



# APRACA Newsletter

*Acknowledged leader in rural and agricultural finance* | Vol. 6 Issue 3



*Delegates of 3<sup>rd</sup> steering committee discussing on organizing 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress*

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Steering committee meeting on organizing the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Rural and Agricultural Finance

The 3<sup>rd</sup> steering committee meeting for organizing the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress was convened by NABARD (host organization) which was held in their New Delhi Regional Office, during 2-3 July 2019. The 1<sup>st</sup> Steering committee meeting was convened by APRACA (host RACA) in Bangkok during 20-21 March 2018 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> steering committee meeting was held in NABARD, Regional Office, New Delhi, India during 22-23 November 2018. The meeting was attended by the representatives from MCID, NABARD Head Quarters and New Delhi Regional Office, Chairman of APRACA, Secretary Generals of APRACA, AFRACA and CICA. The representative of BAAC and ALIDE joined the meeting through skype.

At the outset, the members of the steering committee congratulated NABARD and APRACA for all the preliminary preparations made by them and also shown happiness over the logo of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress. The members also discussed the following major issues and took stock of the preparation: (a) Finalizing costing and budgets for the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress and establishment of Local Organizing Committee, (b) Finalize the list of the Global speakers for the Business Session 1 and speakers

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*Mr. Vivek Sinha, General Manager of NABARD welcoming the delegates of 3<sup>rd</sup> steering committee meeting*

for other session organizers (Business Session 2 by NABARD, Business Session 3 by APRACA, Business Session 4 by AFRACA, Business Session 5 by CICA and Business Session 6 by ALIDE). The committee members also met the event management companies for information sharing regarding the expected performance of the selected organizer and the related costing. The committee also met the transport providers, translation service providers, visited the hotel Taj Palace (venue of 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress) and discuss with the focal persons in the hotel regarding sitting arrangements, VIP sitting and stage etc. The committee also visited two (2) other designated hotels for

negotiation and finalization of the hotel rates etc. the team also met other relevant officials from the government of India who are supporting the World Congress on Rural and Agricultural finance. The committee members also discussed about the expected number of delegates from each association, global agencies, UN agencies and local (Indian) organizations and it emerged that the number of delegates will be around 250 and the requisite arrangements need to be completed. Regional Office of NABARD, New Delhi will monitor the progress and the World Congress Secretariat in APRACA and NABARD HQ will provide all technical support.

## ACTIVITIES OF APRACA SECRETARIAT

- APRACA and BFIN jointly hosted the 'Leadership Development Programme' for Employees Provident Fund (EPF), Nepal in Bangkok during 8-12 July 2019

The Banking, Finance and Insurance Institute of Nepal (BFIN) in collaboration with APRACA, Bangkok conducted a five-days training programme on 'Leadership Development' during 8-12 July 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. This programme was targeted for exclusively for the officials of the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and other officials from the Banks and Financial Institutions involved in managing provident funds. In this programme, the EPF officials got the opportunity to understand the principles and various components of social security, gained exposure to the parameters involved in designing of Social Security Schemes, understood the importance of capacity building to improve overall social security administration and Leadership transformation through lectures by top academics of APRACA and resource persons from varied financial institutions and government departments in Thailand. Apart from the above, the programme was also targeted to supplement the learning through visits to relevant Institutions in and around Bangkok to get the first hand experiences. The programme was attended by 27 participants.



