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CDD

CIRDAP Development Digest



**Centre on Integrated Rural Development for
Asia and the Pacific**

CIRDAP

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) is a regional, intergovernmental, and autonomous institution, established in 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 several other UN bodies and donors. Its member countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh (Host State), Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The main objectives of CIRDAP are to: (i) assist national action; (ii) promote regional cooperation; and (iii) act as a servicing institution for its member countries for promotion of integrated rural development (IRD) through research, action research, pilot project, training, and information dissemination. Amelioration of rural poverty in the Asia-Pacific region has been the prime concern of CIRDAP. The programme priorities of CIRDAP are set under four Areas of Concern: 1) Agrarian Development; 2) Institutional/ Infrastructural; 3) Resource development including human resources; and 4) Employment. Within these Areas of Concern, the thematic areas identified are: Poverty alleviation through participatory approaches with emphasis on social sector development (e.g. health, education and nutrition); Employment generation through microcredit support, infrastructure development and local resource mobilisation; Gender issues; Governance issues; and Environmental concerns for sustainable rural development.

Operating through designated 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.

About CDD

CIRDAP Development Digest (CDD) is published four times a year (March, June, September and December). The purpose of the CDD is to highlight various facets of IRD in the Asia-Pacific region. Any uncredited article or information appearing in the CDD may be reproduced without prior permission but with due acknowledgement and a copy to the Editor. The designations employed and the presentation of materials in CDD do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of CIRDAP concerning the legal status of any country, city or area, or of its authorities or boundaries. News items, viewpoints on IRD and related issues are welcome. All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor.

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Cover photo shows the participants of the Twenty-first CIRDAP Governing Council Meeting (GC-21) held on 13th October 2017 at Metro Manila, Philippines.

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Policy Body Meetings

Twenty-first Meeting of the CIRDAP Governing Council (GC-21)

The Twenty-first Meeting of the CIRDAP Governing Council (hereinafter referred to as GC-21) was held on 13th October 2017 at Metro Manila, Philippines. The Meeting was attended by the delegates from its member countries, i.e. Bangladesh, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand.

The keynote speech, on behalf of the Chief Guest H.E. Hon. Rodrigo Roa Duterte, the President of the Republic of the Philippines, was delivered by the Hon. Rosalina L. Bistoyong, OIC Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Government of the Philippines. The inaugural programme began with welcome remark by Mr. Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau, DG, CIRDAP. He hoped that valuable advice shared by the GC members in the meeting will provide direction to CIRDAP Secretariat to advance CIRDAP as a Centre of Excellence in integrated Rural Development in Asia-Pacific region.

The Opening Statement was delivered by the GC-20 Chairperson H.E. Joeli Cawaki, Asst. Minister for Rural Development and Maritime, Government of Fiji, while H.E. Engr. Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh also made a speech as Special Guest. Atty. Luis Pangulayan, Undersecretary for Legal Affairs Office, DAR, introduced the Chief Guest, wherein Ms. Ma Celestina Manlangit-Tam, Director, Bureau of Agrarian Legal Assistance, DAR delivered the vote of thanks.

GC Members of the Philippines and Fiji were unanimously elected as the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson of GC-21 respectively for the period starting from GC-21 Meeting till the election of new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at the next GC meeting (GC-22).

Thirty-first Meeting of the CIRDAP Executive Committee (EC-31)

The Thirty-first Meeting of the CIRDAP Executive Committee (hereinafter referred to as EC-31) was held during 09-10 October 2017 at Metro Manila, Philippines. It was attended by delegates from its member states, i.e. Bangladesh, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand.

Ms. Evelyn G. Laviña, Undersecretary for High Value Crops and Rural Credit under the Department of Agriculture, Government of the Philippines read the Keynote Speech of Chief Guest Hon. Secretary Emmanuel F Piñol. The Undersecretary Ms. Laviña delivered the message of the Secretary emphasizing on “unity while doing differently” and up valuing regional cooperation effectiveness addressing poverty through implementation of national development policies. Further, the speech of the Special Guest, Ms. Mafruha Sultana, Secretary of the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (LGRD&C), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, suggested some ways making CIRDAP more relevant to CMCs. Mr. Setareki Tale, the Chairperson of Executive Committee and also the Deputy Secretary/ Divisional Commissioner (Central), Ministry of





Rural and Maritime Development, Natural Disaster Management and Meteorological Service, Government of Fiji hoped that the members will actively participate in the meeting to make it successful.

