



## ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART) E-newsletter

1<sup>st</sup> Edition  
(Sept 18' - Feb 19')

### ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART)

### MESSAGE FROM THE STATE PROJECT DIRECTOR

The Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) is a World Bank financed Project of the Government of Assam.

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the Project is to “*add value and improve resilience of selected agriculture value chains, focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in targeted districts of the State of Assam*”. The Project plans to achieve these by:

- enabling investments in agri-enterprises, improving the investment environment and investment promotion, facilitating access to finance for agribusiness enterprises, and, where appropriate, pushing for process, regulatory changes;
- facilitating the growth of agri enterprise clusters to increase competitiveness, revenue and employment growth; and supporting development of a modern supply chains; and
- fostering the development of climate resilient production clusters, and improving producer access to knowledge, technologies, markets, and infrastructure so that they are able to respond to market opportunities and climate variability.

#### The four Project components are:

- Enabling Agri Enterprise Development**, with sub components being (i) enhancing state capacity to attract private investments, (ii) setting up of an Enterprise Development and Promotion Facility (EDPF) (iii) setting up of an Agribusiness Investment Fund (AIF) (iv) establishing Stewardship Councils.
- Facilitating Agro Cluster Development** with sub-components being- (i) support establishment of cluster level Industry Associations (IAs), (ii) supply chain support.
- Fostering Market Led Production and Resilience Enhancement** with sub components being (i) promoting climate resilient technologies and their adoption, (ii) Facilitating market linkages through market intelligence and product aggregation, (iii) Facilitating access to and responsible use of financial services.
- Project Management, Monitoring & Learning.**

View details on : [www.arias.in](http://www.arias.in)

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first in a sequence of monthly e-newsletters from APART.

I would like to inform our esteemed readers that the APART Project started its implementation w.e.f January 2018 and since then there has been continuous progress in the implementation of the Project in all the identified districts.

In this first issue we would like to highlight the important events/news of past six months (Sept 18'- Feb 2019') for our esteemed readers.

APART would like to shape the content of the newsletter to meet your requirements and expectations. Therefore, we invite your suggestions and feedback.

Thank you.

Vinod Seshan, IAS

## WORLD BANK REVIEW MISSION OF APART

The first review mission of the World Bank-supported Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) managed by ARIAS Society was held from 19th – 23rd November 2018.

The World Bank mission team led by Shri Manivannan Pathy held extensive interactions with the implementing Departments of the State Government, the International agencies providing technical assistance to the project, besides the APART team and reviewed the progress of the project activities. The team also reviewed the implementation of the Project in the field and interacted with the project beneficiaries.

On the last day of the review mission, the visiting team accompanied by the State Project Director, ARIAS Society, Shri Vinod Seshan and team presented the outline of the review to Shri Alok Kumar, IAS, Chief Secretary, Govt of Assam, who is also the Chairman of the Project Guidance Council (PGC) of ARIAS Society.



*WB mission members interacting with Line departments and APART team*



*World Bank Review Mission team interacting with Project beneficiaries in the field*

## STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS FOR SECTOR SCAN STUDY

Deloitte India has been engaged by ARIAS Society to conduct a Sector Scan Study and a Sub-sector Scan Study of Agribusiness Sector for the Assam Bureau of Investment Promotion (ABIP) under APART. The initial round of stakeholder consultations for the study was conducted from 9th– 11th October 2018 at Guwahati.



*Discussion between APART and Deloitte teams*

The agenda for the consultation was to interact with key stakeholders viz., Department of Industries & Commerce and key industry associations along with ARIAS Society for getting insights into the existing investment scenario in the State and focus on the sectors of investment as well as collection of relevant prior studies, reports, and datasets. With this objective, the Deloitte team held consultations with Commissionerate of Industries & Commerce (C&I) and representatives from ARIAS Society.

