Over 20 per cent of the Asia-Pacific population are youth and although only one in five workers are between the ages of 15 and 24, this group accounts for almost half the region's jobless. Employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for young people, especially those in rural areas are limited, and most of the jobs available are poorly remunerated and generally unattractive to young people. Young people are also under-represented in decision-making.

APAARI recognizes the lost opportunities created through the gender gap and the disengagement of rural youth in agriculture. Women are talented farmers, entrepreneurs and scientists, and youth have enthusiasm and inherent aptitude for technology adoption and innovation. These attributes are being undermined and underutilized. APAARI can be a forum where women and youth can have their voices heard and make a bigger contribution through the following strategies (Table 5).

Table 5. Women and youth

Key Strategy 5.1: Women and youth are engaged in productive and rewarding activities in AFS	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
5.1.1 Strengthen the engagement of women and youth in agricultural value chains, to enable them to receive a higher share of benefits from integrated markets	• Document and share success stories on value adding activities that are attracting women and youth • Involve more women and youth in expert consultations related to value chains • Promote engagement of women and youth through communication campaigns and social media
5.1.2 Improve opportunities for women and youth in agri-food research	• Promote research scholarships and other work opportunities for women and youth • Involve more women and youth in analytical work, including in APAARI • Promote success stories about women and youth working in agricultural research
5.1.3 Build capacity of women and youth in AFRIS	• Coordinate training for women and youth in value addition, agri-food research and extension, entrepreneurship, ICT and KM
Key Strategy 5.2: Women and youth are appropriately represented in policy and decision making in AFS	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
5.2.1 Strengthen organizations of women and youth at national and regional levels to give them greater voice	• Create opportunities for women and youth to engage in regional and global dialogue • Encourage women and youth to learn and share experiences at APAARI events • Collect gender and age disaggregated data on participants at capacity development events
5.2.2 Ensure inclusive representation of women and youth in APAARI	• Recognize and include women and youth as active members and staff of APAARI • Include women and youth in APAARI governance and policy decision making

3.6 Foresight and Visioning

Foresight and visioning will allow APAARI to analyse changes in the development context, trends, challenges and opportunities emerging over time and space and adjust its priorities and implementation plans accordingly. This realignment will occur through on-going

foresight and visioning exercises. Such exercises will also encourage innovation and analysis that can be turned into actions to effectively address the future development of AFS. These will focus on development themes and APAARI programmes and will also include the community-based foresights and prioritization of regional needs to set the agenda for collective action.

Table 6. Foresight and visioning

Key Strategy 6.1 Developments, trends and changing needs that may impact on the realization of Vision 2030, are continuously monitored and evaluated and turned into actions

4. APAARI Governance and Development

Good organizational governance and continual efforts to develop the capacity and effectiveness of APAARI will drive the results sought and described in this strategic plan and help fulfil the ambitions set in the APAARI Vision 2030.

This will require appropriate refinements in APAARI governance and increased capacity in securing and managing financial, material, and human resources. To strengthen its capacity APAARI also needs to improve its management systems with a special focus on planning, monitoring and evaluation (PM&E), and decision making through relevant policies and management standards. Stronger governance will be pursued through the strategies outlined in Table 7 below.

Table 7. APAARI governance and development

Key Strategy 7.1 APAARI is efficient and effective in contributing to strengthening of AFRIS in the APR	
Specific strategies	Indicative activities
7.1.1 Develop and effectively utilize the human capacity of the APAARI Secretariat	● Acquire and develop human talent in accordance with strategic priorities ● Develop human resources through staff exchange, secondment, in-service training, and graduate training
7.1.2 Effectively mobilize and utilize APAARI's financial and material resources	● Mobilize funding through proactive revenue measures, and optimal use of reserves ● Develop partnership and engagement strategy and standard to guide resource mobilization efforts ● Allocate funding in accordance with strategic priorities

7.1.3 Develop APAARI Secretariat competency in the four programme areas	Support existing staff to participate in professional development and training
7.1.4 Implement a PM&E and outcome assessment system	Develop and implement effective PM&E systems for performance assessment of APAARI programmes
7.1.5 Develop effective leadership and management, incorporating appropriate systems, structure and processes	- Refine policies and management standards for management of resources - Develop an enabling environment within the association for efficiency and effectiveness - Apply principles of transparency, accountability, prudence and due diligence in all APAARI operations
7.1.6 Reform APAARI to deliver on APAARI's mission and vision	- Build an inclusive environment with more stakeholders and wider representation - Focus on women, youth and CSOs that represent small producers - Assess and refine decision making and governance mechanism of APAARI to maximize efficiency - Change/amend APAARI constitution when necessary in accordance with the provision of Article 16 of the Constitution to deliver on APAARI mission and vision

5. Key Implications

The Strategic Plan is ambitious in terms of strategies, actions and deliverables through development outcomes and this gives rise to a number of implications to reform APAARI in terms of its governance and development. The key implications are:

- Enhanced/proactive partnership among APAARI members, partners, the AFRIS and primary stakeholders;
- A platform based on ownership and self-commitments and a mechanism to catalyse change;
- APAARI to be a more diverse multi-stakeholder platform mirroring change at regional level, with membership not only of research organizations but many others such as CSOs (NGOs/FOs), higher education, extension, policy makers, the private sector, development organizations, national, sub-regional and regional governments, etc.;

- The platform to be equitable with inclusivity for key actors involved in AFRIS;
- Transformative but speedy improvements, especially strengthening human and financial resources;
- A step-wise transformative process in progressive manner, and to be consistent with structure of APAARI;
- Development and implementation of an effective Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) system; and
- Necessary APAARI constitutional reform required to enable effective changes.

