

# **APRACA Strategic Plan 2025-2030**

## **1. Committee for APRACA Strategic Plan 2025-2030**

As per the decision taken during the 76<sup>th</sup> EXCOM Meeting held in Nanning, Guangxi, China on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023., the following members volunteered to join the drafting committee of APRACA Strategic Plan 2025-2030 (hereafter SP 2025-30).

- **Chairman of Drafting Committee:** Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), Thailand
- **Committee Members:**
  - a) Agricultural Development Bank of China (ADBC), China
  - b) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), India
  - c) State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Pakistan
  - d) Bangladesh Bank, Bangladesh
  - e) Nepal Rastra Bank, Nepal
  - f) Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Agribank), Vietnam
- **Secretary to the Committee:** APRACA Secretary General

## **2. Methodology Followed:**

APRACA Secretariat prepared the brief Terms of Reference (ToR) for the APRACA SP 2025-2030 and shared the same with the Chair of the drafting committee (BAAC) along with the approved APRACA Strategic Plan 2019-2024. The BAAC team organized a meeting with the President of BAAC (vice-chair of APRACA EXCOM) on 15 December 2023 who provided guidance to draw the main objectives of APRACA SP 2025-2030. The BAAC and APRACA team prepared a draft based on the broad guidelines provided by the President of BAAC and the APRACA SP 2019-2024.

The draft was discussed in the meeting of the drafting committee members on 16 January 2024 which was chaired by the President of BAAC. A special reference were made during the deliberations in aligning the Strategic Plan of APRACA with the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 of the United Nations. After the comments and feedback from the members of the drafting committee, the APRACA Secretariat in collaboration with BAAC now finalized the APRACA SP 2025-2030 and place the draft to the members of 77<sup>th</sup> EXCOM members for feedback and comments to improve the same and incorporate this in the final version which will be circulated within 15 days from the date of EXCOM meeting. The New SP 2025-30 will be implemented with effect from the first quarter of 2025.

### 3. Strategic Plan 2025-2030

#### A. Background and APRACA Strategic Framework

Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA) was founded by 37 institutions from 16 countries<sup>1</sup> in 1977 to promote cooperation and facilitate mutual exchange of information and expertise in the field of rural credit and finance. To date, APRACA is owned by 92 member-institutions dedicated to rural/agricultural credit and finance from 24 countries in the Asia-Pacific Region<sup>2</sup>. Upon the policy guidance of its General Assembly (GA) and Executive Committee (EXCOM), APRACA Secretariat exercises decentralized implementation of its major functions through two agencies, namely: (i) APRACA-Centre for Training and Research on Agricultural Banking (CENTRAB); and (ii) APRACA Rural and Agricultural Expert's Association (ARAFEA) and 3 ACEs (APRACA Centres of excellence) in China, Iran and India. The APRACA Secretariat based in Bangkok mainly coordinates the training, research and consultancy projects of the association and support the agencies and ACEs. Since its inception, APRACA has aspired to work for rural growth and development particularly for the upliftment of the rural poor in the Asia-Pacific Region. APRACA envisions itself as the authority and leader organization on agricultural rural finance in the Asia-Pacific region. This collective aspiration of the APRACA member institutions is reflected in the vision statement adopted since 2013 (Box 1).

##### **Box 1: APRACA Vision**

*APRACA is the organization on rural and agricultural finance that helps promote productivity, inclusive growth, self-reliance, and welfare of the rural poor in the Asia-Pacific region.*

The APRACA mission statement contains the association's operational objectives, functions, and ideals, and APRACA's strategic purpose (Box 2).

##### **Box 2: APRACA Mission**

*To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of rural finance and improve access to financial services through a network of knowledge sharing and learning, capacity-building, research, and exchange of expertise*

The overall purpose of APRACA as embodied in the mission statement can be broken down into specific strategic objectives which would provide APRACA's key result areas. It also embodies APRACA core functions which can be used to clarify roles and

<sup>1</sup> The 37 founding member institutions of APRACA are from the following countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, Iran, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Western Samoa and Thailand.

