



# PPP CoP 2025 The Rewind

A Reflection and Strategic Outlook  
Document

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# Foreword

2025 has been a pivotal year for reimagining collaboration in the Asia-Pacific agricultural sector. The launch of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Community of Practice (CoP) by APAARI was born from a simple yet profound observation: the immense potential of the private sector in shaping agricultural policy and trade was largely untapped. The journey of "PPP CoP 2025 – The Rewind" documents our collective effort to bridge this gap.

Over seven dynamic sessions, we moved beyond abstract concepts to confront real-world challenges—from biopesticide regulations and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) compliance to the logistical hurdles faced by mango farmers in Bangladesh and the need for harmonized phytosanitary standards for potato trade. This document captures the candid dialogues, the critical insights, and the actionable next steps co-created by over 300 participants from government, industry, academia, and the development sector.

As we rewind the year, we see a clear trajectory: from identifying funding gaps to forging shared goals; from isolated projects to systemic thinking; and from dialogue to a trusted platform for co-ownership. "PPP CoP 2025 – The Rewind" is not just a summary; it is a reflection on our collective learning and a roadmap for the transformative work that lies ahead. We invite you to revisit this journey with us and join in building the partnerships of the future.

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal  
Executive Director, APAARI

# Executive Overview

Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) are increasingly recognized as indispensable instruments for transforming agri-food systems, strengthening plant health governance, and expanding safe trade. In 2025, a structured series of seven webinar sessions convened policymakers, regulators, private enterprises, researchers, development partners, and practitioners across Asia-Pacific to critically examine how PPPs can move from concept to operational reality. Organized as a Community of Practice (CoP) by APAARI, the series sought not merely to exchange ideas but to cultivate trust, shared understanding, and pathways for collaborative action.

This publication — **PPP CoP 2025: The Rewind** — synthesizes those discussions into a reflection document. It situates the deliberations within global and regional PPP trends, aligns insights with international guidance such as the PPP framework promoted by Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), and distills lessons for designing effective partnerships in agriculture and trade facilitation



**Trust is the Cornerstone:** Recurring discussions highlighted that successful PPPs are built on long-term commitment, transparency, and a clear, fair allocation of risks and rewards, moving beyond mere contractual relationships to shared journeys.



**Systemic Approach is Essential:** Isolated interventions are insufficient. Effective PPPs require a holistic, market-systems approach that addresses regulatory frameworks, infrastructure deficits, capacity building, and incentive alignment across the entire value chain.



**Regulatory Harmonization is Critical:** A major barrier to regional trade is the lack of harmonized policies, particularly for biopesticides, SPS measures, and phytosanitary certification where the voices for private sectors are often missing. Streamlining approvals and aligning with international standards like EUDR is an urgent priority.



**Farmer-Level Engagement is Non-Negotiable:** The success of any high-level policy or trade initiative hinges on its impact at the grassroots. Ensuring quality, compliance, and fair prices requires direct engagement by public and private sector alike with farmers through contract farming, training, and certification programs.

This document serves as both a reflective record of the dialogues of 2025 and a guiding framework for stakeholders committed to building resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive agricultural systems through effective public-private partnerships.

# PPP CoP 2025

## Session Matrix

The following details provide a comprehensive overview of the seven sessions held throughout 2025, detailing the date, theme, and contributions from speakers and panelists for each individual session.

### 1. Launching Session of the CoP (30 January 2025)

**Panelist 1:** Expectations from PPP, Ibrahim Khalil – Deputy General Manager, Ispahani Agro Limited

**Panelist 2:** Challenges with PPP on Trade Compliance, Monjurul Islam – Advisor, BFVAPEA

**Panelist 3:** Role of Academia in PPP, Mohammad Shaef Ullah – Professor, Department of Entomology, BAU

**Panelist 4:** Views on PPP for AgriTrade in Bangladesh, Ahsan Ullah, SPS Technical Support – Bangladesh, APAARI

### 2. Strengthening PPP for Market Access in Bangladesh (24 February 2025)



**Jewel Rana**, Senior Agriculture Research Officer, Australian High Commission, Dhaka) – Strengthening PPP for Market Access in Bangladesh



**Md. Monjurul Islam (Advisor, BFVAPEA)** – Challenges of Market Access in Horticultural Commodities

### 3. Regional Perspectives: Implementation Strategy of PPPs in Pakistan & Needs for PPP Strengthening (25 March 2025)



**Ravi Khetarpal**, Executive Director, APAARI – Needs for PPP strengthening in Asia & the Pacific



**Rehana Kausar**, Senior Scientific Officer, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) – Implementation strategy of PPPs in Pakistan