The above implications and changes will require APAARI reform to be systematically assessed planned and advanced through regular consultation (within APAARI's members and partners). It will also be paramount to do the necessary ground-work through canvassing and advocacy to solicit commitments by members, partners and primary stakeholders.

APAARI core values of visionary, excellence, learning and growing, inclusiveness and accountability, will need to serve its members, partners and other stakeholders in ensuring commitment to the highest level of professionalism to strengthen AFRIS in Asia and the Pacific.

6. Way Forward

The APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-22 is a starting point for many subsequent actions of APAARI in delivering on its Vision 2030 and sustainable agricultural development which will contribute to the realization of the sustainable development goals.

Successful implementation of the Strategic Plan will depend on effective partnership and cooperation between APAARI, agri-food research and innovation organizations, and primary stakeholders as identified in the Plan. To forge such effective partnerships, APAARI will need to embark on a series of awareness activities about the importance and scope of strengthening AFRIS for the development of AFS. The intent should be to help AFRIS and partners not only to engage and participate in collective efforts but also to mobilize partnership support from many organizations involved in the AFRIS.

In the process of delivering the development outcomes, the strategic plan has made a number of assumptions (details in the main plan) under which it will be possible to successfully implement APAARI strategies. These assumptions, if found untrue, may be a source of significant risk, causing disruption, delay and even failure in realizing outcomes in a timely manner. Therefore, such risks need to be objectively assessed and

appropriate risk management actions be implemented in a progressive and anticipatory manner.

The strategic plan has emphasized several key strategies, specific strategies and indicative activities under both themes and programmes. However, the plan excludes the scheduling of strategies through projects and events. Scheduling is not possible in the absence of information on funding, partnership and commitment and willingness to engage. Early efforts will be required to evaluate the availability of resources and commitments so that activity scheduling can be reflected in biennial operational plans.

It is fundamental and necessary that early changes in APAARI governance and development take place, as the basic and major driver under the Association's control and influence. Key areas of such change include having participatory stakeholder involvement, a reformed constitution, and enhanced human and funding resources at the APAARI secretariat. These activities are expected to lead to positive changes within and outside the Association, and among the partner organizations.

A key area in the implementation of the Strategic Plan is its PM&E, which will require baseline information on key aspects of APAARI functioning, including membership, outcomes of programme activities, resources, management standards, governance and decision-making protocols, as well as the extent of networking. APAARI will develop biennial PM&E frameworks consistent with respective biennial operational plans, having quantitative and qualitative performance indicators on activities, inputs, milestones and outputs. The performance indicators will need to follow 'Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound' (SMART) criteria with adequate flexibility, including appropriate allowances for changes in resource availability, assumptions and risks.

APAARI will plan its strategies in cycles of six years beginning with this Strategic Plan 2017-22. In addition to the Vision 2030 and strategic plans, APAARI will develop biennial operational plans which will be guided by the Strategic Plan and the subsequent plans that will follow beyond 2022. Biennial operational plans will be the basis for implementation.

APAARI recognizes that as the context of AFS is changing, so are the needs and challenges, requiring adjustment over time. Such realignment needs to be undertaken with the help of foresight and visioning exercises on an on-going basis.

To conclude, in successfully developing the Strategic Plan 2017-2022 and charting the pathways to strengthen AFRIS, APAARI has realized a watershed accomplishment in strategically addressing the post-2015 development agenda towards 2030. If the Strategic Plan is implemented with sincerity, conviction and rigor, APAARI will prove to be a successful platform in addressing and contributing to the realization of sustainable development goals in Asia and the Pacific.

Annex 1. Members of the task team for developing the Strategic Plan

Dr Raghunath Ghodake	Executive Secretary	Leader and Coordinator
Dr Simon Hearn	Consultant	Advisor
Dr Birte Komolong	Consultant	Member
Ms Martina Spisiakova	KM Coordinator	Member
Dr Syed Abbas	Consultant	Member
Dr Bhag Mal	Consultant	Member
Dr Emma Zalcman	Planner	Member

Consultation /approval events



Participants at the Advanced Consultation on Strategic Plan, 20-21 June 2016, Bangkok

Consultation /approval events



Participants at the APAARI Executive Committee Meeting, 8 September 2016, Bangkok



Participants at the 14th APAARI General Assembly Meeting, 3 November 2016, Taichung



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