

Secretary General's Report

FinPower Regional Forum/Consultation rescheduled

APRACA has rescheduled the dates and venue of the 'FinPower Regional Forum/Consultation on Rural Finance Innovations and Emerging Issues' as follows;

- Dates of the Forum : December 13-16, 2011 (meetings on Dec. 13-14 and field trip to Chonburi Province on Dec. 15-16)

- Venue : Pathumwan Princess Hotel, Bangkok

The Forum/Consultation had originally been slated for November 2-5, 2011, which was later postponed in accordance with the recommendation by the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC) of Thailand, one of co-host organizations of the Forum/Consultation. The recommendation to postpone was based on the threat of tremendous flooding that had affected many Provinces in Thailand including the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

In line with the rescheduling of the Forum, APRACA has sent invitation letters to all its members welcoming new participants. As of the end of October, a total of 69 participants were registered including 15 local participants from 18 APRACA member institutions in 16 countries.

Collaboration with UN-ESCAP sought

APRACA contacted United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) based in Bangkok, Thailand with a view to promoting collaboration between the two organizations in developing and conducting projects with common interests. The Secretary General visited ESCAP on October 11 and November 3 and met with Mr. Rae-Kwon Chung, Director, Environment and Development Division, and his officers and discussed the involvement of APRACA in their project on Green Financing.

ESCAP has planned a project titled 'Leveraging Pro-Poor Public-Private-Partnerships (5Ps) for Rural Development – Widening access to energy services for rural poor in Asia and the Pacific' in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with a total budget of US\$ 2,210,000. The project covers five countries - Nepal, Bangladesh, Lao PDR, China, and Indonesia with its duration of four years (2011-2015).

APRACA expects to join the project at the organizing level as well as executing level. The Secretariat will keep a close relationship with ESCAP and find the fields to work together and link APRACA member institutions in the project target countries with ESCAP for the collaborative activities. Mr. Chung also committed to support APRACA by joining the FinPower Regional Forum/Consultation in December.

Visit to AgroBank and Farmers' Organization Authority in Malaysia made

The Secretary General visited AgroBank Malaysia based in Kuala Lumpur on October 25, 2011 and had a meeting with Mr. Wan Mohd Fadzmi Wan Othman, President and CEO, and his four Officers. The SG introduced to them pending issues of APRACA such as the postponement of

FinPower Regional Forum/Consultation, the organization of next Executive Committee Meeting and General Assembly in Cambodia, and the exchange programmes between member institutions including the Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development's training programme in Malaysia.

Mr. Wan, President of AgroBank, showed great interests in APRACA's activities to bridge members for the exchange of knowledge and experiences in rural and agricultural finance. He also promised to collaborate with APRACA further by joining its various activities and review the participation in the FinPower Regional Forum that would be held in the near future.

The Secretary General also visited the Farmers' Organization Authority of Malaysia on October 25, 2011 as part of the efforts to increase membership of APRACA. At the Head Office of the Authority located in Kuala Lumpur, he met with its Director General, Dato' Arpan Shah Bin Satu and Special Officer to Director General, Mr. Syed Mohd Fazmi Bin Sayid Mohamad.

They admitted the Authority needs to benchmark best practices of rural/agricultural finance in foreign countries in order to develop their own businesses and asked for APRACA to support them in this context. The SG proposed them to re-join APRACA as a member for the smooth and efficient collaboration and Dato' Arpan, Director General of the Authority, replied to positively review to apply membership of APRACA. The Authority withdrew its membership of APRACA several years ago.

FinPower National Forum and Technical Support to Myanmar being prepared

APRACA has been organizing the national forum in and technical support to Myanmar on December 6- 10, 2011. The national forum and technical support will be hosted by the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank. The APRACA Secretary General is slated to join as forum director.

Mr. S. M. Moniruzzaman, Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank, was selected as international expert to share Bangladesh rural finance policy environment and regulatory framework and provide technical support to the Central Bank of Myanmar and other rural financial institutions and projects.

APRACA-CENTRAB's Partnership with Asian Institute of Management (AIM) established

In line with the continuing effort to further enhance the quality of the training programs, CENTRAB has forged partnership with the Asian Institute of Management for the conduct of non-degree training programs for APRACA member institutions.

As a pioneer in international management education in Asia, CENTRAB's partnership with AIM will bring greater height and flavor to the line-up of training programs that will be conducted by CENTRAB by developing professional, entrepreneurial and socially responsible leaders and managers.

In this regard, the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between APRACA CENTRAB and AIM was signed on October 27, 2011 by the President of CENTRAB, Ms. Jovita M. Corpuz and Asian Institute of Management Associate Dean, Center for Development Management, Mr. Juan Miguel M. Luz. CENTRAB and AIM will officially and jointly start the partnership on the non-degree training programs in February 2012.

In addition, CENTRAB has endeavored to promote Partnerships with other Institutions for Training Programs for APRACA Members as follows;

- CENTRAB is exploring the possibility of collaborating with the University of Melbourne to host some non-degree executive programs for APRACA member institutions to be held in Melbourne, Australia in 2012. University of Melbourne is a world class research and teaching university and ranked # 1 in Australia in the field of Accounting and Finance. CENTRAB is in the process of firming up the agreement for University of Melbourne's hosting and expects to seal the partnership before the end of November.

- CENTRAB is inviting the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS) to host training programs for the APRACA member institutions. MDIS is Singapore's oldest not for profit professional institute for life-long learning. MDIS accepted CENTRAB's invitation to be a host partner in 2012 and is now finalizing the program design that will fit the training requirements of APRACA member institutions.

- CENTRAB is looking at the likelihood of ALIDE member institution to host training programs for APRACA member institutions in 2012. ALIDE is one of RACAs working for Latin American countries. ALIDE Secretary General, Mr. Rommel Acevedo welcomes the idea and looks forward to forge a partnership with CENTRAB for the benefit of APRACA member institutions.

CENTRAB has identified some of the relevant training programs which APRACA member institutions can benefit and is in the process of completing and finalizing the program design.