### 4. Systemic Approach to Foster Agricultural Trade through Public-Private Partnerships (30 April, 2025)



**Mohammad Sakib Khaled**, Senior Manager, Portfolio Development, Swisscontact, Bangladesh

# PPP CoP 2025

## Session Matrix

### 5. Driving Scalable Impact through Public Private Synergy and Stewardship (26 June, 2025)



**Romano De Vivo**, Vice Chair, Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAiR)

### 6. Rethinking Public–Private Partnerships: From Funding Gaps to Shared Goals (21 August 2025)

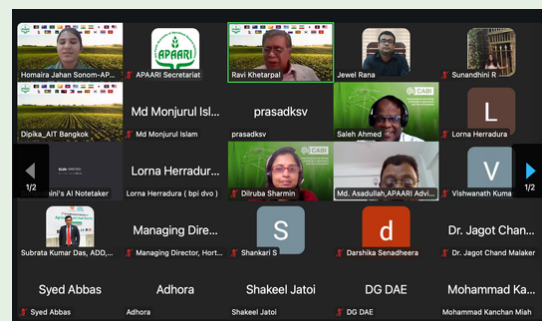
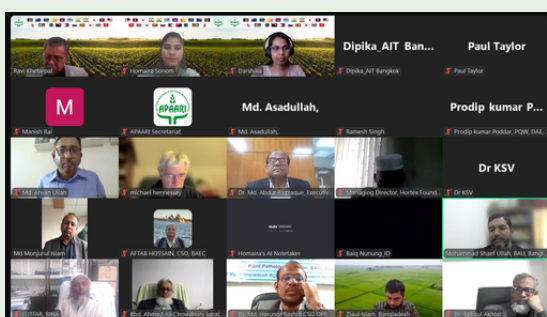


**Gururaj G. Kulkarni**, General Manager & Head of Crop Excellence, String Bio Pvt Ltd, India; Former Director, Bio Innovation Center & Global Head Stewardship, Research & Regulatory Compliance, IIRI

### 7. Strengthening Potato Production through Regional Collaboration and Harmonized Phytosanitary Conditions (30 September 2025)



**Nigel Crump**, General Manager, Australian Seed Potato Industry Certification Authority (AuSPICA) – Harmonization of Phytosanitary Measures for Potato Trade



Snapshots of Participation

# Background of Public–Private Partnerships

Historically, development, infrastructure, and service delivery were largely the responsibility of the public sector. Governments were the primary actors, managing resources, regulating systems, and delivering services independently. This reality has underscored the very need for the private sector—its investment capacity, operational efficiency, and technological innovation—to step in. This recognition marks the origin of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), moving away from a purely public-driven model toward a collaborative one.

Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) **now** evolved significantly since past three decades, transitioning from infrastructure financing mechanisms to comprehensive governance instruments for development, service delivery, innovation, and trade facilitation. Today, PPPs are recognized not merely as contractual arrangements but as collaborative ecosystems that align public mandates with private sector efficiency, investment capacity, and technological innovation.

Globally, PPPs are increasingly deployed to address complex, cross-sectoral challenges — climate resilience, food security, sustainable infrastructure, digital transformation, and resilient supply chains. Multilateral organizations such as the World Bank Group, Asian Development Bank, World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund emphasize PPPs as critical tools for bridging the widening infrastructure and development financing gap, estimated to exceed trillions of dollars annually.

In the domain of agriculture and trade, PPPs have assumed renewed importance. The globalization of value chains, increasing sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, climate risks, and digital disruption demand coordinated action between regulators, producers, exporters, logistics providers, financial institutions, and research organizations. Public institutions alone cannot respond effectively; nor can markets operate efficiently without regulatory certainty and public oversight.

Within this context, the Standards and Trade Development Facility — STDF — a global partnership housed at the World Trade Organization, has highlighted PPPs as essential for strengthening sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity, improving compliance with international standards, and expanding safe trade (STDF, 2023). The STDF PPP guidance underscores that effective partnerships require trust, transparency, shared incentives, clear governance, and sustained dialogue — not merely formal agreements.

The Asia region offers both the promise and complexity of PPP implementation. Rapid economic growth, expanding agricultural exports, and increasing regional integration coexist with fragmented regulatory systems, capacity disparities, and uneven institutional maturity. Countries in South and Southeast Asia face particularly acute challenges in aligning public regulations with private sector operational realities.