## WORLD FISH PROVIDES TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FISHERY VALUE CHAIN INTERVENTIONS UNDER APART

WorldFish, also known as the International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) is providing technical support to the Directorate of Fisheries, Govt of Assam in the implementation of the fisheries sub-component of World Bank-financed Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) for a period of five years.

In the inception workshop held at the National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), Khanapara, Dr. C.V. Mohan, Team Leader, WorldFish explained the technical contribution of WorldFish to the Project, to secure and enhance the contribution of mall-scale fisheries to food security in Assam.

He also stressed on increasing the availability, accessibility, and consumption of nutrient-rich safe fish especially for women of reproductive age, infants and young children.

In his inaugural speech, Shri Vinod Seshan, IAS, State Project Director, ARIAS Society, urged the department to develop an action plan of the activities under different interventions, as identified in the project document. He also stressed to develop and promote climate resilient technologies in support of sustainable aquaculture and small-scale fisheries in Assam.

Keeping in line with the implementation modalities of the Project, Directorate of Fisheries has so far conducted 728 polyculture demonstrations in 13 districts covering 43 clusters, 110 paddy cum fish demonstrations are ongoing in 7 project districts. A total of 838 beneficiaries have been covered so far. The department has conducted 90 Awareness programmes in selected 46 fishery clusters in 15 districts. A total of 10,672 fish farmers, including 31% women had attended these awareness programmes in the Project districts.



*Beneficiaries of Fisheries component*

## PACKAGE OF PRACTICES ON FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

The Package of Practices on Fisheries and Aquaculture (PoP) in Assam, developed based on the changes in Science and Technology, eco-system and necessity for climate resilient technologies by Assam Agricultural University was published by Directorate of Fisheries, Govt of Assam in collaboration with ARIAS Society under World Bank Financed Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART). The PoP was released by Shri Parimal Suklabaidya, Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries, Assam at Dispur on 18-09-2018. The Minister, in his speech, said that the new Fisheries PoP suitable for the agro-climatic condition in Assam would be a highly useful document for all the stakeholders and especially for the fish and fish seed farming communities of the State for years to come.



*Hon'ble Minister releasing the PoP*

Hon'ble Minister, Panchayat and Rural Development, Government of Assam Sri Nava Doley also graced the function as special Guest and appreciated the

efforts of Fishery Department to develop the State as one of the leading fish producing state in the Country.

## APART SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH ICAR-NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE ON PIG (NRC-PIG)

APART signed an agreement with ICAR-National Research Centre on Pig, Guwahati. As per the agreement:

- NRC-Pig will provide technical advisory services for piggery value chain improvement in the selected project districts of Assam.
- The institute will support the APART Project in strengthening the Liquid semen availability and Artificial Insemination (AI) Services in the State and to carry out capacity building of Masters Trainers.
- Conduct out the gap analysis of ICDP lab at Demow, Sivasagar District and ICDP lab at Khanapara, Kamrup District, in association with Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Department, Govt of Assam and Assam Livestock & Poultry Corporation (ALPCo).



*SPD ARIAS, officials from NRC-Pig & APART team at the agreement signing ceremony with ICAR NRC Pig*

- Conduct training programmes in association with AHVD and ALPCo.

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL LIVESTOCK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Govt. of Assam signed a contract agreement with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya, a global research institute for livestock sector research and development, headquartered at Nairobi, Kenya. According to the agreement ILRI is providing technical support to the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department (AHVD) and Dairy Development (DDD) under the World Bank funded APART project.

The different activities undertaken so far:

- Mapping of dairy and pork value chain actors

- Assessment of existing labs under Directorate of Dairy Development (DDD) & Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Directorate (AHVD)
- Training Needs Assessment (TNA) of dairy and piggery value chain actors and drafting of the training course for both dairy and piggery value chain actors.
- Mentoring Govt. pig breeding farms.



