



Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)



Progress Report July 2017 – October 2017

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PROGRESS REPORT ON APAARI ACTIVITIES (July 2017 – October 2017)

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) was established in 1990 at the initiative of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, a unique voluntary, membership-based, self-mandated, apolitical and non-profit multi-stakeholder organization in the Asia-Pacific Region. The main objective of APAARI is to promote and strengthen agriculture and agri-food research and innovation systems through partnerships and collaboration, capacity development and advocacy through facilitation of intra-regional, inter institutional, and international cooperation. APAARI has been active in fostering the overall agricultural development by addressing the concerns of hunger, poverty, environmental degradation and sustainability of agricultural production. It has completed 26 years of its existence with an impressive record of achievements. It has its headquarters at the FAO Regional Office for Asia-Pacific in Bangkok. To know more about the organization, please visit: www.apaari.org

APAARI organized and participated in meetings, conferences and workshops during the period of July 2017 to October 2017. These included (i) APAARI Executive Committee Meeting on 14 July 2017; (ii) SAARC Regional Consultation on 'Facilitating the use of microbial pesticides in South Asia'; (iii) Regional Policy Dialogue on Scaling Conservation Agriculture for Sustainable Intensification (CASI) in South Asia; (iv) FAO Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Asia-Pacific; (v) Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS), Marketplace; (vi) Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) Steering Committee Meeting; (vii) Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) Global Consultation Meeting 6; (viii) Sustainable Agro Food Business Forum (SABF); and (ix) Committee on World Food Security (CFS), GFAR 44th Annual Plenary Meeting.

I. Meeting/Workshops/Conferences

1. The 1st APAARI Executive Committee Meeting for 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

APAARI organized the first Executive Committee Meeting for the year 2017 and was held on 14 July 2017 at the Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. It is the first meeting under the Chairmanship of Dr. Yusuf Zafar, Chairman, APAARI, Chairman of Pakistan Agricultural Research Centre (PARC), and attended by 21 participants, which includes the members of the Executive Committee, APAARI staff and Special Invitees.

The meeting was presided by Dr. Bhag Mal, Ex-Interim Executive Secretary, APAARI, and presented key agenda items which relate to APAARI Progress Report November 2016 – June 2017; Biennial Work Plan 2017-2018, Income and Expenditure Plan 2017; and the latest update on ASTI project. Three new APAARI publications was released by Dr. Yusuf Zafar, namely, APAARI Strategic Plan 2017-2022, Proceedings of the Expert Consultation on Best Practices in Agri-food Innovations in Asia and the Pacific, and Investments in Agricultural Research for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: Country Status Reports.

Some of the highlights of the meeting was the APAARI membership and payment status, Audit Report and Audited Financial Statements January-December 2016, Project ideas for APAARI Governance and Development, the launch of the new APAARI website, Membership and Representation of NGOs, FO's and Private Sector on APAARI, Expanding the APAARI Network to Pacific Island Countries, and the tenure of APAARI Executive Secretary. To download the proceedings, please visit this link:

<http://www.apaari.org/web/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2017/Proceedings- ECM 14 July 2017 Final.pdf>

2. SAARC Regional Consultation on 'Facilitating the Use of Microbial Pesticides in South Asia', Bangalore, India

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Bangladesh, CABI-South Asia at ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru organized the Regional Consultation on 'Facilitating the use of microbial pesticides in South Asia' from 21-23 August 2017 in Bangalore, India. The meeting stressed the importance of the utilization of microbial pesticides in the SAARC countries; the challenges on IPR, regulatory hurdles, political interference and duplication of research within and across the countries. An effort was also called to develop climate resilient biocontrol agents and genetic improvement of biocontrol agents. The need for innovative funding and partnership strategy was emphasized to have a well-knit information opportunities for SAARC for environmental friendly biopesticides can be better utilized.

