

Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions



Capability Statement

APAARI is an apolitical, regional organization established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 1999. It is a vibrant network of over 80 members and numerous partners from national agricultural research systems (NARS), international agricultural research centres – higher education, civil society – farmer and women organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. APAARI facilitates collaboration in knowledge management (KM), capacity development and advocacy on issues of critical importance to Asia-Pacific to realize its Vision of “Strengthened Agri-food Research and Innovation Systems” and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

What we do

APAARI works at a two levels. Firstly, based in Bangkok, Thailand, the APAARI Secretariat plays a key role in coordination, facilitation and mobilization of its members and partners in Asia-Pacific to participate in collective actions. Secondly, APAARI works as a Community that helps the Association diversify and enhance its role by capitalizing on the strengths of its members and partners to collectively deliver results that contribute to the achievement of the APAARI Vision and the SDGs.



*A farmer husking paddy, Rangamati, Bangladesh
(International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development)*



Scientists studying mung bean in Seed Research and Development Center in Phitsanulok, Thailand (APAARI)

A knowledge broker

Deploying research and science for innovation and development requires capacity and strong links among users of research outputs, as well as innovative processes to make those links work. In the dynamic and rapidly changing context of agri-food systems, APAARI is filling this gap as a vital intermediary that is bridging and bringing together diverse organizations and knowledge needed to create and apply successful agricultural innovations. As such, it is promoting and facilitating the generation, adaptation, transfer and dissemination of evidence needed for scaling up and out of successful innovations. This includes both innovative technologies and supporting processes that develop capacities, ecosystems and enabling environment to strengthen agricultural innovation systems (AIS) in the region.



APAARI Executive Committee Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand (APAARI)

An innovation platform

As an innovation platform facilitating face-to-face and online interactions, and publishing a range of knowledge resources, APAARI is creating an engaging environment for learning, sharing, discussing ideas, and bringing out the voices of women and youth to promote trust and out-of-the box thinking. This leads to collective learning, collaboration, and joint exploration of opportunities and solutions for common and emerging issues, which is strengthening the regional knowledge base to better support and influence decision- and policy-making processes in the region. As an active partner of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) hosted by FAO, APAARI has fully embraced the AIS perspective and development of functional capacities (soft skills) for innovation in its projects and programmes, and developed a model for blending of technical and functional capacities to better support innovation processes in Asia-Pacific and beyond.



Training programme for input dealers, Anand, India (Assam Agricultural University)



Launch of Big Data in Agriculture Platform of the CG, Hyderabad, India (International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics)



Women packing lychee in Phayao, Thailand (Department of Agriculture, Thailand)

The difference we make to benefit our members

Networking – Connecting member institutions and individuals in a network of national, regional and global AIS stakeholders and expertise.

Capacity development – Funding and facilitating member participation in programmes that build their technical and functional capacities to better support innovation and sustainable transformation of agri-food systems.

Policy dialogue – Creating opportunities for members and partners to engage in policy dialogue on science-based options for complex and interrelated economic, social and environmental sustainability challenges, influence mindset shift and inspire transformation towards sustainable agri-food systems.

Knowledge management – Sharing knowledge and experiences based on evidence, facilitating learning, disseminating research outputs, and providing guidance on agricultural research and science to researchers, policy makers and donors to support re-orientation of investments and shape their focus on strategic priorities to strengthen agri-food innovation ecosystem.

Information management – Facilitating data and information collection, and dissemination and outreach of the outcomes of agri-food research and innovation to support scaling up and out of new knowledge, as well as to feed evidence into decision- and policy-making processes.

Advocacy – Using evidence to advocate policies for increased and improved investments in agri-food research and innovation systems; reforms for agricultural higher education institutions to better respond to the dynamics of agri-food systems; and improved agricultural innovation strategies based on the AIS perspective.

Our approach

Guided by the APAARI Vision 2030 and the Strategic Plan 2017-2022 aligned with the SDGs, APAARI works with its members and partners to address the following priority themes to benefit small farmers and achieve more sustainable agri-food systems in the region:

- Mobilization, management and use of natural resources
- Management of risks and uncertainties
- Inclusive development and integration of value chains
- Analysis, strengthening and formulation of public policies and overarching regulatory frameworks

The following key programmes and activities address these areas, including cross-cutting approaches to women and youth, and foresight and visioning:

- Knowledge management
- Partnership and networking
- Capacity development
- Advocacy



Discussion during the Expert Consultation on Agricultural Biotechnology, Bangkok, Thailand (APAARI)

Key facts

Establishment: In 1990 by FAO, and national agricultural research institutions of China, Fiji, India, Iran, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Western Samoa.

Key supporters: Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Council of Agriculture (COA) Taiwan, FAO, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), European Union (EU), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) of the WTO.

Key partners: Members of APAARI, development organizations from around the world, including FAO, WTO, USDA, Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR), and Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA).

Key expertise of the APAARI Secretariat

Specialized Technical Areas – The APAARI Secretariat facilitates a network of national, regional, and global technical experts in the field of agricultural biotechnology and bioresources, biosecurity, biodiversity, compliances to sanitary and phytosanitary measures of WTO, and food systems, collectively working towards research prioritization, public awareness, policies, regulatory harmonization and capacity building.