<sup>2</sup> Current membership of 24 countries are: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Iran, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

responsibilities of the APRACA agencies/units. The APRACA's strategic objectives for the period 2025-2029 derived from its core mission and the emerging demand from the member institutions are as follows:

- (i) Foster collaborative sharing of innovations, best practices, and knowledge solutions in the ambit of agricultural and rural finance.**
- (ii) Promote economic cooperation and provide technical support to the member institution in developing cross border trade model under the existing regional (APEC) and sub-regional (ASEAN +3) framework.**
- (iii) Advance technical capacity of member institution and support acquiring high quality knowledge and techniques to deliver rural and agriculture finance including climate resilient financing approach and conduct research activities related to these areas.**
- (iv) Facilitate mobilization and deployment of experts from APRACA member institutions/other agencies for conducting consultancy services to promote core objectives and programme of APRACA and its member institutions.**
- (v) Strengthen knowledge management process through partnerships, collaborations, and networks for expanded sharing, learning, and dissemination of updated know-how on agricultural and rural finance.**
- (vi) Consolidate APRACA's organizational and financial capacity for effective, efficient, and sustainable operations.**

## **B. Status of Implementation of the APRACA Strategic Plan for 2019-2024**

The APRACA Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 approved in 20<sup>th</sup> General Assembly held in Colombo, Sri Lanka is guided by the same Vision, Mission, and Objectives of APRACA. It builds on the previous plan (2013-2018) taking into consideration what have been accomplished and what have not been acted upon. During this period, APRACA witnessed major changes in the rural and agricultural financing environment, which include improved financial inclusion, proactive role of governments, increased mobile penetration, Fintech revolution (e-payment system, P2P, mobile banking, and Blockchain technology, etc.), and impact of climate change.

APRACA strategic plan started implementation during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2019 and APRACA member institutions faced with huge challenges during the start of the year 2020 till the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2022 due to COVID19 pandemic and restrictions in terms of movement and business development. However, the member institutions utilized the time to acquaint themselves with the online system and APRACA and was able to deliver some of the important activities through these platforms. A brief on the achievements till June 2023 is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Status of activities under the APRACA Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 (as of May 2024)**

Objective/Activities	Accomplishments (up to May 2024)
<p><b>(i) Foster collaborative sharing of innovations, best practices, and knowledge solutions in agricultural financing and rural development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Update, on a regular (annual) basis, the assessment of APRACA member institutions' knowledge requirements and preferred mode of exchange or knowledge sharing.</li> <li>● Formulate a program of knowledge sharing on priority requirements of members based on results of the assessment.</li> <li>● Implement the (APRACA-EXCOM/GA) approved program of knowledge sharing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● APRACA Secretariat designed and delivered the knowledge dissemination programme in the form of workshops, webinars, training etc.as per the requirement of member institutions.</li> <li>● A knowledge sharing programme already formulated and the first phase of the same in the name of FINSMART was already implemented. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase will be launched from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 after receiving suggestions from the member institutions.</li> <li>● All the programme suggested and approved by APRACA EXCOM and GA are being implemented.</li> </ul>
<p><b>(ii) Promote better understanding of financial, monetary, banking, and economic development issues/challenges (including climate change) and innovations (such as the Fintech revolution), particularly as they relate to agriculture and rural sectors through training and research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review of the status of and issues in rural and agricultural financing in the region towards the development of research and training agenda for the next 3-5 years.</li> <li>● Mobilize funding and implement approved research agenda.</li> <li>● Consolidated analysis of training evaluation results and input the results/ learnings in training courses/modules.</li> <li>● Develop/update training courses / modules based on the results of: assessment of members' knowledge needs, evaluation of training courses, and assessment of issues/status of Agri financing in the region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Completed up to 2019</li> <li>● APRACA in collaboration with FAO already published 2 policy papers. Two more research paper is under publication. Funding received from FAO for these publications.</li> <li>● APRACA developed a training course on 'strengthening agricultural value chains' with the generous support from FAO. We will be piloting this course during 2022 with APRACA member institutions.</li> <li>● Same as above</li> </ul>