Some success stories about the research carried out in India in dealing microbial pesticides were also briefed during the meeting and also discussed constrains like difficulty in rearing of host larvae, problems in fermentation, shelf life and laborious registration requirement. New approaches like a combination of microbials with anthropod bioagents and symbionts were also suggested. The meeting also released the Book of Abstracts in SAARC Regional Consultation on 'Facilitating the use of microbial pesticides in South Asia', and release of e-Publication in SAARC Regional Consultation on 'Facilitating the use of microbial pesticides in South Asia'.

3. Regional Policy Dialogue on Scaling Conservation Agriculture for Sustainable Intensification (CASI) in South Asia, Dhaka, Bangladesh

APAARI participated in the regional dialogue jointly organized by the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and supported by the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) held last 8-9 September in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The meeting was also in collaboration with national agricultural research systems from across South Asia, CGIAR institutes, Australian Organizations, government officials, researchers, and policymakers. The key agenda of the meeting was mainly on sharing experiences from their own countries and identify which policy changes, institutions and regulations, recent advances on conservation agriculture in South Asia; current status on scaling CASI, group discussions, knowledge and capacity building, business models and entrepreneurship.

4. FAO Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Asia-Pacific, FAO-RAP, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized a "Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Asia-Pacific", hosted and co-organized by the Government of Malaysia held last 11-13 September 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The regional meeting's objective is to create a space for greater clarity on the needs and concerns in

relation to biotechnologies, underlining the needs for maintaining a multisectoral approach, covering the crop, livestock, forestry and fishery sectors. A wide spectrum of available biotechnologies, including microbial food fermentation, tissue culture in plants, reproductive technologies in livestock, use of molecular markers, genetic modification and other methods will be examined by the experienced participants in the public sector biotechnology work from across the region, along with those from the private sector and civil society. Representatives from the governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-state actors, civil society, private sector, research/academic institutions and cooperative/producer organizations are the target audiences of the regional meeting.

5. Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS), Marketplace, Dhaka, Bangladesh

FAO in collaboration with the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), Ministry of Agriculture organized a “Market Place” under the “Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS)” held last 13 September 2017 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The CDAIS is a global project funded by the European Union and is implemented in eight (08) countries including in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, the project is being implemented by Agrinatura, a European based consortium of agricultural researchers and universities, and FAO in collaboration with BARC. The objective of the project is to improve the capacity of value chain actors to promote agricultural innovation and hence improve rural livelihoods through continuous learning. The CDAIS “Market Place” in Bangladesh seeks to facilitate the alignment of initiatives for capacity development for AIS (Agricultural Innovation Systems) by development partners and capacity development service providers (capacity development, supply side) with the capacity development needs of the niche partners/value chain actors (capacity development demand side).

APAARI participated in the event by submitting a poster to describe the organization’s current (or planned) capacity development projects or initiatives in line with the implementation of its Strategic Plan 2017-2022, and how to possibly support the following value chains: Mango, Fish (Tilapia and Pangus), Poultry, Pineapple and Tomato farmer’s group or niches.

6. Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) Steering Committee Meeting, Townsville, Australia

APAARI participated in the 8th GFRAS Annual Steering Committee meeting in Townsville, Australia as a representative of GFAR from 14-15 September 2017. It was co-organized with the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) and the topic was Rural Advisory Services and empowered youth for balanced transformation in rural and urban communities. The meeting provided a unique opportunity from all regions, sectors, gender and ages to exchange on and learn about the roles, relations, challenges and opportunities of youth and Rural Advisory Services (RAS) in the context of rural and urban transformation. The objectives of the meeting are to identify and discuss roles, challenges and opportunities for youth to be meaningful actors in balanced and inclusive rural and urban transformation; relations between RAS and youth for inclusive and sustainable rural-urban linkages; changes in policies and the capacities of RAS needed for both RAS and youth to fulfil their roles; and to strengthen capacities of RAS networks through peer exchange and learning.

7. Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) Global Consultation Meeting 6, Vientiane, Lao-PDR

APAARI participated in the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) Global Consultation Meeting 6 which took place in Vientiane, Lao-PDR last 18-19 September 2017. The objectives of the meeting is to share country progress and lessons learnt from the project with regards to the implementation of activities at different levels i.e. Niche Partnerships, organizations and national platforms, Country team dynamics (NPC, CPM, NIF lead, NIFs, Working groups, Steering Committee), the use, adaptation and results of global concepts, i.e. CNA_Niche, CNA_organization, MEL/Coaching Plan, National Platforms, CD interventions and 2017-2018 activities and beyond CDAIS. It also aimed to share concepts or approaches such as review and refinement workshops, a discussion on how to document or capture stories of change and create a space for cross-country learning.

8. Sustainable Agro Food Business Forum (SABF), Bangkok, Thailand

APAARI attended the Sustainable Agro Food Business Forum (SABF) held from 26-27 September 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. The forum's objective is to make an effort to identify ways to establish food value chain from producer to the end consumers and to develop a roadmap to establish a Sustainable Agro Food Platform. It also acknowledges the importance of agriculture and food role to mobilize Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) food producers and Small holders to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All 7 dialogues had led to the establishment of Sustainable Agro Food Platform. The multi-stakeholders include policy-makers, Small holders, SE and MSME business sectors, international agencies, civil society organizations and academics.

9. Committee on World Food Security's (CFS), GFAR 44th Annual Plenary Meeting, Rome, Italy

The Committee on World Food Security's (CFS) 44rd annual plenary meeting took place in Rome, Italy at the headquarters of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) from 9-13 October 2017, and is the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all. The event was supported by the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and also provided a 2-day training for the invited participants to cover the event.

APAARI participated as a Social Media Reporter to cover side events during the entire week by creating blog posts, promotion of the event to various platforms like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn on a timely basis. The event, organized several dialogues and discussions ranging from climate change, the role of youth, food security and nutrition, women's roles and rights, forestry, food diversity and more.

II. Activities Undertaken

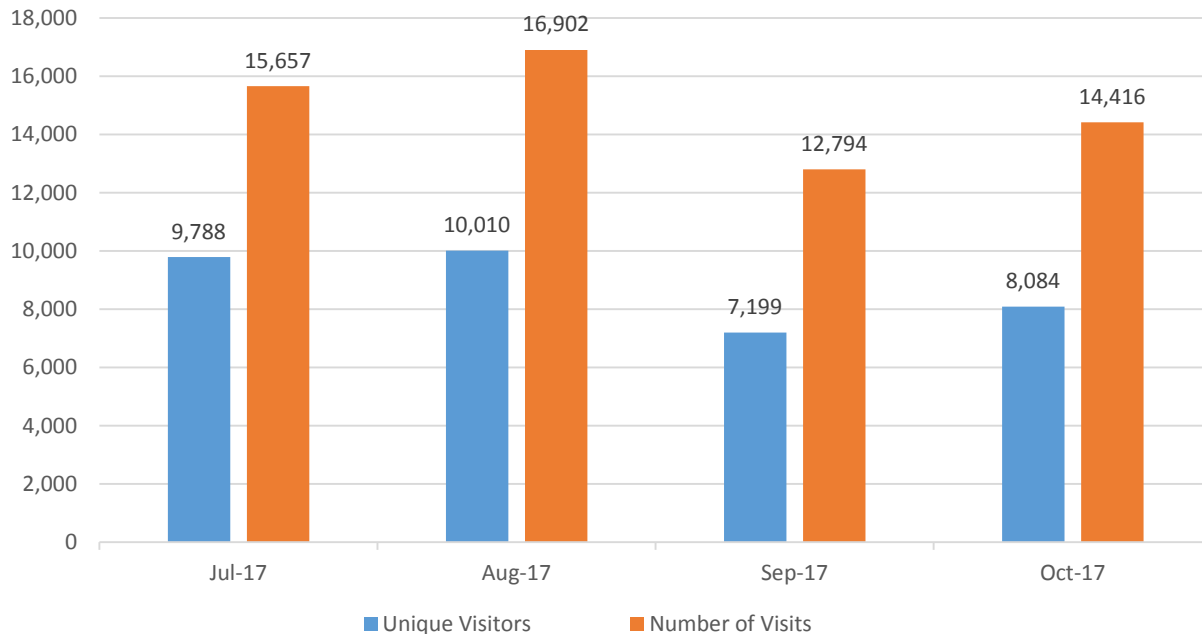
1. Knowledge Management Programme

1.1 APAARI Website

The new APAARI website was launched on 14 July 2017 during previous Executive Committee meeting, with a new design and re-organized content. The site is based on Wordpress Content Management System and is mobile-ready, allowing integration of social media applications like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn

and Blogger embedded on the pages. The website is up-to-date to ensure that APAARI stakeholders can have easy and quick access to news and latest publications on agri-food research and innovation. Moreover, improvements on content and design is still ongoing in order to promote and share more knowledge to its partners and encourage membership in the future.

APAARI Website Statistics (1 July – 31 October 2017)



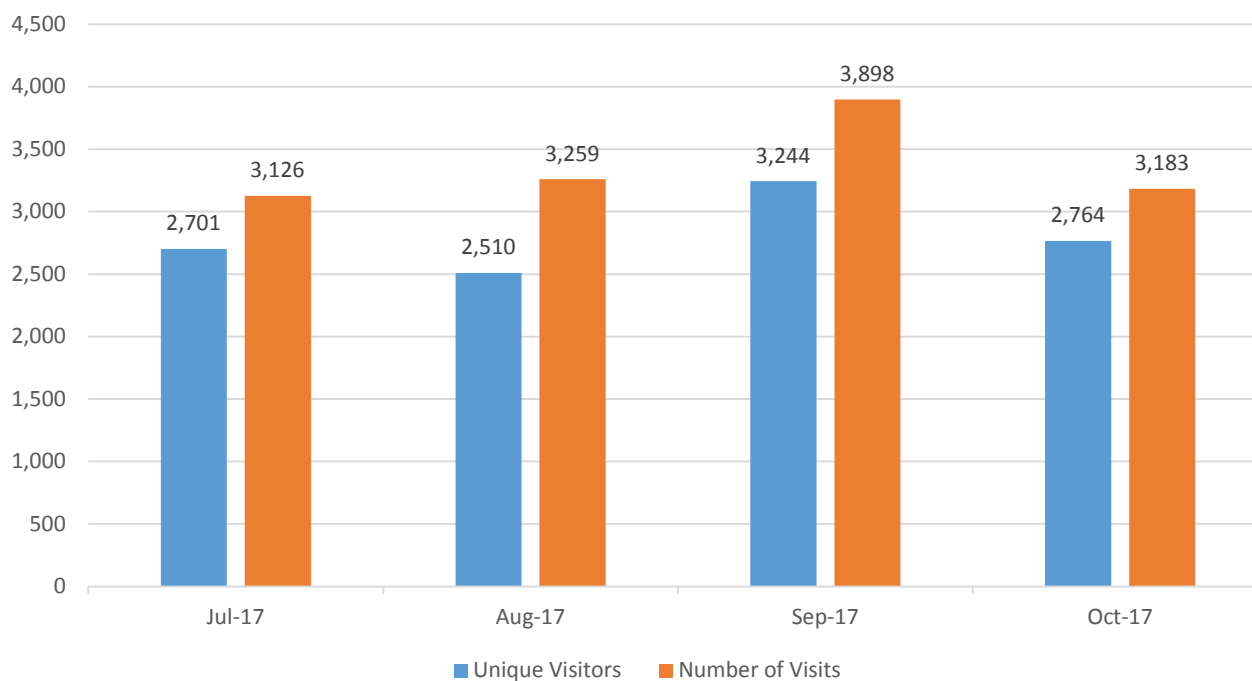
1.3 APAARI Social Media

Aside from the website, APAARI is also focused on giving importance to its social media exposure through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and soon its Blogger account. Daily posts of news, upcoming events, opportunities and latest publications from its partners were being shared on the above mentioned platforms. The collection of articles is sourced from the APAARI network news, re-sharing posts from their partners’ Facebook account and so as retweeting their posts from Twitter. Currently there are 398 Facebook likes compared to 320 likes; from 94 followers rose to 168 on Twitter and 126 to 169 connections in LinkedIn platforms, on a period from 16 June to 3 November 2017. Connected to LinkedIn is Slideshare – a platform. APAARI Slideshare has been established and includes one presentation About APAARI to enable people to learn about the Association. More presentations will be shared following APAARI-supported events.