# Background of Public–Private Partnerships

Against this backdrop, the Public–Private Partnership Community of Practice (PPP CoP) emerged as a collaborative platform to facilitate dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collective problem-solving across stakeholders. The 2025 webinar series — comprising seven sessions — served as a reflective journey to rethink PPPs from funding instruments toward shared development mechanisms.

This document, “PPP CoP 2025 – The Rewind,” highlights that journey.

## The PPP Community of Practice

### Purpose and Approach

The Community of Practice established by APAARI was conceived as a neutral platform where public and private actors could engage regularly rather than episodically. The rationale was that trust — the foundation of any partnership — cannot be built through one-off consultations.

*Trust does not emerge from contracts — it grows from consistent engagement.*

The CoP adopted a conversational format combining expert presentations, case studies, moderated discussions, and open exchanges through chat and Q&A. Participants represented government agencies, national plant protection organizations, agribusiness firms, exporters’ associations, universities, development partners, and international organizations.

# Detailed Reflections from the Seven Sessions

## Session 1

### Launch of the PPP CoP: Establishing a Shared Space

The inaugural session on 30 January 2025 set the tone for the entire series. Opening remarks emphasized the private sector's underutilized role in policy dialogues on agricultural trade. Speakers highlighted that while governments regulate markets, private enterprises operate within them and therefore possess practical insights into constraints and opportunities.

Industry representatives spoke candidly about regulatory bottlenecks affecting innovation. One speaker from a major agribusiness company stressed that developing biopesticides requires collaboration across research institutions, regulatory agencies, and commercial entities. He pointed to soil degradation caused by excessive chemical fertilizer use and argued that biological inputs offer sustainable alternatives but face slow approval processes and unclear policies.

An exporter association representative drew attention to Bangladesh's limited agricultural export performance relative to regional competitors. He emphasized that without improvements in phytosanitary capacity, quality assurance, and farmer-level practices, PPP initiatives would not deliver tangible trade gains. Academia contributed by underscoring the role of universities in providing scientific evidence, technical training, and innovation support.

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Participants from different countries shared perspectives on regional cooperation. A Pakistani expert suggested focusing on strengthening intra-regional trade rather than solely targeting distant markets. Others highlighted the need for databases, certification systems, and awareness programs to support compliance.

The discussion revealed widespread recognition that PPPs must extend to the grassroots level. Farmer engagement, extension services, and market-driven production were repeatedly identified as prerequisites for successful partnerships.

## Session 2

# Market Access Challenges and Export Competitiveness

The second session moved from conceptual discussions to concrete trade barriers. Presentations focused on horticultural exports, particularly fresh produce, and the difficulties faced by developing countries in meeting stringent international requirements.

A case study described mango farmers struggling to access foreign markets due to inadequate cold storage, inconsistent quality, and insufficient SPS compliance. Speakers argued that PPPs could mobilize investment in infrastructure, training, and certification systems that governments alone cannot finance. Export association representatives presented data showing declining fresh produce exports, attributing the trend to lack of Good Agricultural Practices certification, limited market intelligence, and weak supply chain coordination. They advocated contract farming arrangements that align production with market demand while distributing risks between farmers, companies, and government agencies.

During the open discussion, regulators emphasized the need for traceability systems and accredited laboratories. Participants debated the feasibility of chartered cargo flights for perishable exports and the importance of adjusting transport costs to remain competitive. Audience comments reflected frustration that discussions on PPPs often fail to translate into concrete actions. Some participants urged the creation of pilot projects in priority commodities to demonstrate viability.

## Session 3

# Systemic Approaches to PPP Implementation

The third session introduced a systems perspective, arguing that isolated interventions rarely produce sustainable results. Instead, PPPs should address entire market ecosystems, including regulatory frameworks, supporting services, value chain actors, and consumer requirements. The keynote presentation explained how facilitation — enabling stakeholders to collaborate — can be more effective than direct implementation by external agencies. Examples from Bangladesh illustrated how coordinated action among regulators, companies, and farmers helped expand the biopesticide market by aligning policies with industry needs.

Panelists representing certification bodies, development projects, and government agencies emphasized the importance of incentive alignment. Partnerships endure only when each actor perceives tangible benefits, whether financial, regulatory, or reputational. Discussions also highlighted the need to institutionalize collaboration mechanisms so that partnerships continue beyond project timelines. Participants agreed that capacity building must extend beyond central agencies to field-level actors and service providers.

## Session 4

# Country Experiences: Opportunities and Constraints

Country case studies provided valuable insights into real-world PPP dynamics. A presentation on Pakistan described PPP initiatives ranging from infrastructure projects to agricultural innovations such as shrimp farming and drip irrigation systems. The speaker acknowledged significant achievements but also candidly discussed challenges, including policy inconsistencies and difficulties in persuading private partners to share risks.

