



SAARC AGRINEWS



Afghanistan



Bangladesh



Bhutan



India



Maldives



Nepal



Pakistan



Sri Lanka

April-June 2025

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The Sixtieth Session of the Programming Committee (PC) was held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 28-29 April 2025, and National Focal Points of SAARC Member States, SAARC Regional Centres and SAARC Specialized Bodies participated in this meeting. Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Director, SAC and Dr. Md. Yunus Ali, Senior Program Specialist (Livestock) joined the meeting and presented the SAC activities. Director SAC presented the Governing Board Report of SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) for 2024 highlighted programs, implementation status report of 2024, and proposed programs and budget for the year 2025.



Meeting on Agro-Processing Project Formulation for SAARC Member States and Follow-Up Visit at RDA

On 10th April 2025, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), and Dr. Md. Yunus Ali, Senior Programme Specialist (Livestock) & Regional Project Coordinator of the Livelihood Enhancement Project, visited the Rural Development Academy (RDA) in Bogura, Bangladesh.

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They hold a meeting with the Director General of RDA to explore opportunities for formulating a regional project focusing on agro-processing, aiming to benefit the SAARC Member States through value addition and enhanced livelihoods.

As part of the visit, SAC team also conducted a follow-up inspection of activities under the SDF-funded Livelihood Enhancement Project implemented at RDA. They observed RDA's ongoing initiatives in producing and marketing value-added products such as Jackfruit and Mango chips, which are being successfully sold at local market.



SAARC and ACDI/VOCA Collaborate for Workshop on Livestock GHG Mitigation in South Asia

A meeting was held between the Director- SAARC Agriculture Centre and Vice President of MERL, ACDI/VOCA on April 13, 2025, at the SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka. The meeting objective was to share the concept note on the SAARC Regional workshop on “Development of Inventory for Livestock Origin Greenhouse Gases and its Mitigation by Appropriate Feeding Strategy in South Asia” with the dignitaries for implementation of the program smoothly. The workshop is supposed to be held in collaboration with the ACDI -VOCA, Bangladesh Climate Smart Livestock Activity in September 2025, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Later on some books published by SAC were handed over to Dr. Emmanuel Dormon, Managing Director, ACDI-VOCA and Dr. Bidyuth Kumar Mahalder, Chief of Party, ACDI-VOCA, Bangladesh Climate Smart Livestock Project. Dr. Md. Younus Ali (SPS livestock), SAC officials and senior officials of the ACDI-VOCA were present in meeting.



A meeting was held between the CABI and SAARC Agriculture Centre

A meeting was held between the CABI and SAARC Agriculture Centre on 19th April, 2025 at the SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka with the aim to discuss the scope of collaboration for sustainable agricultural development in the SAARC Member States. Later on a book on women's empowerment for agriculture development in South Asia: enabling policies was handed over to CABI UK office. CABI Pakistan and CABI Bangladesh and SAC officials were also present in meeting.

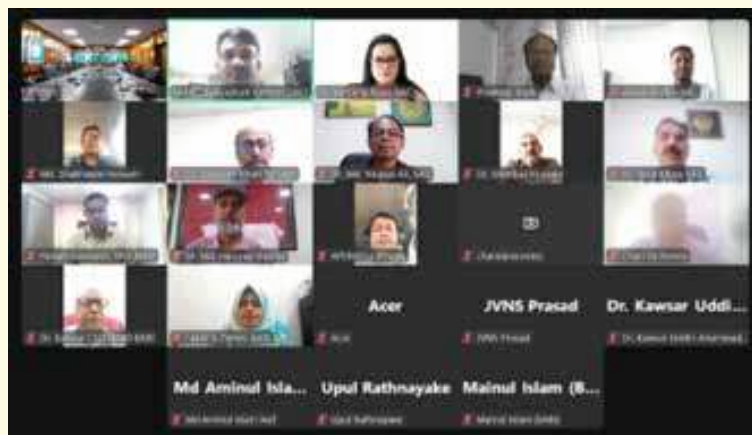


Visit of Women led organic agriculture and poultry farming and Community Service Provider activities at WHH in Sirajganj district of Bangladesh

A team of CABI and Dr. Md Yunus Ali, Senior Programme Specialist (Livestock), SAC visited the activities (Women led organic agriculture and poultry farming, Community Service Provider etc.) under the project of Rural Advisory Services for Women Empowerment. The program was jointly organized by the Welthungerhilfe, FIVDB and Uttaran in Sirajgonj district of Bangladesh on 25th April 2025.