Objective/Activities	Accomplishments (up to May 2024)
<p><b>(iii) Facilitate mobilization and deployment of experts from APRACA members and non-member institutions for the conduct of consultancy services in support of the APRACA's objectives and programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Update database of experts from among member institutions, with their relevant fields of expertise and capabilities.</li> <li>● Tapping of experts from among member institutions as resource persons, trainers, speakers, consultant, and/or exchange for the training, research, and consultancy services of APRACA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The database for experts from member institutions and other sources was already updated by the Secretariat and also being updated every year.</li> <li>● APRACA Secretariat is completely relying on the expertise of APRACA member institutions and trying its best to provide consulting to the listed experts (unless it is specified by the donor agencies).</li> </ul>
<p><b>(iv) Encourage greater dissemination and use of high-quality knowledge on rural and agricultural finance through publications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Formulate/Update and implement a publications and dissemination program based on members' requirements and the agri/rural finance sector in the region</li> <li>● Update/maintain the APRACA website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● APRACA is publishing 4 issues of Newsletter and other publications as per the requirements of the donor agencies.</li> <li>● Website updated in 2019</li> </ul>
<p><b>(v) Enhance partnerships and networks for expanded sharing, learning and dissemination of knowledge on agricultural finance and rural development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strengthen collaborative engagement/activities with existing partners/ network on knowledge sharing / resources and experience on agricultural finance and rural development</li> <li>● Initiate meetings with priority potential partners and networks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The database on potential external partnership has been prepared and we are getting excellent response from the new partners</li> <li>● APRACA has been invited by international organizations like IFAD, ADB, World Bank, and GIZ to participate/speak in policy and knowledge related conferences/Seminars</li> </ul>
<p><b>(vi) Strengthen APRACA's organizational and financial capacity for effective, efficient and sustainable operations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhance coordination activities between and among APRACA entities: General Secretariat and CENTRAB.</li> <li>● Continue to increase membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The coordination among Secretariat and other arms of APRACA is extremely good and the programme were being developed accordingly.</li> <li>● Drive on increasing membership is being continuously being done.</li> </ul>

Objective/Activities	Accomplishments (up to May 2024)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake measures to increase income of the APRACA General Secretariat and CENTRAB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This has been always a thrust area of the APRACA Secretariat.</li> </ul>

Note: Activities are mentioned in blue letters.

### C. APRACA Strategic Plan for 2025-2030

The proposed APRACA Strategic Plan for 2025-2030 is generally guided by the APRACA Vision, Mission, Objectives and Aims. The proposed plan has been built based on the guidance provided by the Chair of the Drafting Committee, emerging issues of the region and the previous plan taking into consideration what have been accomplished and what have not been acted upon. As suggested by the President of BAAC, the Strategic Plan also has considered the major changes witnessed in the rural and agricultural financing environment in the last few years such as slowdown of agricultural finance due to COVID, impact of climate in agricultural productivity and food system and impact of digital finance to support higher reach out at a lower cost. The proposed activities and actions to be undertaken towards the achievement of the Strategic Plan (SP) are outlined below:

#### SP 1: Foster collaborative sharing of innovations, best practices, and knowledge solutions within the ambit of agricultural and rural finance impacting commodity value chain development and improved efficiency.

##### Activities:

- 1.1 Update the assessment of knowledge requirements for staff members (all levels) of APRACA member institutions and preferred mode of exchange or knowledge sharing (preferably on biennial basis).
- 1.2 Formulate capacity building programme for imparting new knowledge on priority requirements of members based on results of the assessments.
- 1.3 Implement the APRACA-EXCOM/GA approved programme of knowledge sharing with pier groups.
- 1.4 Facilitate the dissemination of innovation achievements among members engaged in agricultural and rural finance. Develop and execute of structured sharing programs, encompassing both exchange mechanisms and practical learning.
- 1.5 Collaborate with other regional networks in rural and agricultural finance (AFRACA, NENERACA, ALIDE and CICA) to organize global events (World congress) and regional events for knowledge dissemination.

#### SP 2. Promote economic cooperation and provide technical support to the member institution in developing cross border trade model under the existing regional (APEC<sup>3</sup>) and sub-regional (ASEAN +3<sup>4</sup>) framework.

##### Activities:

<sup>3</sup> APEC: Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

<sup>4</sup> ASEAN +3: Association of Southeast Nations + China, Japan & South Korea

- 2.1 Development of protocol/procedural framework for cross border trade models for providing access to regional/global markets by the clientele of APRACA member institutions.
- 2.2 Support Regional (APEC) and Sub-regional economic cooperation framework in developing the cross-border trade activities by the clients of APRACA member institutions.
- 2.3 Identify partner bank and financial institution for cooperation agreement and develop the required agreement protocol.
- 2.4 Support and connect member institutions in organizing/participating the trade fairs/business matching activities (Both physical and online) through APRACA member network.