1.4 APCoAB Website

APCoAB website has been continuously updated with effect from August 2017 with new contents of latest news and articles related to agricultural biotechnology. The ‘look and feel’ of the APCoAB website is harmonized with APAARI website. The efforts are being made to update the contents in existing databases.

APCoAB Website Statistics (1 July – 31 October 2017)



1.5. Partnership for Knowledge Management


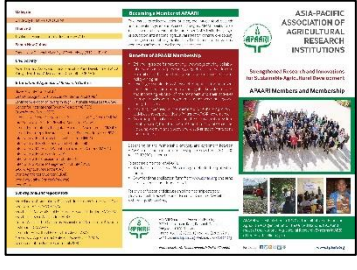
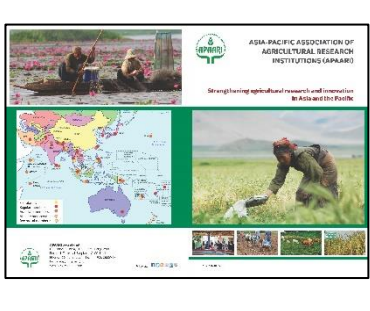
APAARI signed two Letters of Agreement (LoA) with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2017. Its work in partnership with FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) will be on the use of drones for agriculture on 2018. The upcoming “APAARI Webinar CD for AIS” scheduled on 16 November 2017 is APAARI’s collaboration with FAO in Rome, Italy, on the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) and its Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CD for AIS) project in 2017. Apart from this APAARI will promote the Common Framework on CD for AIS through the printing and dissemination of TAP promotional materials (e.g. factsheets) and presentations at various events, meetings and in online communications; coordinate TAPipedia webinars and facilitation of the expansion of TAPipedia network; facilitate knowledge and experience sharing on CD for AIS within NARS; advocacy with higher education institutions to include the Common Framework on CD for AIS in university curricula; integration the Common Framework on CD for AIS in APAARI-supported activities and projects; and participation in virtual TAP SC meetings.

1.6. APAARI Network Highlights

APAARI, with its purpose to promote the latest news, announcements, opportunities and publications from its stakeholders, is being published bi-monthly. Two issues has been circulated during July – October 2017 and shared among its partners, website and social media platforms.

1.7 Publications

APAARI published the latest APAARI Flyers categorized into 2 namely: APAARI Membership and APAARI General Flyer. A newly designed APAARI Folder is also printed to be included and support documents on any upcoming meetings or events. The latest APAARI Newsletter for June 2017 was also released.

Publication	Month in which published	Cover
APAARI Newsletter June 2017	July 2017	
APAARI Membership Flyer	October 2017	
APAARI General Flyer	October 2017	
APAARI Folder	October 2017	

2. Visits and Partnership

2.1. A visit to FAO-RAP Office, Bangkok

APAARI paid courtesy visits to various consulates and organization in Bangkok as part of its plan to learn and share about any recent and targeted activities where there will possibilities of partnerships. A meeting with FAO-RAP Assistant Director General Dr. Kundavi Kadiresan was held on October 5, 2017 and a future collaboration areas were discussed in general and the Pacific countries in particular. Dr. Kadiresan assured APAARI to provide her full support in achieving the common goals in the Asia-Pacific Region.

2.2. General Scoping for Partnership

2.2.1 A Meeting with Taipei Economic and Cultural Officer, Bangkok, Thailand

On August 28, 2017 and October 10, 2017, APAARI visited Mr. Allen Chenhwa Lou, Director Political Division of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Thailand and a Plan of expansion of activities under APCoAB was discussed in detail with a focus on application of biotechnology for sustainable utilization of bioresources in Asia-Pacific region.