Inventory of Potential CSA Technologies, Success Stories & Capacity Building Meeting with Regional Collaborators of C-SUCSeS Project



A meeting on “Inventory of Potential CSA Technologies, Success Stories & Capacity Building” under the C-SUCSeS Project was held on 3rd June 2025, 28 participants attended by virtually from six SAARC countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Director of SAC, inaugurated the session, emphasizing the importance of shared learning for policy and institutional adoption of CSA technologies. Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, SPA (NRM) and Regional Program Coordinator, urged member countries to present 2–3 key success stories during the upcoming Results Presentation.

National Focal Points and scientists shared impactful outcomes from participatory research and stressed the need for continued training and collaboration. The participants reiterated the commitment to scaling climate-smart practices across the region. The meeting concluded with a note of thanks from the Director of SAC, emphasising on the need of cross-country collaboration, learning and timely progress toward project completion.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Participatory Research Conducted under C-SUCSeS Project in Sri Lanka

A team from SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), comprises of Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, Dr. Rumana Azad, and Md. Abdul Goffar, visited Sri Lanka from 24–25 June 2025 to monitor participatory research under the C-SUCSeS project.

On 24 June, the team visited the Plant Genetic Resources Centre (PGRC) in Gannoruwa, Peradeniya, observing diverse germplasm collections vital for climate-resilient agriculture. The PGRC’s GenBank plays a crucial role in providing breeding materials for future variety development in Sri Lanka and the region.



On 25th June, accompanied by Mr. R. A. C. J. Perera of the Natural Resources Management Centre, SAC team visited Climate Smart Farmer Training School (CSFTS) and surrounding participatory research sites in Thirappane, Anuradhapura. The visit observed increased women's participation, improved crop productivity through solar-powered micro irrigation, and successful adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies. It was observed that despite positive outcomes, challenges such as high initial costs, limited technical knowledge, and institutional support remained continued. Scaling up training, demonstrations, and incentives were recommended to accelerate CSA adoption.



Results Presentation Meeting and Way Forward of C-SUCSeS Project held at Colombo, Sri Lanka

Two days 'Results Presentation Meeting and Way Forward' was held on 27-28 June 2025 at Hotel Ramada, Colombo, Sri Lanka in IFAD and SDF funded project on "Consortium for Scaling up Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia". The meeting was attended by Mr. Abdulkarim Sma, Lead Economist IFAD, Ms. Irosha Cooray, Officer Incharge (OIC) SDF, Dr. Shahidur Rashid, Director IFPRI, Md. Dr. Harunur Rashid, Director SAC, Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, RPC, C-SUCSeS project team and scientists of National Agriculture Research and Extension system (NARES) of SAARC member countries (MCs)



Abdulkarim Sma, Ms. Irosha Cooray, Dr. Shahidur Rashid were Special Guests. The Chief Guest elaborated the investment plan, Sri Lankan Government is pursuing to develop agriculture sector of the country and emphasized on learning from each other to develop collective wisdom against climate change impacts.

The technical session of day 1 (27th June 2025) started with country presentation by NPP sharing success stories, lessons learnt and need for sustainability of the project. The technical session on second day (28th June), resource persons from IFPRI talked about the importance of including fisheries and crop sectors in phase-II, the scalability, and dissemination of the project results.

The two days meeting started with traditional candle lighting followed by welcome address by Director SAC. Mr. D.P. Wickramasinghe, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation, Government of Sri Lanka was the Chief Guest at the inaugural session, while Mr. Abdulkarim Sma, Ms. Irosha Cooray, Dr. Shahidur Rashid were Special Guests. The Chief Guest elaborated the investment plan, Sri Lankan Government is pursuing to develop agriculture sector of the country and emphasized on learning from each other to develop collective wisdom against climate change impacts.