Mr. Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau, Director General (DG) of CIRDAP delivered his speech warm welcoming to everyone and thanking to the Government of Philippines for hosting the EC and GC meeting in a short notice. He

expressed high hope that EC meeting will be the platform where delegates can take advantage to forge friendship and establish networks amongst member countries.

The EC Members of the Philippines and Fiji were unanimously elected as the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson of EC-31 respectively for the period starting from EC-31 Meeting till the election of new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at the next EC meeting (EC-32).



EC-31 in progress.



DG CIRDAP delivering his speech in the Agribusiness Forum programme during 11-12 October 2017.

Research News

Focus Group Discussion on the Project of Livelihood Enhancement of the Small Farmers in SAARC Region

With the support from the SAARC Development Fund (SDF), CIRDAP and SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) are now on the process of initiating and implementing a research project on “Livelihood Enhancement of the Small Farmers in SAARC Region through Small Scale Agro-business focusing on Value Chain Development”. A Focus Group Discussion for the aforementioned project was organized via video conference on 25 November 2017, where Mr. Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau, Director General and Mr. Shafiqur Rahman, National Officer (Research) from CIRDAP participated virtually.

SDF opened the meeting by welcoming the participants to the virtual meeting and briefed them on the objectives of the meeting. SAC presented the overview of the project, logical framework and the role of SAC. The presentation was followed by discussion and feedback from the participants. CIRDAP presented its view and role.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- a. To formulate clear objectives, activities, output and impacts of the project;
- b. To agree on the roles, responsibilities and accountability of all the agencies involved in the project;
- c. To articulate project’s business model & financial sustainability;
- d. To design project implementation modalities;
- e. To agree on the organizational structure to support the project; and
- f. To agree on action points and specific timeline by countries and Coordinating Agency.

The following discussion was carried out in FGD:

1. SAC presented the overview of project, logical framework and the role of SAC. The presentation was followed by discussion and feedback from the participants:
 - a. Project Overview
 - i. The overall objective of the project is promoting agro-business model in selected sites with a major focus on promoting small agro-processing equipment’s for quick value addition of fruits and vegetable;
 - ii. Specific objectives of the project isto identify and replicate successful food processing technologies and models for fruits and vegetable in South and South-East Asia region;

iii. The activities of the project are as follows:

- Participatory appraisal of value chain of target commodity
- Inception meeting
- Farmer group formation
- Supply of quality seeds and farm inputs
- Identification and supply of equipment’s and inputs (procurement and supply)
- Training need assessment
- Installation of equipment
- Training on agri-business
- Training on commercial production and post-harvest handling
- Training on processing and pro handling
- Exposure visit to agro business/business facilities
- Development of small agro business
- Production and marketing
- Monitoring and evaluation
- To increase skill and capacity of smallholder farm families on value addition of locally produces fruits and vegetable
- Increase income and improve livelihoods of the small holders
- Promote empowerment of rural women and employment through promotion of agri-business
- Develop value chain of the agriculture products and mainstreaming the locally produced commodities

b. Role of SAC

- Co-ordination of potential IAs during proposal development and its consolidation;
- Provide value-added technical support to the IAs;
- Liaise closely with the IAs to ensure that the regional priorities of the projects are given due consideration vis-à-vis national priorities;
- Review and monitor physical project progress of the IAs;
- Review and recommended for SDF’s consideration financial reports, request for no-cost extension, and project revisions
- Preparation of consolidated narrative (quarterly, annual and end of project) reports and subsequent submission to SDF;
- Provide coordination support to SDF in its monitoring and

evaluation activities such as field visits, conduct of evaluations, joint review meetings, etc.