2.2.2 APAARI visit to Sri Lanka Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand

APAARI had a meeting with high level delegation of Sri Lanka in Embassy of Sri Lanka at Bangkok on October 19, 2017. Sri Lankan delegation comprised of Dr SDG Jayawardena, Chairman, Sri Lanka Council of Agricultural Research Policy (SLCARP), Ministry of Agriculture; Dr JDH Wijewardena, Secretary/Director, SLCARP; Dr Rohan Wijekoon, Director General of Agriculture. Mr Anil Sirimanna, First Secretary (Commerce), Embassy of Sri Lanka in Bangkok, Thailand, was also present during the discussion.

A detailed discussion was held to identify the common areas of interest in agriculture including agricultural biotechnology between APAARI and Sri Lanka to promote sustainable agriculture in Sri Lanka and other countries. Recognizing the expertise developed in Sri Lanka particularly in knowledge management using ICT, agricultural biotechnology, and e-agriculture, how can the benefits be harnessed for the welfare of farmers in Asia-Pacific, was also discussed. Sri Lankan delegation requested for support of APAARI in the area of bio pesticides and marine biodiversity. Capacity building of various stakeholders for sustainable agriculture and policy development and advocacy were was also other areas where APAARI and national system of Sri Lanka may collaborate with each other.

2.2.3 FARA Executive Director visited APAARI

A partnership was charted when Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo, Executive Director, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), Ghana, visited APAARI, on October 3, 2017, where a collaboration between the two regional organizations to foster an inter-regional cooperation and synergy in the common mandates was discussed. Several areas of partnership were identified, namely, exchange knowledge and expertise of agricultural research, innovation and development; jointly scoping for regional and inter-regional projects on agricultural related to research, policy, innovation, development, capacity development and policy advocacy with a special focus on women and youth in agriculture; organization of activities of mutual interest including conferences, workshops and training programs in fulfilment of their

common goals; exploring the possibility of synergizing their activities in biotechnology and bio resources; Participate in apex committees of the other party on reciprocal basis.

III. Membership Drive

During the period July – October 2017, a new member joined APAARI in the Affiliate Member category namely the Indian Institute of Technology (IITB), Mumbai, India. The total number of members increased to 71 as compared to 68 in 2016.

IV. International/Regional Collaboration

During the period under report, APAARI had active discussions with FAO-RAP, ACIAR, GFRAS, TAAS, SAARC and DoA, Thailand and organized and participated on several activities/ programmes including coordination of workshops, conferences and expert consultations.

V. Forthcoming APAARI-supported Meetings/Workshops

1. Regional Expert Consultation on Underutilized Crops for Food and Nutritional Security in Asia and the Pacific November 13-15, 2017

Under APAARI-COA collaborative program, Regional Expert Consultation on Underutilized Crops for Food and Nutritional Security in Asia Pacific is being organized from November 13-15, 2017 at Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) and Council of Agriculture (COA), Taiwan, in collaboration with World Vegetable Center, ICRISAT, Crops for the Future, ICARDA, Bioversity International and Department of agriculture (DOA), Bangkok have agreed to be co-sponsors. About 55-60 participants from 20 countries belonging to 33 organizations will be participating in the Expert Consultation. Nine thematic technical presentations, six strategic presentations will be made by experts in underutilized crops. Country Status Reports (16 countries) seven countries from South Asia and six from South-East Asia and 3 from the pacific countries will also be presented. In addition, four working groups and one panel discussion is also included in technical program. Objectives of Expert Consultation are:

1. To create much needed awareness on the role and value of underutilized bioresources that have potential for diversification of food basket to ensure better food and nutritional security in Asia Pacific;
2. To share experiences and learn lessons to accelerate the use of underutilized plants as crops for the future; and
3. To assess R&D status on priority crops and policies that are needed to promote the use of these ‘Crops for Future’ in Asia and the Pacific region.

Expected Outcomes of Expert Consultation are:

- The Regional Expert Consultation will provide a platform for sharing experiences/knowledge relating to underutilized plants of Asia and the Pacific that have food and nutritional value.