**SP 3. Advance technical capacity of member institution and support acquiring high quality knowledge and techniques to deliver rural and agriculture finance including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other new trends of financing, approach and conduct research activities related to these areas.**

**Activities:**

- 3.1 Review of the status of and issues in advancing rural and agricultural finance in the region to develop research and training agenda for the next 3-5 years.
- 3.2 Identify the institutions (local/regional/global) to provide high quality training to support human resources in member institution.
- 3.3 Initiate collaboration and mobilize funding/financial support from potential partners and networks in identified priority areas, including but not limited to climate resilience, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) economy or any other areas as determined by APRACA members and networks.
- 3.4 Strengthen collaborative engagement/activities with existing partners/networks on knowledge sharing / resources and experience on agricultural finance and rural development.
- 3.5 Develop interactive curriculums collaboratively for the rural agricultural finance/business that align with emerging financial trends, including but not limited to risk management, credit granting, financial technology, digital banking, and other pertinent areas.
- 3.6 Facilitate the engagement of association members in the identification and utilization of environmental, social, and governance (ESG), achieved through the implementation of financial research methodologies or the development of pertinent financial services.
- 3.7 Develop/update training courses / modules based on the results of the assessment of members' knowledge needs, evaluation of training courses, and assessment of issues/status of agricultural financing in the region.

**SP 4. Facilitate mobilization and deployment of experts from APRACA member institutions/other agencies for conducting consultancy services to promote core objectives and programme of APRACA and its member institutions.**

**Activities:**

- 4.1 Update database of experts from among member institutions, with their relevant fields of expertise and capabilities.
- 4.2 Tapping expertise from among APRACA member institutions as resource persons, trainers, speakers, consultant, and/or exchange for the training, research, and consultancy services of APRACA.
- 4.3 Update/maintain the APRACA website to reflect APRACA and its member's contribution to support national and regional knowledge universe.

**SP 5. Strengthen knowledge management process through partnerships, collaborations, and networks for expanded sharing, learning, and dissemination of updated know-how on agricultural and rural finance.**

**Activities:**

- 5.1 Strengthen collaborative engagement/activities with existing partners/ network on knowledge sharing / resources and experience on agricultural finance and rural development.
- 5.2 Initiate collaboration with priority potential partners and networks of similar objectives and activities.
- 5.3 Organize wide dissemination of knowledge captured during the engagement with the member institutions.

**SP 6. Consolidate APRACA's organizational and financial capacity for effective, efficient, and sustainable operations.**

**Activities:**

- 6.1 Enhance coordination activities between and among APRACA entities: General Secretariat, APRACA-CENTRAB, and A-RAFEA (APRACA-Rural and Agricultural Finance Experts' Association).
- 6.2 Enhance coordination activities between and among APRACA Centres of Excellence (BIRD, CEREFA etc.)
- 6.3 Continue to increase the number of member institution with the support of existing members.
- 6.4 Undertake measures to increase income of the APRACA General Secretariat, CENTRAB, and A-RAFEA.

**D. Proposed timeline of the activities:**

The above strategic plan and activities are indicative and subject to the feedback, comments approval from the EXCOM members. Upon approval the proposed activities along with the corresponding target outputs, timelines and responsibilities will be identified and documented in formulation of the corresponding Plan of Action 2025-2030 that should follow the formulation of this Strategic Plan for the proposed period of the APRACA activities.