In addition, SAC may organize the below activities:

- Project inception workshop
- Annual progress meeting
- Regional level ToT training
- Project completion workshop

c. Discussion:

- i. Afghanistan: Due to connectivity issues, comments was agreed to be shared via email.
- ii. Bhutan: Bhutan confirmed that the project was relevant for the Bhutanese context but highlighted that discussion might be needed for the selection of the appropriate implementing agency for Bhutan. This will be discussed within the Department of Agriculture and the decision be conveyed to SAC and SDF.
- iii. Bangladesh: Bangladesh raised a query regarding the co-funding from IA. SAC clarified that it is in-kind contribution in terms of staff cost.
- iv. India: India raised concerns on the current proposed timeframe of the project (July 2017 to June 2019) might not be sufficient for the project to achieve its objectives considering that the project is not yet approved; and that the budget allocated for human resources might not be sufficient, and requested for revisiting of the project budget to make it more realistic.
- v. Nepal: Due to connectivity issues, comments was agreed to be shared via email.
- vi. Pakistan: Due to connectivity issues, comments was agreed to be shared via email.
- vii. Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka also raised similar concerns to India on the budget allocation and the need to revisit it, and the timeframe of the project for implementation. She also suggested that the Department of Extension Services might be a more appropriate IA for Sri Lanka. She also noted that there was no budget allocation for infrastructure that may be needed for housing the equipment.

All the countries confirmed and agreed that the project is as per their respective country requirements.

2. Assistant Director, Social Window noted that there was a need to revise the project proposal based on the comments and feedback provided by the IAs, and requested SAC to do using SDF's revised proposal formats. She also emphasized that the revised project proposal should

highlight its sustainability plan and revenue generation model especially focusing on the farmers groups as they will be the ones taking the project forward after the conclusion of SDF's funding. She also enquired if there was any discussion on the legal status of the groups, and what strategies will be in place to facilitate marketing and access to finance. She also requested for the justification for procuring equipment outside of the SAARC region to be included in the revised document, and sought clarification on the measures taken by SAC to ensure that the necessary customs and other related clearances are obtained in time to facilitate timely delivery of the equipment to the participating countries.

3. AD Social Window, SDF also highlighted on the role of SAC will be as coordinating agency and will be provided with 3% of the 88% of the SDF portion of the budget. She informed that the 3% will be dependent on the performance of the IAs.
4. She also briefed the meeting on the activities that will be covered under the Common Activities under the portion of the budget maintained by SDF. Both the budget for Common Activities and Coordinating Agency Management Fee will be conveyed to SAC for inclusion in the project budget.
5. SAC clarified that the equipment is being donated for research purposes by a firm in Indonesia, and the transportation and necessary clearances will be undertaken by CIRDAP. As the equipment are intended for research, SAC informed that there will no delay in the getting the equipment cleared.

However, IAs like Sri Lanka and Bangladesh informed that there are equipment available that can be purchased from within the SAARC region, and suggested that these may be cost effective to use instead. SAC and CIRDAP acknowledged that there are locally available machines equipment, but recommended that since the project will be implemented in two sites in each country, the donated equipment be piloted in one site, and the other site equipped with locally available equipment. This will facilitate comparative analysis for the two sets of equipment, and feed into the research that SAC will conduct the donated equipment.

6. SDF presented on the Project Financing Agreement (PFA) and Procedure for Signing.

Agreement and Next Steps:

1. Revised project document to be shared by the IAs incorporating and using the new SDF proposal formats in coordination with SAC and inclusion of justification on procurement of machineries outside of SAARC region. The proposal should also contain the Sustainability of the groups (Revenue generation model);
2. The comments by IAs will be compiled by SAC and shared with SDF;
3. Formal Letter from all IAs to send to SDF via SAC on confirmation on participation in the project; and
4. SDF will share revised proposal templates including the budget description for common activities along with the Minutes of the Meeting.

It was agreed that the above will be completed/submitted by the SAC and IAs by 01 December 2017.

CEO, SDF informed that SAC should compile the project related documents and present to SDF as per the prescribed new project formats for discussion and further taking it for final approval by SDF Board. Since the project is already concept cleared by the Board, CEO informed the IAs not to make major changes and increment in the budget, and revise it as per feedback from each participating country. CEO, SDF also emphasized the IAs to include the Sustainability Plan and Revenue Generation model for the project to thrive even after the exit of SDF funding. CEO closed the Meeting with vote of thanks and note of appreciation to all the participants for making themselves available for the discussion within short notice.