*Discussion and interaction on pork value-chain*

## ORIENTATION PROGRAM SAFEGUARD POLICY OF APART FOR PWD OFFICIALS

World Bank’s environmental and social safeguards need to be compiled during rehabilitation works, like construction of roads etc. In complying with the same, an orientation programme for the Public Works Department (PWD) officials from the districts was conducted, where they were oriented on the safeguard requirements in preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the roads identified for rehabilitation under the APART.



## SENSITIZATION ON “THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) ACT, 2013”

In compliance to Section 4 of “*The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013*”, ARIAS Society formed the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) vide Office Order No. ARIASS/APART/319/2018/04 dated, Guwahati the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018. The Committee is headed the Deputy Project Director, ARIAS Society and comprised of one male and three female members, one among them being an external member from the legal profession.

In this regard, an orientation on the ICC was conducted for all the staff of ARIAS Society with an aim to build a gender sensitive and safe workplace.



*Participants in the orientation programme*

## VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT PLAN (VCDP) FOR SELECTED COMMODITY VALUE CHAINS UNDER APART

For the purpose of addressing the Project Development Objectives of Assam Agri Business and Rural Transformation (APART) - ‘Add value and improve resilience of selected agriculture value chains, focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in targeted districts of Assam’, it is essential to have in place a very dynamic ‘Value Chain Analysis Plan (VCAP)’.

Preparation of the VCDPs is being undertaken by the ARIAS Society Project Coordination Unit (PCU) in collaboration with the respective Operational Project Implementation Units (OPIUs) and the District ATMAs for addressing the following core purpose:

- i) To arrive at a clear ‘baseline current status’ for each of the selected commodity value chains
- ii) Wherein the ‘critical binding factors & latent opportunities’ in each value chain will be traceable.
- iii) Post VCDP trials, the emerging value chain models shall help the International Knowledge Partners under APART to customize their interventions effectively.
- iv) These models shall also pave way for structuring the Market Linkage leading to Rural Transformation.



*Meeting with beneficiaries and display of their farm produces*

## WORKSHOP AND DISCUSSION ON POTATO VALUE CHAIN ACTIVITIES

Under the on-going World Bank supported Assam Agri-Business and Rural Transformation (APART), International Potato Centre (CIP) in collaboration with the Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing (DoH&FP), Govt of Assam, organized two day workshop to review the district level potato value chain analysis and finalize the potato value chain action plan for Assam. The workshop held on the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February 2019, witnessed participation of ATMA officials from 14 Project districts involved in potato value chain, besides officials from International Potato Centre (CIP), ARIAS Society and Department of DoH & FP. Project Manager, CIP briefed the strategies for implementing the value chain actions in Assam and emphasized on the “Public Private Partnership” model in the potato value chain, which in turn will help in providing direct benefit to the farmers.

Discussions were also held on streamlining the gender strategy, which is a mandate of the World Bank. CIP has put efforts in mainstreaming gender in the whole process of potato value chain. Dr. Nozomi Kawarazuka, Gender Specialist, CIP referred to the study carried out in six districts, involving women to understand their current role in potato cultivation and marketing. The value chain analysis of Barpeta, Nagaon and Sonitpur districts was shared by the Development and Value Chain Expert, CIP highlighting the major constraints of potato value chain in these three districts. The workshop was followed by district-wise potato value chain analysis, presentations, and open house discussions. A draft value chain action plan and recommendations for the districts was the outcome of the two-day workshop.

## AWARENESS & TRAINING PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED BY HANDLOOM & TEXTILES

Department of Handloom and Textiles, GoA and implementing department of APART organised a number of awareness programmes in the project areas of Kaliapani Development Block, Jorhat District, Gourisagar Development Block, Sivasagar District, Chhaygaon, Kamrup District, Chariduar, Sonitpur District, Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur District where weavers, entrepreneurs and allied workers

participated. The training programmes disseminated awareness about the APART project, beneficiary selection process and other opportunities that may be availed by the beneficiaries under the project.