**Table 2: Activity wise timeline for implementing the Strategic Plan for the proposed period (2025-2030)**

SI	Strategic Plans (SPs)/Activities	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
<b>SP #1</b>	<b>Foster collaborative sharing of innovations, best practices, and knowledge solutions within the ambit of agricultural and rural finance impacting commodity value chain development and improved efficiency.</b>						
1.1	<i>Update the assessment of knowledge requirements for staff members (all levels) of APRACA member institutions and preferred mode of exchange or knowledge sharing (preferably on biennial basis).</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
1.2	<i>Formulate capacity building programme for imparting new knowledge on priority requirements of members based on results of the assessments.</i>	—	—			—	—
1.3	<i>Implement the APRACA-EXCOM/GA approved programme of knowledge sharing with pier groups.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
1.4	<i>Facilitate the dissemination of innovation achievements among members engaged in agricultural and rural finance. Develop and execute of structured sharing programme, encompassing both exchange mechanisms and practical learning.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
1.5	<i>Collaborate with other regional networks in rural and agricultural finance (AFRACA, NENERACA, ALIDE and CICA) to organize global events (World congress) and regional events for knowledge dissemination.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>SP #2</b>	<b>Promote economic cooperation and provide technical support to the member institution in developing cross border trade model under the existing regional (APEC) and sub-regional (e.g. ASEAN +3, GMS etc.) framework</b>						
2.1	<i>Development of protocol/procedural framework for cross border trade models for providing access to regional/global markets by the clientele of APRACA member institutions.</i>	—	—				
2.2	<i>Support regional (APEC) and sub-regional economic cooperation framework in developing the cross-border trade activities by the clients of APRACA member institutions.</i>		—	—	—		
2.3	<i>Identify partner bank and financial institution for cooperation agreement and develop the required agreement protocol.</i>	—	—	—			
2.4	<i>Support and connect member institutions in organizing/participating the trade fairs/business matching activities (Both physical and online) through APRACA member network.</i>		—	—	—		
<b>SP #3</b>	<b>Advance technical capacity of member institution and support acquiring high quality knowledge and techniques to deliver rural and agriculture finance including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other new trends of financing, approach and conduct research activities related to these areas.</b>						

SI	Strategic Plans (SPs)/Activities	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
3.1	<i>Review of the status of and issues in advancing rural and agricultural finance in the region to develop research and training agenda for the next 3-5 years.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.2	<i>Identify the institutions (local/regional/global) to provide high quality training to support human resources in member institution.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.3	<i>Initiate collaboration and mobilize funding/financial support from potential partners and networks in identified priority areas, including but not limited to climate resilience, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) economy or any other areas as determined by APRACA members and networks</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.4	<i>Strengthen collaborative engagement/activities with existing partners/networks on knowledge sharing / resources and experience on agricultural finance and rural development.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.5	<i>Develop interactive curriculums collaboratively for the rural agricultural finance/ business that align with emerging financial trends, including but not limited to risk management, credit granting, financial technology, digital banking, and other pertinent areas.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.6	<i>Facilitate the engagement of association members in the identification and utilization of environmental, social, and governance (ESG), achieved through the implementation of financial research methodologies or the development of pertinent financial services.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.7	<i>Develop/update training courses / modules based on the results of the assessment of members' knowledge needs, evaluation of training courses, and assessment of issues/status of agricultural financing in the region</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>SP #4</b>	<b>Facilitate mobilization and deployment of experts from APRACA member institutions and other agencies for conducting consultancy services to promote core objectives and programme of APRACA and its member institutions.</b>						
4.1	<i>Update database of experts from among member institutions, with their relevant fields of expertise and capabilities.</i>	—	—				
4.2	<i>Tapping expertise from among APRACA member institutions as resource persons, trainers, speakers, consultant, and/or exchange for the training, research, and consultancy services of APRACA.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
4.3	<i>Update/maintain the APRACA website to reflect APRACA and its member's contribution to support national and regional knowledge universe.</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>SP #5</b>	<b>Strengthen knowledge management process through partnerships, collaborations, and networks for expanded sharing, learning, and dissemination of updated know-how on agricultural and rural finance.</b>						

SI	Strategic Plans (SPs)/Activities	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
5.1	<i>Strengthen collaborative engagement/activities with existing partners/ network on knowledge sharing / resources and experience on agricultural finance and rural development.</i>						
5.2	<i>Initiate collaboration with priority potential partners and networks of similar objectives and activities.</i>						
5.3	<i>Organize wide dissemination of knowledge captured during the engagement with the member institutions.</i>						
<b>SP #6</b>	<b>Consolidate APRACA's organizational and financial capacity for effective, efficient, and sustainable operations</b>						
6.1	<i>Enhance coordination activities between and among APRACA entities: General Secretariat, APRACA-CENTRAB, and A-RAFEA (APRACA-Rural and Agricultural Finance Experts' Association)</i>						
6.2	<i>Enhance coordination activities between and among APRACA Centres of Excellence (BIRD, CEREFA etc.)</i>						
6.3	<i>Continue to increase the number of member institution with the support of existing members</i>						
6.4	<i>Undertake measures to increase income of the APRACA General Secretariat, CENTRAB, and A-RAFEA.</i>						