*Participants from Employees Provident Fund, Nepal, BFIN and Faculties*





*Participants from EPF, Nepal engaged in listening and discussions*

- APRACA participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mekong Knowledge and Learning Fair of IFAD held in Bangkok during 10-11 July 2019



*IFAD organized MKLF 2019 in Bangkok to showcase the best practices in agricultural development in Mekong Delta in Southeast Asia*

APRACA was invited by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to join the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mekong Hub Knowledge and Learning Fair (MKLF) 2019 held in Bangkok during 10-11 July 2019. The first MKLF was attended by more than 120 participants from IFAD loan and grant projects (including APRACA), government agencies, private sector and financing institutions which was held in Danang, Vietnam on 04-06 July 2018. The MKLF 2018 identified approaches and technologies for scaling up or replication and policy issues for attention. It also created spaces for cooperation and partnership among participants. Thirty-seven good practices and innovations

from IFAD loan and grant projects in the Mekong Hub were presented to elaborate the MKLF 2018 theme on “Inclusive and Resilient Smallholder Transformation in the Mekong Cluster”. During MKLF 2019, more than 150 delegates from IFAD supported loan and grant projects in the IFAD Mekong Hub, government, private sector, and farmer representatives from Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, Myanmar and Lao PDR actively participated to make it a successful event.

APRACA and Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC) jointly organized and set up a booth during the MKLF 2019 to showcase the products and services of BAAC and knowledge products of APRACA. During the 2 days of the event, the booth was visited by 65 participants and learned about the financial services provided by BAAC and the activities of APRACA in the Asia-Pacific Region.



*APRACA Secretary General and BAAC officials at the APRACA-BAAC Booth*





*APRACA Secretary General discussing with the delegates during the MKLF 2019*

- The representatives from the Embassy of the Czech Republic met APRACA Secretary General in Bangkok on 25 July 2019

A delegate of 3 officials from the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Thailand visited APRACA Secretariat to discuss with the APRACA Secretariat on future collaborations in the areas of agricultural development. Mr. Pavel Kucera, Chief Communication Officer of the Big Terra Alpha Company from Czech Republic led the team and was attended by Mr. Jessada Khawsithiwong. The purpose of the meeting was to present the initial project for Climate Report and Analytical Platform for Agriculture in Asia,



*Mr. Pavel Kucera, Chief Communication Officer of the Big Terra Alpha Company in Czech Republic with the APRACA Secretary General*

- APRACA Secretary General was invited to join the meeting of the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BNCCI) and Thai Business Groups in Bangkok on 9 August 2019

The delegates of Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BNCCI) from Kolkata, India visited Bangkok to meet the Thailand Business houses to bring long term cooperation with Thailand with special emphasis on tourism, food processing and education sector. In this connection, the BNCCI invited Dr. Prasun Kumar Das, Secretary General of APRACA to deliver a presentation on APRACA's role in this cooperation initiatives. During his delivery, he insisted that the look east policy of Government of India and look west policy of the Thailand government provides enough opportunity to enhance the cooperation and the financial institutions in both the countries can support these initiatives.



*APRACA Secretary General speaking at the business summit of the BNCCI, India and Thai-Business Corporations*



- **Learning and Exposure visit of Ethiopia Microfinance Association on 'Digital Finance Models and Services', jointly organized by Skydive International in Bangkok, 11-17 August 2019**

Skydive International and APRACA jointly organized an international exposure visit programme on 'Digital Finance Models and Services Trends, Developments and Learning Experiences' in Bangkok, Thailand during 11-17 August 2019. This programme was attended by 9 participants from the Senior Board Members of Ethiopian Inclusive Finance Technology Steering Committee set up in Ethiopia to improve microfinance delivery system in the country. Apart from the class room training delivered by the faculties from

commercial banks, experts from APRACA and World Bank, the participants also exposed with the practical experiences with Micro-Banker Project of FAO on Digital Banking Practical Applications for the MFIs and Cooperative Banks in Asia-Pacific region. The participants also visited the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC) to learn about their 'Digital Platform for Marketing Financial Services' in Thailand. The team also visited the Fintech Thailand Co. Ltd. who are supporting to make financial system more efficient by using advanced technology. The solutions provided by them include choosing suitable trading platform, implementing trading gateway to SET/TFEX, programming trading algorithms, coordinating with quant modelers and monitoring overall system performance. The programme was extremely successful for the participants.