A technical session on, “*Innovation in handloom weaving with reference to Muga and Eri Silk*” was conducted for the technical staff from the five project districts.



Awareness Programmes in the districts

## ACTIVITIES OF DIRECTORATE OF HORTICULTURE & FOOD PROCESSING (DOH&FP) UNDER APART

Directorate of Horticulture & Food processing (DoH & FP) is supported by two international agencies viz. **International Potato Centre (CIP) from Lima, Peru** and **World Vegetable Centre (WorldVeg) from Taiwan**. CIP is supporting for overall development of potato crop and WorldVeg is supporting for development of vegetable crops viz. *cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, brinjal and pumpkin*.

Besides those crops, Directorate of Horticulture is concentrating on ginger, turmeric (*supporting mainly processing part*) and banana crops under APART.

Till date APART have reached out to 1254 beneficiaries through DoH&FP and have conducted 1254 demonstrations (*Potato-504, Cabbage-150, Cauliflower-150, Tomato-150, Brinjal: - 150 and Pumpkin-150*)



*Zero Tillage technology demonstration in the field*

## ZERO TILLAGE TECHNOLOGY INTRODUCED BY INTERNATIONAL POTATO CENTRE (CIP)

CIP has introduced another new technology for potato crop and demonstrated in farmers' field. In this technology, no land preparation is required (ploughing not required), after harvesting of paddy, the potato tubers are planted in the field and nutrients (fertilizers and organic manures) are applied and then the crop is covered with paddy straw (which is used as mulch materials). This technology has got good response from the farmers and they are interested to adopt this technology in coming years. In this technology, cost of production is also less and farmers need not to prepare any land, and there is no requirement for fertilizer and water intake is also less as residual moisture and nutrients are available in the field.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARD ACTIVITIES UNDER APART

Environmental Screening is the process by which the appropriate level and type of Environmental Assessment (EA) is determined for a given on the basis of its likely environmental impacts under APART.

For identification of sensitive sub-projects with respect to the environmental issues a screening and review process has been worked out. This exercise is a useful tool to identify the environmental issues and integrate them into the project preparation, and not as an exclusion criterion for avoiding environmental impacts.

The PCU and Line Departments are carrying out screening exercise for all proposed subproject interventions (department wise) prior to initiation of the activities. Environmental Screening of rural roads has been considered the major area of concern during this period and detailed screening has been carried out for 28.00 km of rural roads.

Subsequently, site specific Environment Management Plan (EMP) has been formulated so as Contractors implement EMP during the project construction.



*Environmental survey of the identified rural roads*

## IMPROVED RURAL ROAD CONNECTIVITY PLANNED UNDER APART

The Government of Assam (GoA) under the World Bank aided Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) has targeted for rehabilitation of approx. 100 kms. of rural access roads to connect agricultural production clusters to markets, warehouses, enterprises clusters etc.

On behalf of the Government of Assam, APART through PWRD will upgrade rural access roads that will connect project supported production clusters and enterprise clusters to higher classes of road, market centres and urban centres. These upgraded roads are aimed to



*Community Consultation*

provide better connectivity and market access to the rural farmers and project beneficiaries.

The Project has issued acceptance/ work order for 17.45 kms (approx) through PWRD and aims to achieve a target of 50 Kms. of rehabilitation of rural roads in the FY 2018-19. These rural roads are expected to benefit almost 2 lakh (approx) rural population and will be constructed using climate resilient technologies and innovative designs.

The Project has completed social and environmental screening of the selected roads in Kamrup metro, Nagaon, Hojai, Golaghat, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Nalbari, Barpeta, Kokrajhar, Goalpara and Cachar districts.

Through these interventions, APART aims to help

the farming communities of the state with better road connectivity, which in turn will impact their overall social and economic development.