Participants raised questions about who should initiate PPPs — governments or private actors. The response emphasized that partnerships can originate from either side but require mutual commitment to succeed.

A recurring theme was that private investors often expect extensive facilitation from governments while remaining cautious about sharing profits or proprietary information. Demonstrating successful outcomes was identified as a key strategy for building confidence.

## Session 5

# Rethinking PPPs: From Funding Gaps to Shared Goals

This session marked a conceptual turning point. Rather than viewing PPPs primarily as mechanisms for financing public projects, discussions focused on partnership quality. Speakers stressed co-design, co-ownership, and avoidance of power asymmetries between sectors.

Participants explored intellectual property issues, transparency requirements, and the importance of long-term investment horizons. Examples from agricultural research collaborations illustrated how open innovation models can reduce financial risks while encouraging private participation.

The dialogue underscored that trust emerges from continuous interaction and clear communication. Several participants suggested establishing advisory boards and sector-specific working groups to facilitate ongoing engagement.

## Session 6

# Driving Scalable Impact

The sixth session examined how successful pilots can be expanded into systemic solutions. The keynote speaker described PPPs as shared journeys of risk, responsibility, and reward, emphasizing the need for well-defined governance structures and fair risk allocation.

An international expert highlighted the importance of regional collaboration, noting that many agricultural challenges — such as pest outbreaks and climate impacts — transcend national boundaries. Participants discussed the role of open innovation platforms that allow stakeholders to share technologies and data.

The discussion became particularly lively when participants questioned why some PPP initiatives fail. One practitioner cited an abandoned agricultural center of excellence as evidence that PPPs sometimes remain symbolic rather than functional. Others raised concerns about mistrust between organizations and unequal levels of commitment.

Despite these criticisms, optimism prevailed. Several participants argued that PPPs are essential for addressing issues such as post-harvest losses, employment generation, and value addition.

## Session 7

# Strengthening Potato Production Through Regional Collaboration

The final session focused on a specific commodity — potato — to illustrate how PPPs can operate in practice. Experts discussed the importance of harmonized phytosanitary standards, seed quality systems, and regional cooperation.

The keynote speaker explained that potato productivity varies widely across regions due largely to differences in seed quality and disease management. He emphasized that harmonization of standards reduces uncertainty, builds trust, and facilitates trade. Both formal certified seed systems and informal farmer-managed systems were recognized as important components of production landscapes.

Participants explored challenges such as bacterial wilt affecting exports and the need for traceability. Private sector companies were identified as major drivers of demand for clean seed because their profitability depends on reliable supply chains. However, they often require clear public leadership before committing investment. The session concluded with proposals for mapping seed quality baselines, aligning testing protocols, and launching pilot projects under regional coordination.

# Stakeholder Participation Analysis

Category	Engagement Level	Key Contribution
Government	High	Policy and regulatory perspectives
Private Exporters	High	Operational bottlenecks
Logistics Firms	Moderate	Infrastructure constraints
Academia	Moderate	Research insights
Development Partners	Selective	Reform support

- *Analysis indicates strong to moderate technical engagement by different stakeholders for their respective contribution. It was also observed that development partners need to be more actively engaged.*

Interactive chat exchanges in general demonstrated strong engagement, with participants posing practical questions, sharing experiences, and sometimes expressing skepticism about implementation prospects. The CoP format allowed these concerns to surface constructively.

# Voices from the Floor: Q&A and Audience Perceptions

The CoP's true value was captured in the candid exchanges between participants. The "Voices from the Floor" section highlights the raw, unfiltered perceptions that shaped the dialogue. The chat window became a mini-roundtable of practitioners sharing ground realities.

## Theme 1: Frustration with Inaction



Md. Afzal Hossain (Bangladesh): "No doubt PPP is very impactful but difficult to implement... A networking organization should take the lead to make PPP functional."

## Theme 2: The Trust Deficit



Bijan Barua: "Why mistrust between the organizations—where are the gaps? Private sector... are more interested for PP synergy but government shows less interest – why?"

Thisadee (DALaM-Laos)- How can public and private sector stakeholders collaborate effectively to create a sustainable regional framework for agricultural trade, ensuring policy alignment, investment opportunities, and knowledge-sharing across Asia-Pacific?

## Theme 3: The Innovator's Dilemma



Justin Ahmed (Beanstalk AgTech): "...what would you say are the proof points that are most critical in garnering the trust necessary to establish public-private partnerships?"