- Assessing the importance of most potential crops, status of their R&D for exploring the possibilities of their commercial use and eventual benefit to small holder farmers.
- Developing a Road Map to ensure sustainable use of underutilized crops, also known as ‘Crops for Future’, for food and nutritional security in Asia and the Pacific.
- Exploring the possibilities of establishing a regional network for knowledge sharing and AR4D collaboration.

3. Launch Workshop for ASTI project

APAARI is organizing a Launch Workshop for ASTI project in collaboration with IFPRI, Washington and ACIAR, Australia, from 12 – 14 December, 2017 at Bangkok, and it will be attended by the ASTI focal points of 10 countries of South-East Asia.

3. International Collaboration - Third International Symposium on Plant Cryopreservation (CryoSymp 2018)

APCoAB-APAARI will be co-organizer of The Third International Symposium on Plant Cryopreservation (CryoSymp 2018), Asia Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, to be organized from March 26-28, 2018, with Department of Plant Science, Faculty of Science, Mahidol University, Bangkok, International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) and other universities and government organizations. APAARI is represented in International Organizing and Scientific Committees of CryoSymp 2018.

VI. APAARI Participation in Meetings Organized by Other Fora

1. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal gave a key note address and talked about biosecurity engagements and use of biopesticides for meeting SDGs in SAARC regions in the Regional Consultation on 'Facilitating the use of microbial pesticides in South Asia organized by SAARC, ICAR and CABI, Bangalore, India, 21-23 August 2017.
2. Dr. Rishi Tyagi, Coordinator, APCoAB, represented APAARI and acted as Facilitator of Session IV: Policy Dialogue Scaling Conservation Agriculture in Regional Policy Dialogue on Scaling Conservation Agriculture for Sustainable Intensification (CASI) in South Asia, organized by ACIAR and TAAS, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 8-9 September 2017.
3. Dr. Rishi Tyagi, Coordinator, APCoAB, represented APAARI in FAO Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Asia-Pacific, organized by FAO-RAP, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 11-13 September 2017.
4. Ms. Celilu Bitong participated in the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS), Marketplace, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 13 September 2017.
5. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, as a representative of GFAR, participated in the 8th GFRAS Annual Steering Committee meeting, Townsville, Australia, 14-15 September 2017.
6. Ms. Celilu Bitong and Ms. Martina Spisiakova participated in the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) Global Consultation Meeting 6, Vientiane, Lao-PDR, 18-22 September 2017.
7. Dr. Rishi Tyagi, Coordinator, APCoAB, represented APAARI, in Sustainable Agro Food Business Forum (SABF), organized by ESCAP, AFMA, EBAC, Bangkok, 26-27 September 2017.
8. Ms. Celilu Bitong participated in the Social Media Bootcamp of the Committee on World Food Security's (CFS) 44rd Annual Plenary meeting, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Rome, Italy, 7-13 October 2017.
9. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal attended the Working Group meeting of WTO's Standard and Trade Development Facility (STDF), Geneva, Switzerland, 30-31 October, 2017.

VII. APAARI Sponsorship for Capacity Development

1. Implementation of CRP Dryland Cereals Scholarship Programme

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between APAARI and ICRISAT for a collaborative CGIAR Research Program (CRP), the Dryland Cereals Scholarship Program was implemented. Six candidates from Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Sri P.V.N. Telangana State University for Veterinary, Animal, Fishery Sciences. Hyderabad; Field Crops Research & Development Institute, Mahailuppallama, Sri Lanka; Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University, China; and B.A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Anand, are pursuing their Ph.D. research work under this collaborative programme.

As per the Letters of Agreements between APAARI and the respective universities and institutions, the total allocated scholarship grant was USD 94, 212 out of which USD 64,212 allocated for scholarship of these six candidates has been disbursed. The agreement on the scholarship took effect from July 1, 2014 and shall last until 31 December 2016. The CRP-DC Programme has now been concluded and the liquidation statement has been submitted to ICRISAT. Out of six, two students have already submitted their Ph.D. Theses under CRP DC Scholarship Programme sponsored by ICRISAT. The remaining four students are under the process of completion of work including writing and submission of their theses.

