About CIRDAP

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) is a regional, intergovernmental and autonomous institution. It was established on 06 July 1979 at the initiative of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations with support from other UN bodies and donor. The center came into being to meet the felt needs of the developing countries at that time as an institution for promoting integrated rural development in the region. It has 15 member countries viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh (host state), Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. Operating through contact ministries and link institutions in member countries, CIRDAP promotes technical cooperation among nations of the region. It plays a supplementary and reinforcing role in supporting and furthering the effectiveness of integrated rural development programmes in the Asia-Pacific region.

VISION

CIRDAP, a Centre of Excellence in Integrated Rural Development.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide technical support and promote innovative best practices on sustainable IRD amongst member countries in Asia-Pacific in order to improve the lives of the rural people.

In pursuing this mission:

- We shall strengthen collaboration with our link ministries, link institutions, development partners, private sector and other stakeholders;
- We shall adopt state of the art information and communication technology;
- We shall commit to mobilising resources; and
- We shall embrace the values of Diligence, Integrity, Transparency and Accountability, Inclusivity, and Resilience to inculcate professionalism.

VALUES

CIRDAP should be guided by the following values:

- Diligence - Commitment to careful and persistent work and effort to contribute to the achievement of CIRDAP goals;
- Integrity - Uphold moral or ethical code through honesty, faithfulness, sincerity and innocence;
- Transparency and Accountability - Ensure that all activities are undertaken through ways in which they can easily be visible by others and taking ownership of their processes and outputs;
- Inclusivity - Ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable rural people in terms of socio-economic status, gender, physical challenges in all activities undertaken; and
- Resilience - The ability to anticipate and manage challenges to sustain continuous progress.
CIRDAP, as a Centre of Excellence, has completed its 40 years in enabling rural communities in the Asia-Pacific region. The 40th Anniversary of CIRDAP is a very special celebration for all of us. On this occasion, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and heartfelt greetings to our Policy Bodies Members, our Development Partners and all those who supported CIRDAP for its success during 40 years.

Since its inception, CIRDAP has been continuously assisting national actions; promoting regional cooperation; providing technical assistance to its 15 member countries and beyond. The Centre also fosters exchange of ideas and experiences; organizes collaborative activities; promotes innovative best practices on sustainable integrated rural development; stimulates community and marginalized peoples participation. At the same time, it has been changing its strategic plans, approaches and focus areas in order to face global changes, challenges, and agenda like SDGs in effective and efficient ways. Likewise, it has designed “Strategic Directions 2018-2022” and working in aligning with this new direction. We are committed to striving its continued growth, success and visibility in the area of rural development and poverty alleviation.

Over the last 40 Years, we have enormous compilation of great events and achievements in terms of researches, pilot projects and trainings. On the occasion of its 40th Anniversary, we would like to share some glimpses from the huge album of fond memories. We have also incorporated the genesis of growth in brief, and a few chronological events of CIRDAP.

Lastly, we hope your support and cooperation will be continued with further strengthened and motivations to make the Centre irresistible.

Dhaka, Bangladesh
June 2019

Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau
CIRDAP Genesis of Growth: Then and Now

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) is a regional, intergovernmental and autonomous institution established in July 1979 by the countries of Asia and the Pacific region at the initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations and several other UN Bodies with the support from the Government of Japan and donor agencies including the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

CIRDAP was established with the expectation of fulfilling the need for a Centre that would strengthen integrated rural development activities in the region. Such a need was first articulated in FAO meetings in the early seventies. Consequently a proposal for the establishment of an international network for promotion of integrated rural development in the region was developed. The proposal was discussed with 12 member governments of the region in 1974. The governments favourably endorsed the proposal.

The 12th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Far East held in Tokyo in September 1974 urged early action in establishing the regional Centre for promoting research and training in IRD based on field action. The idea received support from the World Food Conference of 1974 and also from the FAO Adhoc Consultation on Collaboration in Selected Rural Development Activities which was convened at FAO Headquarter in October 1975.

A recommended by the Ad-hoc Consultation, a project proposal for the establishment of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia was prepared. This proposal was discussed by member governments in a Consultation convened by FAO in Bangkok in March 1967.