Agricultural data management – APAARI coordinates and oversees the collection, compilation, analysis and publishing of high-quality agricultural research and development (R&D) data, relating to institutional development, investment, outputs, performance, and human resource capacity in low- and middle-income countries, providing evidence for policymakers, researchers, and donors in support of enhanced investment in agri-food research and innovations.

Agricultural education – Utilizing multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral expertise, APAARI facilitates policy dialogue with agricultural education institutions and develops capacities for innovation bringing mindset shift and leading to reforms required to address the complex and interrelated economic, social and environmental sustainability challenges facing agri-food systems today.

Knowledge management – APAARI is playing a key role in facilitating the generation, adaptation, transfer and dissemination of scientific knowledge needed for scaling up and out of successful innovations. Through publication of success stories, facilitation of knowledge sharing and learning, as well as face-to-face and online engagement of stakeholders, APAARI is creating a stronger regional knowledge base to better support decision- and policy-making processes.

Strategic partnership – APAARI is targeting high-level government officials, leaders and managers of NARS, as well as sub-regional bodies i.e. the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Pacific Community (SPC). This facilitates strategy and policy development that improves the enabling environment for fostering agri-food research and innovation, including compliance with international agreements, e.g. those of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for agricultural trade facilitation and the Convention of Biodiversity.

Project development – APAARI is developing collaborative projects with and for the benefit of its members and partners, facilitating their access to innovative activities that build their capacities to better strengthen national AIS. Through providing technical support in the formulation of new projects, resource mobilization, identification and scoping of new projects, as well as enhancement of partnership and membership with relevant stakeholders, APAARI facilitates access of its members to innovative activities and knowledge that build their capacities needed to strengthen national AIS and agri-food systems.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) – APAARI has adopted and promotes a MEL framework based on good practices and experiences of national and international organizations.



Discussion on the Expert Consultation on Best Practices in Agri-Food Innovation in Asia and the Pacific, Taichung, Taiwan (APAARI)



Focus group discussion on dietary diversity, Khulna, Bangladesh (Biodiversity International)

Unique benefits to national and international agricultural research institutes

APAARI is a strategically important and easily-accessible platform for national and international agricultural research institutes, such as CG and the Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture (AIRCA), as well as NARS and other national and regional stakeholders. The key benefits of being a member of APAARI include:

- showcasing their research, technologies and innovative practices
- creating opportunities for scaling up their research and innovations
- facilitating learning based on the work conducted by other members
- enabling a collective voice to jointly work towards national and regional priorities, including policies that impinge upon various aspects of agricultural R&D in the region
- developing new technical and functional capacities to foster improved innovation and strengthened AIS in the region



Volunteer facilitator instructing farmers on proper varietal selection, Cotabato, Philippine (International Rice Research Institute)



Sharing of ideas between participants of the Knowledge Management for more effective Agricultural Innovation System Workshop, Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) (APAARI)

Join us/partner with us

To achieve higher impact, APAARI seeks to attract new members from NARS, higher education institutions, international agricultural research centres, civil society and the private sector.

Contact

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Key achievements

Between 1990-2013, APAARI became a dynamic institution in a fast-changing agri-food environment while pursuing its vision, goals, and objectives. To respond to the evolving agri-food landscape and meet the needs of its members, APAARI has revised and amended its Constitution, refined its priorities and initiated administrative reforms to enhance performance of the Secretariat, and diversified its activities at national, sub-regional, regional and global levels.

By optimizing the use of regional assets through knowledge-sharing and capacity development activities, APAARI has played a central role in harnessing agricultural science for strengthened agri-food research and innovation systems in Asia-Pacific.

Since its establishment to date, APAARI organized 58 expert consultations, published 60 success stories, and issued 59 newsletters, among many other achievements.

APAARI's key recent achievements (2014-2021) include:

- 7,154 participants were supported by APAARI through various capacity development programme (33 per cent of these were women)
- 32 such programmes, including expert consultations and policy dialogue, were organized or sponsored by APAARI
- Fourteen webinars with participation of 2,881 people were organized and delivered
- Members increased by 42 per cent
- Thirteen success stories were published
- International partnership strengthened, particularly with ACIAR, AIRCA, CG, CIRAD, FAO TAP, GFAR, GCHERA, USAID, USDA and STDF/WTO
- Project income increased from zero to USD 684,988 due to resource mobilization efforts

Activities

Key ongoing initiatives: Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology and Bioresources (APCoAB), Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI), Asia Pesticide Residue Mitigation through the Promotion of Biopesticides (APRMP), Improving Phytosanitary Trade Compliance in Bangladesh, Agroecology and Safe Food System Transitions, Manifesto for a new vision of Research and Innovation in support of Forgotten Foods, and Scaling up the TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems.

APAARI is a member of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) hosted by FAO. Dr. Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary, APAARI, is chairing TAP (2020-2022), and is also the Chair of Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR) from 2021-2024.