Pilot Projects Update

Activity Proposal of Capacity Development Project duly signed with DIU

The MOU-MOA on Technical Cooperation in Technology Transfer and Enterprise Development of Philippine Center for Postharvest and Mechanization under the Department of Agriculture was signed on 06 September 2017. This was acknowledged at the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines, Consular Section, Dhaka Bangladesh in September 26, 2017. In line with the signing of MOU, the activity proposal, "Capacity Development: Up-valuing Agro-food enterprise of Selected-Bank Assisted Women's Group" was finalized and duly signed on 23 November 2017 by the DG CIRDAP Mr. Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau and by the Daffodil International University (DIU) Registrar Prof. Dr. Engr. A.K.M. Fazlul Hoque. It was witnessed by DIU Vice Chancellor, Dr. Yusuf M. Islam; Prof. Dr. Ahmad Ismail Mustafa, Dean of Faculty of allied Health Sciences; Dr. Hamidul Haque (Murad), Treasurer; and Dr. Md. Bellal Hossain, Professor & Head, Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering, Faculty of Allied Health Science.

Help Enrich the CDD

An open invitation to contribute news and write-ups

CIRDAP Development Digest (CDD) is published four times a year (March, June, September and December). The purpose of the CDD is to highlight various facets of RD in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition to the regular news updates on the Centre's activities, CDD regularly publishes news items, viewpoints on various aspects of RD and related issues from around the region.

Rural Development Institutions, Practitioners and Academia are humbly requested to provide us with valuable feedback and also to send their views, news and thoughts on various aspects of rural development. CIRDAP would welcome such contributions to the CDD with proper accreditation.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor (icd@cirdap.org or pa@cirdap.org)

Invitation for Articles

Asia-Pacific Journal of Rural Development (APJORD), a half-yearly academic journal, is a flagship publication of CIRDAP. It is devoted to the issues and discussions on rural development, primarily in the Asia-Pacific region.

The journal provides a platform for the academicians, policymakers, NGOs, research scholars and others interested in integrated rural development (IRD), to exchange and share ideas, opinions, field observations, and empirical findings on various facets of rural development.

APJORD focuses on poverty issues and rural transformation, keeping in view the programme priorities of the Centre, e.g. agrarian development, institutional/ infrastructural development, resource development including human resources, and employment.

Articles are invited for publication in APJORD. All articles are subject to peer review. Articles between 4000-5000 words are preferred. Articles should be sent by e-mail to apjordan@cirdap.org. Notes to Contributors is available on CIRDAP website: www.cirdap.org

Typescripts should be submitted in duplicate on A4 size paper, type written on one side in double space, with margins of at least 2.54cm. Statistical tables, illustrations and charts should be submitted on separate sheet and their positions indicated in the text.

APJORD follows the Chicago Manual of Style for preparing article. A note to the contributors is available at the back page of any issue of the Journal or can be found at our web site www.cirdap.org.sg. For further details please contact the Editor, APJORD.



Training Division

International Workshop on Cold Chain and Logistics Management for Agri-food Products in Fiji

As an effort to reduce postharvest losses and maintain the quality and safety of agri-food products in CIRDAP member countries, the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific in association with Japan based Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Fijian Ministry of Agriculture and National Training and Productivity Centre, and Fiji National University organised a five day Workshop on Cold Chain and Logistics Management for Agri-food Products during 11-15 December 2017 in Nadi, Fiji. The objectives of the workshop were to assess the recent developments in cold chain and logistics management for agri-food products; share knowledge on new technologies and best practices in cold chain and logistics management systems; and formulate action plans for the participants to disseminate and utilize the knowledge, techniques, and technologies learnt to promote efficient and effective cold chains and logistics management in respective member countries.

The opening session was attended by the Permanent Secretary of the Fijian Ministry of Agriculture Mr. Jitendra Singh, Director General of CIRDAP Mr. Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau, and Programme Officer of the Agriculture Department, APO Secretariat Dr. Shaikh Tanveer Hossain. Mr. Taginavulau emphasised on the significance of leadership using the Rushmorean Model to encourage participants that human values contribute to social development leading to economic growth.

A total of 22 participants from 15 member countries and observers attended the workshop. During the workshop, it was

learnt that food loss and waste not only have global socioeconomic and environmental consequences, they also have negative impacts on farmers and traders' incomes and the volume of food reaching consumers. An estimated one-third of all food produced, or about 1.3 billion tons, is wasted annually for reasons including poor harvest and postharvest handling practices and the lack of appropriate transportation, storage, cooling, processing, and marketing infrastructure.