2. The Crawford Fund Master Class in Agricultural Research Leadership and Management

The 2nd Master Class in Agricultural Research Leadership and Management" course is scheduled to held from 29 October to 04 November 2017, in Penang, Malaysia. APAARI has nominated 10 participants from 9 countries, namely, Md. Aziz Zilani Chowdhur, Bangladesh; Dr. M. Kamal Sheikh, Pakistan; Dr. Anand Kumar Gautam, Nepal; Mrs. I Kalubowila, Sri Lanka; Dr. Procy B. Sobrevinas, Philippines; Mr. Tekini Nakidkida, Fiji; Dr. Sujoy Rakshit, India; Dr. Prasanna Kumar Pathak, India; Dr. Michael Theophilus Dom, Papua New Guinea and Mr. Chalong Kerdsri, Thailand. The organizers will meet the major expenses and APAARI's commitment for this training course for all the 10 participants will be only USD 5,000.

Master Class program identifies new areas of knowledge that are changing the way research is conducted, particularly in developing countries. In addition to courses on cutting edge technical topics such as molecular genetics, biodiversity and biosecurity, the Fund has conducted Master Classes on intellectual property, science communication, the management of technology transfer, and environmentally oriented areas such as sustainable resources management.

Individual Development Plans

A feature of the Master Class is the opportunity for participants to create an **Individual Development Plan**. This process, including post-workshop follow-up will be facilitated by the Master Class leader. It is anticipated that a strong alumni network can develop, as participants regularly share their progress as a result of participating in the Master Class.

3. Participation in Committee on World Food Security's (CFS), GFAR 44th Annual Plenary Meeting, Rome, Italy

APAARI partially sponsored Ms. Marita Carlos, Director, of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD), for the two days social media bootcamp training and participation to GFAR 44th Annual Plenary Meeting (Committee on Food Security) in Rome, Italy.

CFS 44 is one of the world's main events for anyone working on food security and sustainable agriculture and GFAR is supporting the online outreach for this event.

Attendance at the CFS44 Social Media Boot Camp enabled participant's to gain knowledge and actual practice on how the community of Social Communicators help spread the thematic issues discussed among partners of GFAR at the 44th session of the Committee on World Food Security. 2-day event boot camp was held during 7-8 October 2017 prior to the CFS44 and the participants were introduced to various social media tools, i.e., social networking tools, blogs, photos, videos, slides, webcasting, file sharing and social bookmarking. PCAARRD is a regular member of APAARI and contributes articles relating to agriculture technologies, innovations, information and R&D events, and through the CFS44 training, its capacity to be involved in various KM networks will be more effective.

VIII. Other Items

New Appointments

Executive Secretary

Dr. Ravi Khetarpal has been appointed as Executive Secretary, APAARI and joined APAARI on August 1, 2017.

APCoAB Coordinator

Dr. Rishi Tyagi has been appointed as Coordinator, APCoAB and joined APAARI on August 11, 2017.

ASTI Coordinator /Economist

Dr. Norah Omot has been appointed as Coordinator/Economist, ASTI and she will join APAARI on 10 November 2017.

Knowledge Management Coordinator

Mr. Fai Collins Dzernyuy, an applicant from Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Cameroon, has been selected as Coordinator, Knowledge Management. He is likely to join the APAARI by the end of year.

Administrative Assistant (Intern)

APAARI hired a part-time Administrative Assistant - Intern, Ms. Tarathip Sanboonkrong who started working with effect from September 2017. Ms. Sanboonkrong is assisting in the administrative works duly assigned from time to time by the Executive Secretary and will attend to some minor system and network troubleshooting in the workplace. She will be on a probation period of four months.

VIII. Epilogue

During this reporting period, remarkable transitions took place, particularly in the expansion of the workforce to energise existing and newly signed partnerships. Increased trust was made to give renewed focus on its major programmes; APCoAB, Knowledge Management and ASTI project. APAARI's active participations in various meetings and conferences organized by other Fora were also seen as it drives a brave start under a new leadership and perspective, and looking forward to reach more partners, membership and stakeholders into fulfilling its goals to promote and strengthen agriculture and Agri-food research and innovation systems in the region.