*Measuring of road for social clearance*

## **SPECIAL FEATURE**

### **RAISING MAT-TYPE NURSERY FOR MECHANICAL TRANSPLANTING & IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY**

*- Kanwar Singh, Suryakanta Khandai, Vivek Kumar, Vipin Kumar and Virender Kumar*

Mat-type nursery is a pre-requisite for transplanting rice mechanically. It requires less area (75 m<sup>2</sup>/ha) as compared to conventional nursery (750-1000 m<sup>2</sup>/ha), and also reduces cost of fertilizer as well as water. The difference between a normal and mat-type nursery lies in the way a mat-type nursery is prepared. The following are the steps for developing a Mat-type nursery.

- Note that a nursery raised through conventional methods cannot be used for transplanting rice using machine transplanter. It minimizes the root damage as the seedlings are not uprooted. It is easy to transport the mats to long distances, by sprinkling water intermittently to avoid wilting, and keep the mats in healthy condition. In a mat-type nursery, the seedlings are raised on a thin layer of soil placed on a perforated polythene sheet. The polythene sheet prevents the seedling roots from penetrating the underlying soil and

facilitates creating a dense mat. The mat can be cut into desired sizes to fit into the trays of the mechanical transplanter.

- Start nursery bed preparation 18-20 days prior to transplanting during Sali season and 25-28days during the Boro season. Puddle the field and let it settle for one day. For transplanting one-hectare land, a 1.5 m wide and 50 m long raised (10-15 cm) nursery is perforated polythene sheet, a mixture of clean sieved soil and FYM in 4:1 ratio is spread in a thin layer of 0.75 inch for dry-type, whereas for wet type nursery 0.5-inch layer is maintained. FYM may be placed in furrow or well mixed in soil during field preparation. The beds are compartmented into iron frames of 1.25m x 1.25m. Keep ~60-80 cm channel/furrow between the beds.
- After soaking for 12 hours, drain-out the seed from the water and place the soaked seed in gunny bags for 48-



*Mat-nursery ready to transplant*



*Mat-type nursery at Darrang*



*Mat-type nursery preparation at Barpeta*

72 hours for sprouting. Sprinkle water over seed after regular intervals and turn with hands about 2-3 times for proper aeration and avoiding damage by heat. The seed sprouts after 48 hours during Sali season and 72 hours during Boro season. When the seed sprouts attain maximum 6-7mm length, they are ready for sowing. The pre-germinated seed are broadcasted on the soil that is thoroughly prepared and leveled using a plank. Cover the seeds with a thin layer of straw/banana leaves to save from birds' picking and any other damage. Remove the cover after 2-3 days. Apply 250g DAP after one week of sowing for one hectare's nursery bed. In case of Zn deficiency, spray 0.5% zinc sulphate (21%) + 2.0% urea. If symptoms re-appear, it should be repeated after 5-7 days.

- Irrigate the beds by sprinkling water using a watering can for the initial 3-4 days until the seeds emerge and then irrigate beds by flooding furrows between the beds. Ensure water retention on the top of the nursery bed by frequently irrigating the furrows until the seedlings are ready for use.
- Keep the height of levees/bunds higher than the bed height so that water can be retained on the top of the beds. Stop watering in mat nursery one day before transplanting and drain excess water to ensure the mat is dry for cutting and transplanting. Seedlings of 15-18 cm height are ideal for transplanting. Properly managed seedlings attain this height within 14-18 days after seed sowing during Sali and 22-25 days in Boro season.

## LAUNCH OF RICE KNOWLEDGE BANK & RICE PRODUCTION MANUAL

'Rice Knowledge Bank - Assam', an agriculture web portal dedicated to enhancing knowledge on rice production techniques and technologies, best production practices and state rice factsheets, was launched in Guwahati on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019, as part of the World Bank funded Assam Agri-business and Rural Transformation (APART). The informative portal is the result of efforts of the Assam Agricultural University (AAU), Directorate of Agriculture, Govt of Assam,; with technical assistance from International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society (an Autonomous body of the Govt of Assam); To bridge the gap between research and on-field rice production practices, this website is a digital extension service providing practical

knowledge solutions, especially for small-scale farmers in Assam.