The Government Consultation agreed that: (i) the Centre should be established, at an early date, in a developing country of the Asia and Pacific Region; (ii) the Centre should be named as the ‘Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP); (iii) the quantum of financial support by the host country should not be the only factor in deciding the location of the Centre in a developing country; and (iv) the final selection of the host country should be made by consensus among the Permanent Representatives of Government of the Region to FAO.

The decision to establish CIRDAP, with Bangladesh as the host state, was finally made at a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Group of Permanent Representatives to FAO, held in Rome on 19 September 1977, chaired by the Director General of FAO, which was also attended by representatives of interested donor countries and organisations.

A draft of an Agreement for the establishment of CIRDAP was then prepared under the auspice of FAO. The Agreement was discussed and adopted by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries which met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 29 July 1978, during the period of the 14th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Far East. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries signed the Agreement on 1 August 1978.

**Initial Membership**

CIRDAP came into being in July 1979 after Bangladesh (the host state) and six other states namely, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam had ratified the Agreement signed in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Initially these seven countries constituted the members of CIRDAP. In November 1979, Malaysia became a member and in February 1980, Lao PDR joined the CIRDAP family. Sri Lanka had ratified the CIRDAP Agreement and became a member in June 1980.
Objectives of the Centre
The objectives of the Centre are:

(i) To assist national action and to promote regional cooperation relating to integrated rural development through a network of national institutions in Member States in the Asia and Pacific region, with the aim, in particular, of improving the production, income and living conditions of small-scale farmers and other needy rural groups, and of encouraging their participation in social and economic life; and

(ii) To act as a servicing institution for its member states, with respect to integrated rural development by providing them with technical support, by fostering the exchange of ideas and experiences and by encouraging such joint or collaborative activities as may benefit those states individually or collectively.

Functions of the Centre
For the achievement of its objectives, CIRDAP would:

(i) Conduct, and, through the national IRD centres, promote or assist research on various aspects of integrated rural development in the region, with emphasis on alternative approaches leading to more effective field action programmes;

(ii) Hold consultative conferences or other meetings enabling national decision-makers, research workers, planner and executives to exchange ideas and experiences on integrated rural development and to identify areas in which joint collaborative efforts would be for the mutual benefit of member states;

(iii) Organise training courses on planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes for integrated rural development, and assist, where desired, the national IRD centres in implementing their respective training programmes;
(iv) Provide technical support to national IRD centres, and maintain liaison with such centres and with national, regional or international organisations or agencies concerned with integrated rural development;

(v) Serve a clearing house and data bank for information on integrated rural development in the region, and promote the dissemination of information through publications and the preparation of documentation including the translation of significant publications on integrated rural development; and

(vi) Perform such other functions as may be necessary or useful for the attainment of its objectives.

Organisational Set-up in the Beginning

First Governing Council: The first Governing Council of CIRDAP consisted of all the member states (one representative of each state). The office bearers were Indonesia (Chairman) and Pakistan (Vice Chairman). The Council served as the policymaking body of CIRDAP which met regularly once every two years, having regular biennial sessions.

First Executive Committee: The first Executive Committee consisting of five members (the host state and four other member states, elected by the Governing Council) was organised. The members of the first Committee were India (Chairman), Vietnam (Vice-Chairman), Bangladesh, Nepal and Philippines. This Committee served as the ‘working arm’ of the Council and performed functions delegated to it by the Governing Council. Earlier, the Committee met at least once a year. Hence, now it took place once every two years.

First Technical Committee: The first Technical Committee of eleven members was established. It met once a year and served primarily in an advisory capacity in connection with the technical aspects and the funding of the activities and programmes of the Centre. The members of this Committee were as follow:

a. A representative of a State which is not a member of CIRDAP but has contributed to the resources of CIRDAP;
b. A representative of an agency or organisation which has contributed to the resources of CIRDAP;
c. The heads of four national IRD cent res selected by the Governing Council on a rotation basis;
d. The head of the national IRD centre of the host state;
e. The Director-General of FAO or his representative;
f. An expert of outstanding professional eminence in the field of integrated rural development;
g. A representative of the Inter-Agency Committee on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific; and
h. The Director General of CIRDAP.