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working with multiple partners, and the need for “cross learning” as climate change do not care for boundaries and countries. Ms. Irosha Cooray, SDF stressed on the need to look whether the proposed phase-II of the C-SUCSeS project is aligned with the institutional mandate, goals and the thematic priorities. She added that though we are already there, but we need to look again at the strategic alignment of the phase-II, relevancy and justification etc. Therefore, we need to be more focus and specific, what are justifications, and what are the problems which we are going to address. As we are going with several countries, we need to be more specific. We need to be more specific and focus on project methodologies and project design etc. Mr. Tanvir Ahmad Torophder, Director ARD, SAARC Secretariat, Nepal stressed upon the need for the second phase of the project, he called upon inhouse capability to ensure intime and qualitive assurance in deliver abilities of the project. Mr. Abdulkarim Sma. IFAD talked about developing a scaling up strategy for the phase-II of the C-SUCSeS project. He added that we need to consider specific technologies for example to pick 1-2 CSA technologies say AWD and develop ‘pathway’ how far we can scale up this technology from baseline point look for the investment plan and policy support from respective governments to upscale such technologies. The two days meeting ended by vote of thanks remarks by Director SAC Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid.

SAC Officials Attend Editorial Workshop to Enhance Research Publishing Standard

Two officials from SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)—Mr. Md. Abul Bashar, Senior Program Officer (Publication), and Mr. Md. Aminul Islam Asif, IT Manager (Software)—participated in a workshop titled “Strengthening Editorial Policies and Workflows” on 23rd June 2025 at the National Science and Technology Complex, Dhaka.

The workshop was organized by the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) with support from Ubiquity Press (UK) and NMST, the event focused on improving editorial practices, peer review, and journal management—especially for BanglaJOL-hosted publications. Presided over by Emeritus Professor Dr. A.K. Azad Chowdhury, the workshop aimed to boost the visibility and credibility of Bangladeshi research. Mr. Bashar remarked, “It was a privilege to represent SAC in this vital initiative for strengthening research publishing.”



Abul Bashar Appointed as Senior Program Officer (Publication) at SAC

Md. Abul Bashar, a seasoned agriculturist, environmentalist, and communication strategist, joined the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) as Senior Program Officer (Publication) on May 18, 2025. His appointment marks a significant step in strengthening SAC's regional knowledge dissemination and research outreach.

Prior to this, Mr. Bashar served as Senior Monitoring Officer at BARC's PARTNER Program and was Project Director of Mission Green Bangladesh—an award-winning platform recognized for its contributions to afforestation and climate resilience. In addition to his technical expertise, Md. Abul Bashar has made a notable mark in the field of agricultural journalism. He has contributed in-depth reporting national media, including Kaler Kantho, and has consistently amplified the voices of farmers, researchers, and rural communities. A graduate of BAU, with degrees in Agricultural Engineering and Environmental Science, Bashar also brings extensive experience in agricultural journalism and has been recognized with multiple national awards for his impactful communication work. His appointment will enhance regional knowledge dissemination, research visibility, and agricultural communication of SAC across the South Asia.



Md. Abdul Goffar Joy Appointed as Finance Officer for the C-SUCSeS

Md. Abdul Goffar joined the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh, as a Finance Officer for the Consortium for Scaling-Up Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia (C-SUCSeS) Project in April 2025. Abdul Goffar earned both his BBA and MBA in Finance from the esteemed Faculty of Business Studies, University of Dhaka, where he developed a strong foundation in financial theory and strategic management. Before his tenure at the SAARC Agriculture Centre, Mr. Joy played a key role in a globally oriented start-up, where he was entrusted with steering the financial operations, demonstrating his capacity to navigate complex fiscal landscapes within dynamic, innovation-driven environments. Additionally, he gained regulatory exposure through his part-time engagement with the Enforcement Department of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission. His proactive commitment to professional growth is reflected in his participation in numerous high-impact training and career development initiatives, including serving as a financial planner at IDLC and competing in prestigious platforms such as the Young Bangla Idea Competition. These experiences collectively underscore his versatility, strategic insight, and forward-thinking approach within the finance domain.