*A High-level delegation from Microfinance Sectors of Ethiopia meeting the Secretary General at the APRACA Secretariat, Bangkok*



*The delegation from Microfinance Sector of Ethiopia visited the BAAC HQ in Bangkok and discussed future collaboration on knowledge exchanges on digital finance*

- **APRACA Secretary General was invited to join the forum on 'Reducing Disaster Risks Towards a Resilient Agricultural Sector' meeting with ASEAN member countries in SEARCA, Manila, 28-30 August 2019**

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) and French Embassy in the Philippines, in its interest to support the

development of resilient agricultural communities, jointly conducted a forum to tackle the interactions between disaster and the agricultural landscape and see how various stakeholders of the sector cope with the effects of disasters in various stages, from preparation to post disaster recovery. Secretary General of APRACA was invited to deliver a lecture on the services could be provided by APRACA to the member countries in the region. The objectives of this forum was to facilitate an evaluative approach of the key requirements particularly on: (a) the robustness of policies, (b) adaptive capacity of



institutions, actions, and (c) mechanisms to assume the full range of requirements, not just to reduce risks, but to ensure that the sector can rebound from the adverse impacts of shocks and stresses because of mechanisms available.



*Delegates and speakers at the SEARCA-French Embassy organized conclave on 'Reducing Disaster risk Towards a Resilient Agriculture Sector'*

During the presentation, he brought in the picture the link between development and vulnerability of agriculture and rural areas and how the member financial institutions are assisting to create resilient rural society. The 2-day deliberations were attended by the representatives from public and private organizations, and civil society groups, concerned national government agencies, local government offices, farmer groups, agri-business and financing sector, academe or research institution, and other people or organizations engaged in various agricultural activities.



*Dr. Prasun Kumar Das, Secretary General, APRACA speaking at the panel discussions on climate resilience and role of financial institutions*

## ■ APRACA joined the meetings of Asia-Pacific Climate Week, UNESCAP, Bangkok 2-6 September 2019

Dr. Prasun Kumar Das was invited by the UNFCCC to join the Asia-Pacific Climate week held in UNESCAP, Bangkok during 2-6 September 2019. The Secretary General joined the high-level plenary session on 'Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation: Raising Ambition'. This high-level session brought together high-level government officials with representatives of non-Party stakeholders to create an enabling environment and promote investment in fast tracked implementation of NDC in the region. Panellists discussed how political decisions can create momentum and the enabling environment for climate investments resulting in sustained climate action. The panel discussion addressed the need for enhanced climate ambition and the critical importance of mobilizing private sector investments to implement and further enhance NDCs. The APRACA Secretary General flagged the issues on new and emerging financial tools such as long-term development objectives, tax incentives, blended finance etc. to incentivize private sector participation in this context.



*APRACA Secretary General speaking at the high-level plenary session on 'Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation: Raising Ambition'.*



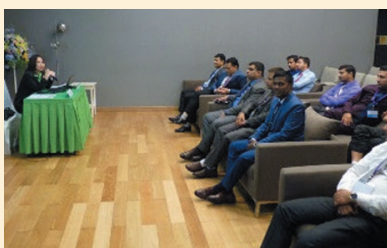
- APRACA and BFIN jointly organized training programme on 'Leadership Development for Financial Institutions in Nepal' held in Bangkok during 23-27 September 2019

Banking, Finance and Insurance Institute of Nepal (BFIN) in collaboration with APRACA, Bangkok conducted a five-days international exposure visit and leadership development programme for the Financial institutions of Nepal during 23-27 September 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. This programme was targeted exclusively for the officials in the banking and financial institutions of Nepal. In this programme, the trainees were exposed to the dynamics of leadership, team building, goal setting and strategic management issues being faced by the banking and financial institutions. The participants received training on the international standards of financial management and balance sheet analysis with special reference to Thailand by the experts from Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC).