To illustrate what cold chain for agri-food products management is; it is basically an uninterrupted series of re-fridgerated production, storage and distribution activities, along with associated equipment and logistics, which maintain a desired low-temperature range controlled supply chain. The process is used to preserve and to extend and ensure the shelf life of products, such as fresh agricultural produce, seafood, frozen food. The process may also extend to, photographic film, chemicals, and pharmaceutical drugs. The above illustrations allow the participants through the facilitation of experts as resource to communicate cost-effective, innovative cold chain technologies, models, and logistics for agri-food products which were examined in detail. This was in alignment along with methods to promote their adoption and scaling up in APO member countries.

In his inaugural address to open the workshop, Chief Guest and Assistant Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Viam Pillay highlighted the importance of cold chains in food security and reducing food losses, particularly for tropical countries. He spoke on recent initiatives by his ministry to deal with the challenges involved.

Then he thanked the organizers for considering Fiji as the venue for the workshop as cold chains and food supply chains were very important for the country's overall economic growth.

The opening session was attended by Permanent Secretary Jitendra Singh of the Ministry of Agriculture, Director





DG CIRDAP addressing his speech emphasising on leadership.

General Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau of CIRDAP, and Programme Officer Dr. Shaikh Tanveer Hossain of the Agriculture Department, APO Secretariat. Mr. Taginavulau emphasized the significance of leadership using the Rushmorean model to encourage participants that human values contribute to social development leading to economic growth.

The participants were given time to present their country report followed by Questions and Answers. Group discussions and presentations were also encouraged. The workshop ended in a Field Trip.

The workshop examined in detail how various APO members plus New Zealand and the USA manage cold chain and logistic services to improve the handling of agrifood products for the benefit of producers and consumers. The experts in their deliberation offered insights on strategies to address the specific needs of developing countries in general and small farmers in Asia in particular as well as the potential contributions public-private partnerships can make to improving the effectiveness of cold chain and logistic systems. Finally, the participants acknowledged the success of the workshop mostly the local participants.

After the workshop, the participants came up with some recommendations which focus on Policies, Institutional mechanisms and Programmes. Under policies the following were raised:

- (i) Government is already playing a major role in coordination and support, but can still be expanded in the area of quality control, product pricing and encouraging Public Private Partnerships; and
- (ii) Incentive schemes for good productivity and support in agri-input.

International Training Programme on Geospatial Information Management in Rural Development in India

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) and the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR) have successfully conducted the international training programme on 'Geospatial Information Management in Rural Development' during 13-22 November 2017 at Hyderabad, India. This training was organized to focus on the Asia-Pacific trends of Geospatial



Garlanding of guests during opening of the workshop.

Recommendations raised under Institutional mechanism were as follows:

- (iii) Development of internal controls and visual implementation of the SOP; and
- (iv) Quality control to be properly implemented with training of the farmers.

Then on Programme, participants raised these recommendations:

- (i) Building capacities for officers – market information, improved technology (P/H technology), Cold Chain Systems.
- (ii) Basic training to start Cold Chain business
- (iii) Layout improvement for flow of business (compressor in room)
- (iv) Labor trainings with retention / skill pool model
- (v) Water sanitation and control to be improved (water testing)
- (vi) Backend of supply chain needs improvement
- (vii) Relationship with the farmers to secure supply of produce
- (viii) Tools to help make purchase decision (Pesticide toolkit)

The workshop resource people who were experts in their own areas facilitated the workshop. They were; Department of Consumer Affairs Secretary Avinash K. Srivastava from the Government of India; Buy Pure New Zealand Managing Director and Organics Aotearoa CEO Brendan Hoare; and Asia Cold Chain Centre Chief Executive and Principal Consultant Dr. Rodney Wee of Singapore. On the other hand the participants particularly the international representatives were also experts in their own areas. They came from the public and privates sectors. Few were consultants themselves.

Information Management (GIM); to study the GIM best practices, pilot projects and programmes in India; and to identify the potential areas where the GIM applications can play a key role in CIRDAP member countries from India's experiences. It was attended by a total of seventeen participants from CIRDAP member countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, Iran, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Bhutan).

The programme was inaugurated by the speech of Director General of CIRDAP which was read by Dr. Rajesh (Project Scientist, CIRDAP). After the inauguration, a presentation on CIRDAP was presented by Ms. Farhana (Programme Associate, Training) and a video clip presentation of NIRD&PR. The programme was attended by seventeen participants from CIRDAP member countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, Iran, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Bhutan). Resource persons were from many renowned institutions of

India as well as from NIRD&PR. The regular sessions of the training programme was held through the presentation discussion and some hands on session of resource persons and active participation of participants. Participants shared their country experience on GIS and GIM through their country paper presentation.

