Building Bridges

DG, CIRDAP and DICD met H.E. Yeshey Dorji, the Minister of Agriculture and Forests & National Environment Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan on 17 July 2015, to invite Bhutan to be a Member of CIRDAP. He also met Mr. Dorji Norbu, Director General, Department of Local Governance, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan, Mr. Karma Tshering, Director General, Royal Institute of Management and Ms. Roseleen Gurung, Sr. Programme Officer, Tarayana Foundation.
H.E. Mr. Hari Kumar Shrestha, Ambassador, Embassy of Nepal to Bangladesh visited CIRDAP in June 08, 2015.

Mission Visit to Bhutan – Inviting Bhutan to join CIRDAP

DG, CIRDAP and DICD had a meeting with H.E. Yeshey Dorji, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture & Forests (MoAF), Government of Bhutan on 17 July 2015 at MoAF, Thimpu, Bhutan. Others were also present in the meeting including:

- Mr. Dasho Tenzin Dhendup, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Forests
- Mr. Chencho Norbu, Director General, Department of Forests
- Mr. Choni Dhendup, Director, Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives
- Mr. Neten Wangchuk, Chief, Department of Livestock
- Mr. Chhim, Chief, Department of Agriculture
- Mr. Kencho Thinley, Chief, Policy & Planning Division
- Ms. Bindu M Tamang, Planning Officer, PPD (Mission Coordinator)

H.E. Yeshey Dorji welcoming the delegation informed that majority of the rural development initiatives in Bhutan are being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture & Forests. He asked the Director General to convey his best wishes to H.E. Chaudary Birendra Singh, the current Chairperson of CIRDAP Governing Council and the Minister of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, and Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India who was initially scheduled to visit but later cancelled. Thereafter Director General Dr. Effendi briefed about the reasons for his visit and invited Bhutan to be a member of CIRDAP.

Dr. Vasanthi Rajendran presented the CIRDAP’s vision, mission and functions inviting Bhutan to join CIRDAP. She also presented the advantages and procedures if Bhutan joins.

Minister informed that the Ministry of Agriculture & Forests has already informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about this issue. Further he informed that the Ministry will discuss with the government and as per their direction they will inform CIRDAP about joining. Regarding invitation to H.E. Yeshey Dorji to the 20th Governing Council Meeting and Seventh Regional Policy Dialogue to be held in Fiji from 17-22 August 2015, H.E informed it would be intimated later.

Other Meetings in Thimpu, Bhutan

DG, CIRDAP also discussed with Mr. Kencho Thinley, Chief, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Royal Government of Bhutan and invited him to Indonesia for the programme on Agro-Processing and Supply Chain and SME Development in Indonesia.

DG and Director (ICD) also met Mr. Dorji Norbu, Director General, Department of Local Governance, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan and discussed several issues with him. DG informed him CIRDAP will be writing to the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India seeking permission to facilitate
participation of rural development officials of Bhutan to participate in the CIRDAP – NIRD&PR training programmes, ITEC Fellowships and PGDRDM. DG explained the process of constitutional democracy that take place in Bhutan under the leadership of the His Majesty’s King of Bhutan.

DG and DICD also met Mr. Karma Tshering, Director General, Royal Institute of Management and discussed with him regarding collaboration. DG, Royal Institute of Management mentioned most priority area for collaboration is capacity building of local government officials/institutions. DG, CIRDAP mentioned incidentally, CIRDAP is organizing an International Conference on “Networking Local Government Training Institutions in CIRDAP Member Countries” during 28-30 July 2015 at NCPAG, Diliman, Philippines in collaboration with the Local Government Initiative and Network (LOGIN). Royal Institute of Management, Bhutan has been invited by LOGIN to participate in this conference.

DG, CIRDAP and Director (ICD) also visited Tarayana Foundation. This was founded by Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck in May 4, 2003. The Tarayana Foundation provides opportunities for live improvement to the vulnerable by helping them to learn and integrate new skills. It promotes self-empowerment. They discussed with Ms. Roseleen Gurung, Senior Programme Officer, Tarayana Foundation. The Director of Programmes explained about various programmes undertaken by Tarayana Foundation, viz., Social Development Programme under three categories of programmes, namely, Vulnerability Reduction; Scholarship and Learning Opportunities and Green Technologies are undertaken. Under Economic Development Programme four categories of programmes, namely, Micro-Finance; Self-Help Groups; Skill Training and Common Worksheets are undertaken. Due to the terrain of Bhutan, Tarayana Foundation has its own model of micro-finance. Mr. Sonam Pem, Director of Programmes, Tarayana Foundation expressed interest to learn from the experience of Bangladesh in micro-finance.

**Collaborative Knowledge Sharing Workshop of Best Practices on Bamboo Value Chain in Selected CMCs**

Pilot Projects Division (PPD), CIRDAP in collaboration with Department of Planning and Cooperation (DoPC) under Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Lao PDR organised a ‘Knowledge Sharing Workshop of Best Practices on Bamboo Value Chain in Selected CMCs’ from 07-08 July 2015. A total of 35 stakeholders participated in the workshop. Deputy Director, International Cooperation Division, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Forestry chaired the inaugural session while DG, DoPC, MAF welcomed the participants as a host. Ms. Eva Benita A. Tuzon, Director, PPD, CIRDAP delivered the message from CIRDAP and also explained the objectives and expected outputs of the workshop.