*Participants from Nepalese financial institutions at the 'international programme on Leadership Development' in Bangkok*

The officials also gained exposure to the practical situations in Siam Commercial Bank (largest bank in Thailand) on the data security, cybercrime and protection in practical banking operations. Apart from the above, the programme was also targeted to supplement the learning through visits to relevant Institutions in and around Bangkok to get the first hand experiences. The programme was attended by 22 participants from 6 financial institutions in Nepal.



*Participants of the international programme on Leadership Development listening and discussing with the faculties during the training sessions*

## News from APRACA Member Institutions

- News from Shakti Foundation, Bangladesh

### **Shakti Foundation organized 14<sup>th</sup> Micro-entrepreneurship Awards Launching Programme**

As part of Citi's ongoing commitment to the field of microfinance, Citi Bangladesh, with the support of the Citi Foundation, launched the 14<sup>th</sup> Citi Micro-entrepreneurship Awards (CMA) program. The CMA program is jointly being organized by Shakti Foundation AND Citibank, N.A., Bangladesh along with the strategic partnership of Credit and Development Forum (CDF). The launching ceremony, held at a renowned hotel in Dhaka on 24<sup>th</sup> of October was inaugurated by the high-level advisory and screening committee chaired by Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Former Governor, Bangladesh Bank. It was also attended by the National Advisory Council Members, Ms. Rokia A. Rahman, Former Adviser

to the Caretaker Government, Mr. N. Rajashekar, Managing Director and Citi Country Office, Citibank, N.A., Bangladesh and Dr. Humaira Islam, Founder Executive Director, Shakti Foundation for Disadvantaged Women.

Since 2005, CMA seeks to highlight the achievements of the most innovative microentrepreneurs in Bangladesh. The goal is to raise awareness of microfinance, particularly among microentrepreneurs who could benefit from it; to recognize and celebrate the contributions that microentrepreneurs bring to the world economy; and to highlight best practices in micro-entrepreneurship.

for more information please click the link: <https://www.shakti.org.bd/initiatives>



## ■ News from TMSS, Bangladesh

TMSS organized a Seminar on Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development held at Pundra University in Bogra, Bangladesh

A seminar titled “Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development in Bangladesh” was held at the University Auditorium in collaboration with the electrical and electronics engineering (EEE) of the Pundra University of Science and Technology (PUB) and the Energy and Power Research Council in Bora, Bangladesh on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

The seminar was addressed by the Chief Guest of Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council Member, Joint Secretary Mohammad Samsher Ali. In his speech, he said new innovations in the energy and power sectors are very important. The electrical and electronics department at Pundra University can enrich the government with the results obtained through

research in the energy and power sectors. In this case, the government will also fund Pundra University in setting up a modern research laboratory.

The seminar was presided over by Pundra University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. AKM Azad-ud-daula Prodhan. Prof. Dr. Hosne Ara Begum Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Vice-Chancellor Prof. ANM Rezaul Karim, Controller of examination Prof. Ansar Ali Talukder, IBA teacher of Rajshahi University Prof. Dr. Mohammad Hashanat Ali also delivered their valuable speech as special guest at the seminar. The delegates and honorable guests visited various project stalls established by the students of the University to showcase their innovations.

*for more information please click the link: <https://tmss-bd.org/4367/seminar-on-renewable-energy-and-sustainable-development-held-at-pundra-university-in-bogra/>*

## Next Major APRACA Programme



**Asia-Pacific Rural and  
Agricultural Credit Association**

*Acknowledged leader in rural and agricultural finance*

BAAC, 469 Nakhonsawan Road, Dusit, Bangkok 10300, Thailand

Tel: (662) 282-0693, 282-1365 Fax: (662) 280-1524

E-mail: [apraca@apraca.org](mailto:apraca@apraca.org), [sofia@apraca.org](mailto:sofia@apraca.org)

**WWW.apraca.org**