As part of the training programme the participants visited many relevant field in Hyderabad, Bangalore and Mysore. They visited the following field for gaining relevant knowledge and experience.

- Infosys- Bangalore
- National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning
- Role of Remote Sensing and GIS for Soil Survey and Land Use planning , Bangalore
- Karnataka State Council for Science and Technology (KSCST), Bangalore
- Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Center, Bangalore
- The Karnataka State Remote Sensing Applications Centre, Bangalore



- KRSRAC, Mysore
- ANSSIRD &PR, MYSORE
- International crop research institute for Semi Arid topics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad
- INCOIS- Disaster Support Centre/ potential fishing zone advisory for Bay

During the study visit the participants interacted with the resource persons and officials of the institutions. The participants gained knowledge and hands on experience on GIS, GIM applications and other technological advancement from the institutions.

The valedictory session of the training programme was held on 22 November. In valedictory session participants were awarded with certificates and momentous by the Chief Guest. Participants appreciated this course and mentioned in their comments that this training programme was very effective and useful for them, they gained much technical and practical knowledge about GIS and GIM, they want to implement their learning in their country and they will carry a good memory of this.





Information and Communication

MoU signed with CDD

CIRDAP signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre for Disabilities in Development (CDD) on Technical Cooperation in Disability Inclusion in Rural Development in CIRDAP Member Countries on 30 November 2017 at CIRDAP Headquarters.



CIRDAP GIS Team visits BARD, Comilla

Two Project Scientists of the GIS Centre of CIRDAP Dr. J Rajesh and Mohd Shanawaz Kashif along with Mr. Waliul Hasnat (Computer Programmer) visited the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) on 03 November 2017 to get the information of BARD infrastructure, its activities and uses of technologies in the divisions, i.e. Research, Pilot Project, Training and programme Implementation Unit, and know about the rules and policies of the divisions. They had meetings with the Senior Officials of aforementioned divisions of BARD. CIRDAP team found that some projects are mostly suitable to use GIS Technologies for monitoring and evaluation that could be valuable for the rural livelihood management.



Cleaning Day at CIRDAP

An in-house cleaning day in CIRDAP was arranged on 02 November 2017 to keep campus premise neat and clean. All professional and general staff of CIRDAP participated in the cleaning spontaneously. After cleaning works, different sports were also organized. At the beginning of cleaning, briefing the importance of green and clean campus, Director General of CIRDAP gave instructions to staff [right photo shows] what should be followed during cleaning.



DG CIRDAP giving instruction on cleaning among staffs.

CIRDAP observed International Days

- CIRDAP observed International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 23 November 2017 at its headquarters located in Dhaka. In the programme, Ms. Unaisi Biu Waqa Taginavulau, Former Senior Assistant Secretary, MoFA, Fiji was the key speaker, where Mr. Tevita G. Boseiwaqa Taginavulau, DG CIRDAP spoke on the importance of elimination of violence against women and gender equality.



- CIRDAP also observed International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 19 October 2017. Director General of CIRDAP delivered his speech on the 2017 theme - Answering the Call of October 17 to end poverty: A path toward peaceful and inclusive societies.



Visit to the Bangladesh Bank Library

CIRDAP Library comprising of Mr. Prodip Kumar Aich, Project Officer (CIRDAP e-Library Project) and two intern viz. Mr. Al-Amin and Mr. Rezwan visited the Bangladesh Bank Library on 22 October to observe and learn the insight works and operations of this dynamic library in Bangladesh. They met two high officials of the Bangladesh Bank Library Mr. Md. Mahbubar Rahaman Khan, General Manager and Ms. Tasnim Fatema, Deputy General Manager. They also discussed on the possible collaborative efforts between two libraries to go forward together in future.