**Regional IRD Network: The first of its kind**

CIRDAP operates with a regional network of Link Institutions and Contact Ministries in the member countries. National IRD centres or institutions designated by the countries are members of the network. These institutions serve as contact points for CIRDAP in respective member countries. Through them, it establishes collaboration in respect of CIRDAP-sponsored programme/projects that are to be undertaken jointly with member countries. Initially, eight of the 9 member countries had already named their national IRD institutions. These were: the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, Comilla (Bangladesh); the National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad (India); the Directorate General of Rural Development, Ministry of the Interior, Jakarta (Indonesia); the Ministry of Agriculture, Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia); the Agricultural Projects Services Centre, Kathmandu (Nepal); the National Centre for Rural Development, Islamabad (Pakistan); the National Council on Integrated Area Development, Quezon City (Philippine); and the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Hanoi (Vietnam). At that time, Lao was yet to designate its national IRD institution.

**Physical Facilities and Personnel in Cumilla**

The CIRDAP Headquarter was located in a three storied building on the campus of the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) at Kotbari, Cumilla. In addition to this building which has 19 office rooms and a conference room, six flats on the campus and a duplex cottage in Cumilla town were made available by BARD for housing the CIRDAP professional staff. Other facilities on the BARD campus, such as the library, cafeteria, hotels etc. were shared by BARD with CIRDAP.

First, CIRDAP Office started with a core team of professional staff consisting of a Director, a Deputy Director and two short-term Consultants, a Documentation Officer, an Administrative Officer cum Treasurer. Later, two Professional Fellows were recruited. The recruitment of general service staff consisting of an Assistant Administrative Officer and 15 other persons followed shortly after hiring of the professional staff.
Funding

During the organising phase of CIRDAP, the FAO and the Government of Japan made generous contributions. These were utilised to meet various expenditures incurred up to the time CIRDAP became a legal entity. Member countries have paid their contributions for the first biennium of CIRDAP programmes.

CIRDAP programmes and activities, including those which were carried out in collaboration with the national IRD institutions, were financed by contributions from various source, such as, from CIRDAP Member States, donor countries and donor agencies or organisations. Beside, funds made available by the Government of Japan, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), for Undertaking programmes of research, training and servicing/information exchange.

Programmes and Activities

The programme activities of CIRDAP are undertaken by four divisions, i.e. Research, Pilot Projects, Training, and Information & Communication.

Linkages with International and Regional Organisations

With the institutional linkages build up over a period of time with regional and international organisations, CIRDAP has acquired an international standard and status of
a reputed organisation. ESCAP has recognised CIRDAP as one of its Network Centres of Excellence in Research and Training of HRD.

CIRDAP has been collaborating with national and international government and non-government organisations for along time. It has close working relations with the Commonwealth Secretariat, IFAD, FAO, World Bank, JICA, NABARD, APO, ANGOC, KLRI, SAARC, ICIMOD, IDRC, BIRD, NAM-CSSTC, TIFNET, AARDO etc. The Centre has been building partnership in the areas of common interest for enabling rural communities.

Achievements and Accreditations:

1. With financial support of IDRC. The Rural Communication Network project was implemented to strengthen communication mechanism between CIRDAP and CIRDAP Link Institutions (CLIs) electronically linking the CLIs in the internet, as well as improving access to and the exchange of rural development information available in the CMCs.

2. CIRDAP became a content partner of IDRC PAN - Asia Network and arranged information about CIRDAP and its activities/projects/publications available on the internet.

3. CIRDAP was designed as the UN focal point institution for PopMap training in the region.

4. CIRDAP is one of the member of the council of Advocates for the World Micro-Credit Campaign.
5. CIRDAP was identified as one of the members of the ESCAP Network of Centre of Excellence for Human Resource Development (HRD) and Training.