## Theme 4: Optimism and Demand for Action



Jewel Rana (Australia High Commission, Dhaka): "PPP will be a game changer in the near future. But before that, solid policy guidance and business-friendly approaches will be the key... PPP is surely the future solution."

Dr. H.D. Kulkarni (Indian Wood Based Industries): Expressed concern on upcoming EUDR compliance, urging APAARI to "make a program to create awareness... and assist agroforestry farmers in meeting the compliance."

# Key Challenges Identified Across Sessions

The 2025 dialogues crystallized a set of persistent, interconnected challenges that hinder effective PPPs in the region.



**The Policy-Implementation Gap:** While many countries have high-level policies supporting PPPs, the on-ground reality is often different. Unclear regulations, slow bureaucratic processes (e.g., biopesticide registration taking years), and a lack of transparency create an unpredictable environment that deters private investment.



**The Trust and Incentive Deficit:** A fundamental lack of trust persists. The private sector fears bureaucratic delays and policy reversals, while the public sector often fear undue influence or conflicts of interest. This is compounded by a lack of shared, clearly defined incentives, leading to partnerships that are transactional rather than transformational.



**Systemic Capacity Constraints:** Limited technical and financial capacity constrains implementation, particularly in developing economies. PPPs fail not just because of poor design, but because the surrounding system is weak. This includes a lack of accredited labs for testing, poor post-harvest infrastructure (cold chains), and limited capacity of farmers to meet international compliance standards (GAP, GHP).



**Regulatory Fragmentation:** Institutional fragmentation complicates coordination, especially when responsibilities are distributed across multiple ministries and agencies. For regional trade, the lack of harmonized standards is a critical barrier. Divergent biopesticide policies, SPS measures, and phytosanitary certification requirements between neighboring countries fragment markets and increase compliance costs for traders. Legal and regulatory frameworks may be outdated or insufficiently flexible to accommodate innovative partnership models of public and private sectors.



**Farmer Inclusivity and Risk:** High-level partnerships often fail to trickle down to the farmer level. Smallholders, who are the primary producers, face the highest risks (climate, price volatility) and often lack the organization, training, and resources to become reliable partners in export-oriented value chains from both public and private sectors.

# Opportunities and Emerging Directions

Despite the challenges, the CoP identified several promising opportunities and initiatives that are shaping the future of PPPs.



**Co-regulation and Delegated Responsibility:** Moving beyond government-only regulation towards models where private sector associations take on quality assurance and certification roles, under public oversight, can build trust and improve efficiency.



**Open Innovation and Pre-competitive Platforms:** Collaborative platforms where public and private sectors jointly fund and conduct pre-competitive research (e.g., pest and disease resistance) can de-risk early-stage innovation and build a foundation of trust. This was a key suggestion from the 6th session.



**Blended Finance for Agribusiness:** Innovative financing mechanisms that blend public or philanthropic funds with private capital can de-risk investments in areas like cold storage, processing facilities, and sustainable farming practices, making them more attractive to private investors.

Innovative partnership models such as consortia and open innovation networks were proposed as ways to distribute risks and leverage diverse expertise.

## Way Forward: From Dialogue to Action

**“PPP is widely recognized as powerful, yet translating dialogue into action remains the real test.”**

The PPP Community of Practice demonstrated that sustained dialogue can build the foundation for collaboration, but implementation requires concrete institutional mechanisms. Participants called for pilot projects, policy reforms, and capacity development programs that translate insights into measurable outcomes.

Aligning with international guidance, particularly STDF principles, future PPP initiatives should prioritize transparency, mutual accountability, and results-based approaches. Regional cooperation will be essential for addressing transboundary challenges and achieving economies of scale.

# Reflections in 2025

The journey captured in PPP 2025 — The Rewind captures both the promise and complexity of public–private partnerships in agriculture. The discussions reveal that while PPPs are widely acknowledged as essential for sustainable development and trade competitiveness, their success depends on trust, clarity of roles, and long-term commitment from all stakeholders.

Ultimately, PPPs are not merely financial instruments or contractual arrangements. They are collaborative processes that must evolve alongside changing economic, environmental, and social realities. The Community of Practice has laid important groundwork; the next step is to convert shared understanding into transformative action by operationalizing of the partnership with co sharing of the risk, if any.

## References

- APAARI PPP Community of Practice Session Proceedings (2025).
- Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF). 2023. STDF Strategy 2020–2024 and Knowledge Products on PPPs. Geneva: STDF.

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