Quarterly CAL E-abstract Service

E-abstracts for December 2017 issue covering the period from October to December has been sent to the insider and outsider stakeholders of CIRDAP for easy access of current literature on Rural Development (RD) and Poverty Alleviation (PA). “CAL E-abstract” is a compendium of newly published articles (abstracts and citation) related to PA and RD in the Asia and Pacific region. These e-abstracts are

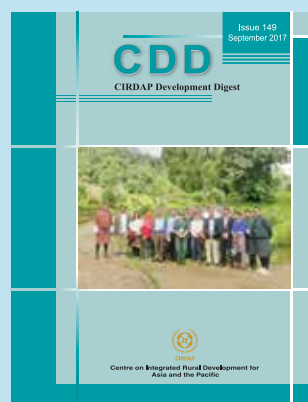
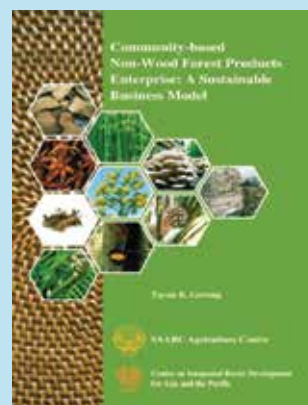
compiled quarterly and collected from journals available in open source journals and subscribed journals, and made them available through e-abstract services for CIRDAP’s staffs and professionals as well as CMCs.

Staff Participation

Dr. Usharani Boruah, Librarian, CIRDAP attended the workshop on “Re-imagining Libraries, Technology Transfer and Resource Sharing in Libraries of Bangladesh: An Observation” jointly organized by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC)-Dhaka and ICDDR,B on 2 December 2017 at ICDDR,B in Dhaka.



Recent Publications





Development News

Mekong Delta: Adapt to Saltwater Intrusion by using Aquaculture in Vietnam

Instead of trying to prevent saltwater invasion and desalinizing, it would be better to adapt to the new circumstances and think of developing aquaculture in Mekong Delta, scientists say.

In the Mekong Delta, one of the largest key agriculture production zones in the country, alkaline soil accounts for 18.6 percent of total area, located along the East Coast belt and the Gulf of Thailand. In the context of climate change, desalinizing is an impossible mission, or will be too costly.



Saline intrusion cannot be prevented, so the best solution is accelerating the salinization process to serve aquaculture.

Meanwhile, alum land accounts for 40 percent of the zone's total area, mostly located in depression areas, where it is very difficult to clear alum. Scientists have warned that saline intrusion would reach more deeply into the mainland in the future as a result of climate change.

Le Quoc Anh, Head of the team carrying out research on turning challenges in Mekong Delta into opportunities for development, pointed out that saline intrusion cannot be prevented, so the best solution is accelerating the salinization process to serve aquaculture. He emphasized that adjusting to environmental conditions is the most important aspect in agricultural production which helps improve productivity and ensures sustainable development.

In fact, farmers also prefer hatching shrimp to growing rice because shrimp brings higher profits. Therefore, despite the ban by local authorities, farmers still deliberately let their fields get salty to farm shrimp in the fields. A local newspaper reported that farmers have even sprayed salt into their fields and ponds to make the water salty for hatching shrimp.

However, Anh stressed that it still needs thorough consideration before accelerating the saltwater intrusion process and shifting the land use purpose from rice to shrimp farming. In the alum infected land, it would be better to have one crop of rice and one crop of shrimp. Meanwhile, in the areas where alluvium soil accounts for 29.7 percent and grey soil amounts to 3.4 percent of total area, it would be necessary to preserve the land for rice and fruit farming to ensure food security.

In other words, Anh said, it is necessary to apply comprehensive measures to mitigate the influences of climate change and select best solutions specifically for different areas. There is a problem that in the saltwater-stricken areas which have just shifted to aquaculture, the conditions are not favorable enough to farm shrimp. In the areas, the current is usually low and farmers still don't have experience.

Therefore, if not applying reasonable scientific solutions, the water in shrimp ponds will get stuck and shrimp will lack oxygen, while the food leftover and waste will harm farming, thus causing losses to farmers.

The Vietnam Net. October 25, 2017. Vietnam.

Innovative bridge in Bangladesh

An innovative floating bridge, aimed at easing communication from Jhampa village to Manirampur upazila headquarters via Rajganj Bazar under Jessore, waits opening on January 1, 2018. Thousands of people including school and college going students from Jhampa village and nearby areas are going to get better communication opportunity, as they will be able to cross the bridge on foot as well as small vehicles.

Jhampa Village Development Foundation comprising 56 youths conducted the work with the spontaneous help of the villagers.



This floating bridge, meant for easing communication from Jhampa village to Manirampur upazila headquarters of Jessore.