This programme was conducted in line with a follow-up action that emanated during the 28th Technical Committee Meeting of CIRDAP held in May 2013, Indonesia which DoPC made a presentation on “Approaches, Lessons and Innovations on Bamboo Value Chain in Lao PDR.” Accordingly, Department of Planning and Cooperation (DoPC) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry had agreed and has confirmed on January 2015 to host in collaboration with CIRDAP a seminar/workshop on Bamboo Value chain.

The workshop aimed to broaden opportunities for the rural communities in Lao PDR that are into micro-small bamboo industry. The experts from the Philippines and Vietnam shared their knowledge on bamboo value chain which involves production, management and marketing. Expert Dr. Nguyen Pham Linh from the Polymer Centre, Hanoi University of Science and Technology, informed that the bamboo as a natural resource in Vietnam is a very good input material for industries replacing synthetic materials. Accordingly, there are already many ways to extract bamboo fiber based on various investigations and have established chemical treatments being applied to get the high properties of bamboo.
Further, the expert from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DENR-ERDB), Philippines, Mr. Gregorio E. Santos, Junior, Senior Science Research Specialist presented his paper and spoke about the best practice on bamboo value chain in the Philippines as supported by a policy framework for bamboo development, i.e., Executive Order No. 879 May 14, 2010 that prescribes to prioritise the product development, promote and market access of bamboo products in the country. The bamboo demand addresses for various industries in Agriculture sector with estimate of 74 million culms. He mentioned that if the estimated harvestable culms of 21 M as projected in 1990 will not be augmented through plantation development, large supply deficits are expected. Even if demand is grossly overestimated, the figures reveal some shortage in bamboo supply.

Using results chain framework, the participants have prepared and presented two sets of action plans that focused on Policy and Business. A field-visit to an association in Ban Napo under Sang Muong district that was into micro-bamboo furniture making enabled the participants to see the bamboo products that provided income to the communities using traditional practices and low cost tools as up valuing process.

**Hands on Training on Agro-Processing for Women Entrepreneurs – A Practical Application on Productive and Income**


Dr. Cecep Effendi, DG, CIRDAP and Mr. Shah A. Sarwar, Managing Director, IFIC Bank Ltd. were present at Inauguration Programme. Both of the dignitaries expected that through these small initiatives the recipients can really improve their food processing items by innovation and adding value for their products. But there should be a market analysis before launching a product. Ms. Eva Benita A. Tuzon, Director (PPD), CIRDAP briefed the objective of hands on training programme and expected this collaboration would continue further for the women entrepreneurs through the network on SMEs created by Bangladesh Bank, IFIC, CIRDAP and other development partners like HORTEX etc. She thanked IFIC Bank for the financial support which was extended along with CIRDAP’s technical collaboration (e.g. preparing proposal and make available of the trainer, training curriculum, venue etc.). Mr. T.I.M. Rawshan Zadeed, Executive Vice President and Head of SME Division & Green Banking, IFIC Bank, spoke at the programme and thanked CIRDAP authority for hosting this collaborative training.

At the end of the programme, 15 women food business entrepreneurs were awarded certificates by Dr. Cecep Effendi, DG, CIRDAP for successfully completing the hands on training course. Ms. Novianti Adrial (Yanti), an Indonesian expert lives in Dhaka had conducted training course at Kitchen of CIRDAP International Conference Centre (CICC) for preparing chips out of bitter gourd, betel leaf, banana flower, carrot etc. for 15 women trainees from all over Bangladesh.
One Year Post Graduate Diploma Programme in Rural Development Management (2015-16) by NIRD&PR, Hederabad, India

The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR), Hyderabad, India, a CIRDAP’s Link Institution in India, is conducting one year residential Post Graduate Diploma Programme in Rural Development Management (PGDRDM). The 10th batch will commence in August 2015 and they are seeking nominations from member countries of CIRDAP. It is a paid programme. The objective of the programme is to develop committed and competent cadre of rural development management professionals and orient in-service officers and practitioners to various facets of rural development.

Under the regional cooperation, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, as a goodwill gesture has offered to sponsor five slots to CIRDAP member countries in this programme in order to develop capacities of rural development managers. The Ministry is kind enough to cover course fee, board and lodging charges, subsistence allowance, and to and fro air travel by shortest route in economy class from respective countries to Hyderabad, India. The Ministry has entrusted CIRDAP to solicit nomination from its member countries, scrutinise on criteria suggested by the Ministry and NIRD&PR. On the basis of eligibility criteria and suitability of the candidate, nominations will be forwarded to NIRD&PR for consideration for admission in the programme.

CIRDAP has nominated candidates for the batches from 3rd to 8th. As per feedback from CIRDAP nominees, the course has been exceedingly useful to develop skills, knowledge and pragmatic perspectives on various facet of rural development management. This is highly encouraging. We would like that CIRDAP member countries should avail this opportunity to develop a cadre of committed rural development managers.