6. The South Asia Programme of the Social Science Research Council, Washington DC, USA has created a new website called the South Asia Research Network (SARN) for students, academics and practitioners interested in social science and humanities related research on South Asia. CIRDAP has been listed as one of the research Centre’s in South Asia.

7. Government of India has provided financial support to conduct three regional training programmes in collaboration with NIRD&PR, India. Three more training programmes have been launched with the financial support to be provided by the Government of India, during 2004.

8. CIRDAP with the financial support of NABARD/BIRD has been organizing a series of training-cum-exposure visits on Micro-Finance in Bangladesh.

9. The Government of Myanmar is continuing to implement two collaborative pilot projects in spite of discontinuation of financial support from CIRDAP due to closure of Japanese fund.

10. CIRDAP, in collaboration with Rural Development Training and Research Institute (RDTRI), Sri Lanka arranged an exposure visit in Bangladesh on micro finance for the community worker of RDTRI. The programme was funded by UNDP, Sri Lanka.

**Priority Areas**

From time to time, to cope with the changes and a view towards aiding national action in the member countries. And to maintain a close harmony with regional and global developments in rural development and poverty reduction efforts, the Centre reviewed and reformulated it programme areas thrice during the twenty-year period spanning 1979-1999. The programme priorities an approved by the Governing Council have evolved into a sharper, more focused areas that provided direction to the Centre’s activities:
1980s

- Development of disadvantaged groups
- People's participation and institutions
- Women and youths in development
- Rural development planning
- Implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Agrarian reform
- Ecology and resource development
- Development support communication

1990-1995

- Agrarian development
- Institutional and infrastructural development
- Resource development including human resources
- Employment

1996-2004 (Thematic Areas)

- Macro-economic policy issues in poverty alleviation
- Participatory approaches to employment generation, credit, provision of infrastructure and local resource mobilization
- Gender issues
- Environmental concerns for sustainable rural development including disaster
- Good governance
- Decentralization
**Current Focus Areas**

A good number of RD concepts, ideas, models and designs have evolved through research, pilot projects, experiments and practices. So many actors in the field, not only public sector but also NPOs, NGOs, CBOs and private sectors, have emerged by the end of last century. It is now really the time that a cohesive and all-pervasive model be worked out on the basis of experiences so far accumulated, which will ultimately fit into the imperatives of the future. Models must be based on, and should manifest a holistic approach towards RD, which eventually lead to poverty alleviation and prosperity for the teeming millions of Asia-Pacific region aligning with SDGs guidelines. Since the horizon of urban and rural divide are shrinking and many people are going to face problems in both the rural and urban areas, there is need to redefine the focus of CIRDAP. Hence, the following target groups and focus areas are suggested:
### Target Groups
- Vulnerable communities in terms of Socio-economic status, Gender, Physically Challenged
- Subsistence farmers and labourers in rural areas
- Micro, Small and Medium
- Entrepreneurs in rural areas

### Focus Areas

1. **Sustainable Development and Efficient use of Natural Resources**
   - Land Administration and Management
   - Waste management

2. **Livelihoods**
   - Poverty reduction
   - Economic Productivity through Technological Innovation, Upgrading and Diversification and Related Policies
   - Skill development
   - Entrepreneurship
   - Access to Financial Services
   - Sustainable Tourism (Eco Tourism)
   - New Development and emerging issues of rural livelihood

3. **Access to Basic Services:**
   - Access and use of ICT for IRD
   - Rural transportation access

4. **Climate Change and Impacts**
   - Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change

5. **Governance**
   - Strengthening local governance and CBO/CSOs
   - Gender Inclusive Governance

6. **Management of Rural Areas in Transition**

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Photographs from CIRDAP activities in 1996.

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Photographs from CIRDAP activities in 2002.

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Photographs from CIRDAP activities in 2015.
Photographs from CIRDAP programmes in 2016.

Photographs from CIRDAP programmes in 2017.
Photographs from CIRDAP programme in 2018.

Photographs from CIRDAP programme in 2019.
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<th>Link Institutions</th>
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<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad, No.5, Roodsar St., Aban Ave., Tehran</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture &amp; Co-operatives, Agrarian Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City</td>
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