The thousand-foot-long bridge, made of 839 plastic drums, 800 iron angles and 250 four-foot-wide iron plates, involved a cost of around Tk 70 lakh, said Mehedi Hasan Tutul, president of Jhampa Village Development Foundation.

"The story goes back to five years ago. A few people including Asaduzzaman, a local teacher, were sitting on the banks of the Baor. Seeing a sand lifting machine that was kept floating on plastic drums, Asaduzzaman suggested that such drums could also float a bridge," Tutul said. They started spreading the idea to the villagers and fund collection for the purpose followed.

"Early this year, the foundation was formed, comprising 56 youths of the village. Locals in general cooperated. We started work for construction of the floating bridge in August," Tutul said.

"As we don't have any technological knowledge for building the bridge, we consulted with the upazila engineer and a few officials of Jessore Deputy Commissioner's Office. Everyone appreciated the idea of building creating an environment-friendly bridge.

"The bridge will be opened for public use on January 1. The funding for maintenance of the bridge will also go on as motorbikes, vans, three-wheelers and private cars will pass the bridge by paying small amounts," said the organiser.

Manirampur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Obaidur Rahman said, "I have seen the construction work of the floating bridge over the Jhampa Baor (a water body). The initiative will benefit thousands of villagers."

By Mohsin Milon. The Daily Star. December 24, 2017. Bangladesh.

SIKAD: A Digital Database to ease School Life in Indonesia

While teaching is a rewarding job, maintaining the school administration system — including student absences, study plans and teaching records — can be painful if using an outdated manual infrastructure.

Former teacher Zainal "Zee" Abidin had observed that the school system was completely inefficient, particularly in terms of record-keeping and transparency. What really struck Zee as troublesome and outdated was the fact that he still needed to carry around a lot of physical documents, such as his study plans, teaching materials and a daily journal that he had to fill out every day, marking off the end of each school day. The process, he described it, was too convoluted and complicated to juggle effectively, plus with the endless documents that he had to carry around, it was just not convenient.

This led him to establishing the Sistem Akademik (SIKAD) startup back in 2013, which functions as a cloud-based administration database to keep track of a school's digital data.

Some of the core functions of SIKAD include report book printing and archiving, as well as making study plans and teaching records more transparent and accessible, not only to teachers, but also to parents so they can monitor the performance of their children and the school. Streamlining tuition payments and keeping business records are also included in the system. Zee said SIKAD was also built with the aim of monitoring. Not only monitoring students and study plans, but also the performance of students and teachers seen from a wider point of view. He feels that keeping an effective, real-time record of performance and curriculum is important as it can quickly identify the areas in which a school needs to improve.

"I would describe SIKAD as a straightforward database for teachers to keep track of student absences, study materials, subjects to follow up on, what they need for a day's teaching, etc. To have a database that integrates everything from the start, it's just very helpful," Zee said. City education agencies can also use the SIKAD system to monitor the performance of certain schools, the performance of teachers and even oversee the physical conditions of the schools themselves. "The point of SIKAD is primarily to reduce the burden of data recording for teachers and students. "I personally support any Smart City initiatives and it would be wonderful if they were to have an educational sector in there too," Zee said. He also hopes the SIKAD system will help lower the rate of absenteeism, as it can detect and analyze student and teacher attendance patterns.



The idea of SIKAD has managed to grab the attention of potential investors and venture capital firms in Indonesia, as the startup is now undergoing a program with GNB Accelerators: a joint venture between Japanese IT company Infocom Corp. and venture capital firm Fenox VC, which involves a mentorship program as well as an investment of US\$50,000.

"Hopefully, with this initial investment, SIKAD can improve its service quality and can appeal more to schools," Zee said.

By Dylan Amirio. The Jakarta Post. November 23, 2017. Indonesia.

Calendar of CIRDAP Activities during January-March 2018

Date	Activities	Venue
02-06 January 2018	Bangladeshi Student Delegation Exposure Visit-cum-Training Programme in India	RGNIYD India
15-24 January 2018	International Training Programme on Social Audit for Rural Development Programmes	Myanmar
05-08 March 2018	International Forum on Strengthening Food Safety Standards	HARTI Sri Lanka
19-28 March 2018	International Training Programme on Waste to Wealth - Value Recovery from Agro Processing	NIRD&PR India
19-28 March 2018	International Training Programme on Decentralised Governance and Delivery of Services - Way to Good Governance	Myanmar

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