CIRDAP invited nominations from its member countries in March 2015 and received eleven nominations from Bangladesh, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The nominees from these countries interviewed telephonically by CIRDAP and short-listed candidates recommended to the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India and NIRD&PR for consideration of admission in the PGDRDM, 10th Batch (2015-16). The primarily selected candidates are as follows: Mr. Tara Prasad Joshi, Nepal; Mr. Herald Correa Hamto, Philippines; Mr. Yohanes Kowa Kleden, Indonesia; Ms. Tran Huyen Trang, Vietnam, and Mr. Kyaw Zaww, Myanmar.

CIRDAP-LOGIN-NCPAG Conference of Local Government Training Institutions to be Held

CIRDAP seeing the potential in bringing together local government training institutions in the region to share expertise, experiences and innovations, organised in collaboration with the Local Government Initiative and Network (LOGIN) a conference of the Local Government Training Institutions (LGTIs) from CIRDAP member countries as well as LOGIN member countries that are not a member of CIRDAP in Manila with NCPAG as the host.

The objectives of the conference were (1) knowing each other local government training institutes in the Asia Pacific region; (2) exploring the possibility of learning from each other's strength and exploring the possibility of knowledge sharing programmes; (3) exploring the possibility of faculty or even student exchange programmes.

The conference of LGTIs was held from 28-30 July 2015 at the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG), University of the Philippines Diliman. Participants were the Heads of LGTIs from member countries of CIRDAP and LOGIN attended the conference.

Outcomes
- Creation of network of LGTIs in CIRDAP and LOGIN member countries.
- Identification of issues of LGTIs in LOGIN and CIRDAP member countries.
- Action plan for future collaboration.

Staff Participation at the Launching Programme of IamSME of Bangladesh

IamSME of Bangladesh was launched on 29 July 2015 with an aim to providing small and medium-size enterprises with proper guidelines, business plans and easy loans. Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr. Atiur Rahman inaugurated the new organisation at Radisson Blue Water Garden Hotel, Dhaka as Chief Guest while Indian High Commissioner Pankaj Saran and European Union Ambassador Pierre Mayaudon were present as Special Guests. On behalf of CIRDAP, Mr. David Hilton, APO, PPD participated in the programme.
Second Screening Committee Meeting held at CIRDAP

Screening Committee for Appointment of Director General, CIRDAP for the Period 2016-2020 met at CIRDAP on 22 June 2015 for interviewing the shortlisted candidates in CIRDAP Headquarter. Earlier First Screening Committee Meeting for appointing the Director General, CIRDAP for the period of 2016-2020 was held on 19 May 2015 at CIRDAP.

46th Editorial Board Meeting of APJORD held

The 46th Editorial Board Meeting of APJORD was held on 25 June 2015 at the General Staff Meeting Room in CIRDAP. Dr. Cecep Effendi, DG, CIRDAP and Chairperson of APJORD graced the meeting. Dr. Vasanthi Rajendran, Director, Information and Communication, CIRDAP and Editor, APJORD moderated the meeting. Welcoming the experts, the Editor briefly described about the agenda and each agenda was then separately discussed by the Editorial Board Members of APJORD.

Recent CIRDAP Publications

- CIRDAP Development Digest (CDD-139)
- APJORD XXV, No. 1, July 2015
- Decentralised Approach to Community Development in Bangladesh
- CIRDAP Annual Report 2014
- Rural Development Report 2013

New Staff at CIRDAP:

M. H. Kawsar Rudro, a postgraduate from University of Dhaka, joined CIRDAP as Assistant Information and Communication Officer. He has a wide range of experience in Communication, Public Relations, Research and Project Management. Prior to CIRDAP, he worked for several Bangla and English Newspapers including New Age, Samakal and Dhaka Tribune. He also worked for Jago Bangladesh, a Bangladeshi non-profit organisation as Assistant Manager and as Research Assistant in a research project funded by British Council Bangladesh under INSPIRE programme.

Forthcoming Programmes of CIRDAP

- Twentieth Governing Council (GC-20) and Thirtieth Executive Committee (EC-30) Meeting of CIRDAP will be held from 17-21 August 2015 in Nadi, Fiji.
- Workshop on Climate Change and Disaster Reduction will be held on 19 August 2015 in Nadi, Fiji.
- Seventh Regional Policy Dialogue of CIRDAP will be held on 19 August 2015 in Nadi, Fiji.
- CIRDAP-Innovation for Poverty Action-Pilot Project in Bangladesh: Financial Inclusion will be held in August.
- CIRDAP-APO, Tokyo, Japan Institutional Talk through on a Number of Initiatives will be held in August.
- CIRDAP – NIRD&PR Collaborative International Training Programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development will be held in October 2015 in Lao PDR.
- CIRDAP – NIRD&PR Collaborative International Training Programme on Geo-Informatics Application in Rural Development for Sharing Innovative and Best Practices will be held in October 2015 in NIRD, India.

For further details please contact:
Dr. Vasanthi Rajendran
Director, ICD, CIRDAP
E-mail: vasanthi@cirdap.org

CIRDAP. Chameli House, 17 Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.