Officially launching the rice knowledge portal ([www.rkbassam.in](http://www.rkbassam.in)) Dr. K.M. Buzarbaruah, Vice Chancellor, AAU congratulated the APART team and other partners, IRRI and ARIAS Society, while highlighting the need to convert this essential knowledge to different local languages for encouraging large scale adoption.

A manual namely-"Steps for successful rice production", was also released in the same event by Shri Rajesh Prasad, IAS, Agriculture Production Commissioner, Government of Assam.



**Release of 'Steps of successful rice production' Rice Knowledge Bank portal**



**Rice Knowledge Bank portal**

The Assam Rice Knowledge Bank (RKB-Assam) showcases rice production techniques, agricultural technologies and best farming practices based on the pool of knowledge from research findings, learning and media resources from AAU and IRRI. It serves to address the challenges for agricultural development by supporting fast and effective transfer of technologies and knowledge from the research laboratories to farmer's fields. With IRRI's and AAU's combined expertise, RKB-Assam is set to be a single point access for information and learning on rice production, with a step-by-step guide for all production stages (pre-planting to post production management); information on rice varieties; decision tools, and agronomy

guides.

Dr. Nafees Meah, Regional Representative for IRRI-South Asia added that "In the North East Region (NER) of India, rice occupies nearly 85% of cropped area, and thus reliance on rice crop for boosting welfare of farmers in Assam is high. IRRI is glad that the collaborative efforts of partners in APART project, by way of the Rice Knowledge Bank- Assam portal will provide updated knowledge on production techniques, technologies and agronomy, and empower farmers with better decision-making, so that yield gaps are reduced, leading to increase in farmer incomes and improved sustainability".

### SERICULTURE DIRECTORATE DISTRIBUTES FUND TO BENEFICIARIES UNDER APART

Shri Ranjit Dutta, Hon'ble Minister for Handloom Textiles & Sericulture, Govt of Assam, distributed funds for construction of eri rearing house to the selected beneficiaries under the World Bank financed Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART).

Under the scheme, Directorate of Sericulture will fund a total of 800 number of eri rearing houses in the selected project districts, for better rearing and production of eri silk in the state. Out of the total project target, 270 beneficiaries have been selected for the year 2018-19.

The cost of the eri rearing house is Rs 1 lakh out of which 80% or Rs 80000 is being funded under APART. The balance Rs 20000 will come in as beneficiary contribution as their share. For the benefit of the beneficiaries, an MoU has been signed between Department of Sericulture and Canara Bank to provide loan upto Rs 15,000 to the farmers to fund the beneficiary contribution. The loan, if availed has to be repaid back in 7 years duration. An interest subvention scheme is also under consideration for payment of the loan interest by the Department. Shri Ranjit Dutta, addressing the gathering of farmers, said that they should make the best use of the eri rearing scheme and also other schemes introduced by the Government, and encouraged them to move towards better production practices. He directed the officials for proper implementation and coverage

of beneficiaries from all eri and muga producing areas of the State. Shri Dutta welcomed the initiative of Canara Bank, to provide financial assistance to the farmers under the ambit of APART.

Shri Rajesh Prasad, IAS, Agriculture Production Commissioner & Chairman, ARIAS Society in his brief speech encouraged the beneficiaries to utilise the amount at the earliest and start immediate construction of the eri rearing houses, so that they get the maximum benefit from the scheme.

Shri Vinod Seshan, IAS, State Project Director, ARIAS Society, briefed the scope and deliverables of APART over the project period of 7 years. He also informed about the other aspects of the project which will cover silk viability studies, support for muga farmers, training and capacity building of



*Hon'ble Minister distributing the sanction orders, under APART Project, to the beneficiaries*

both farmers and Departmental staff etc.

Shri Anjan Kumar Sarma, Commissioner & Secretary, Department of Handloom, Textiles & Sericulture also encouraged the farmers to avail this opportunity with full dedication and contact the Department officials for any

kind of help and support they required.

The programme was attended by farmers from Kamrup district, officials from Canara Bank, Sericulture Department and ARIAS Society

## TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED

### WORKSHOP ON PROCUREMENT

A workshop on procurement was organized by ARIAS Society to orient APART officials, implementing agencies on the World Bank procurement guidelines. The workshop discussed the key principles of World Bank Procurement norms, Procurement Methods & Review Thresholds applicable for APART, with special focus on RFQ (Request for Quotation) Method of procurement for Goods, Works & Non-Consulting Services, Post-Procurement Review, Case studies followed by group discussion and question and answer session. The participants were also given practical training sessions on Systematic Tracking of Exchanges In Procurement (STEP) during the workshop.

### WORKSHOP ON FINANCIAL INCLUSION

A large section of the clients is voluntarily excluded from formal financial services due to poor knowledge of the products of the Banks and the capacity to access and use them. The project would therefore facilitate to bring them into the formal financial services network through financial education and counseling. The Financial Education and Counseling will be tailored to the needs of the target rural Agricultural households and specifically around the primary value chain around which they are organized. The target clients would be the members of common interest groups promoted by the project. Information on credit reporting and guidance on building a good credit history will be part of financial education. The Financial Counseling will be further tailored to the financial status of the individual households based on information on the household's assets, liabilities, income & expenditure, coping mechanism used to meet their vulnerabilities. The Financial Education and Counseling would be tailored to build up awareness of different financial products being offered by different Banks and FIs so to reduce mis-spelling, ensure good delivery as per the norms laid by the Banks and FIs. The raised awareness would serve as feedback loop to ensure effective delivery of Banking Services.

Towards achieving the objectives a Start up Workshop was conducted on the date 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019 on Financial Services Sector for Financial Education and Counseling "Streamlining KCC and PMFBY" in collaboration with OPIU, Agriculture for ATMA officials. Officials from NABARD, Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd, Bajaj Alliance Co Ltd took part during the workshop. An Agency will be on board to take forward this sector.

APART under Component C3 is envisioned to facilitate access to and responsible use of Finance.

This sub-component focuses on three basic activities to facilitate access to and responsible use of Financial Services for the Project Beneficiaries, there by better manage their cash flows, make productivity enhancing investments and better manage the business and non-business risks they face.

Beneficiaries would include Producers, Producer Organizations and other enterprises in the value chain supported by the project. Overall this sub-component aims to facilitate access to a broad set of Financial Services and their responsible use by the target group (Farmers, Agri-business entrepreneurs, Enterprises, Aggregators and District level Co-Operatives).



*Participants during the workshop*

## WORKSHOP ON RELEVANCE OF COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D) IN DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS

A workshop on 'Relevance of Communication for Development (C4D) in developmental projects, organized by ARIAS Society was held on 13th February 2019, with an aim to enable the implementing departments and APART team to understand the importance of communication for development (C4D) while implementing different project activities and also facilitate better dissemination of information, knowledge, learnings and also documentation of success stories and best practices.

The workshop was attended by Nodal officers of OPIUs/ GROs cum Nodal point for Social safeguard of OPIUs and PCU team.

## OTHERS

- Three scientists from AAU and two officers from the Directorate of Agriculture (including one from ATMA) visited the IRRI HQ in Manila, during 6-15 Jan. 2019 for training cum exposure tour.
- Training of Trainers (ToT) on Quality seed production, Nursery Management, Mechanical Transplanting of Rice and Solar Bubble drier was organized for 30 officials of Directorate of Agriculture including ATMAs at Institute of Management and Agricultural Extension (IMAGE), Bhubaneswar during 10-14 February, 2019

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