

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ON SUSTAINABILITY OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PLATFORM FOR SOUTH ASIA (AEPSA): 6-7 JUNE, 25, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

BACKGROUND

The agricultural extension services, both public and private, do play important role in technology delivery and knowledge dissemination to the farmers. Also, the production systems' performance in agricultural and allied sectors directly depends on the efficiency of extension services. In fact, the agricultural extension models evolved over a period of time in South Asian countries broadly include: (i) research institutions demonstrating the technologies in their area of jurisdiction providing informed knowledge and technical backstopping, (ii) development departments carrying innovations forward through field extension agents, (iii) private sector interventions playing an important role in augmenting extension services, (iv) farmers, farmer organizations and NGOs developing and adopting their innovative extension techniques and (v) media -print, electronic, social and internet platforms playing their significant role in strengthening extension services.

Series of international consultations had taken place in the recent past in Nepal (2018), Sri Lanka (2019), India (2022) and Bangladesh (2023) for better understanding and reforming extension services in the region. In view of this, in a meeting held in New Delhi on 8 March, 2024, senior representatives from South Asian countries and Michigan State University (MSU), resolved to establish a neutral Agricultural Extension Platform for South Asia (AEPSA) for sharing experiences, information on innovative extension approaches and cross learning through successful models and success stories around agricultural production systems (proceedings attached).

Since then, AEPSA has been made operational as a program through the initiative of the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) and Michigan State University (USA). A number of preparatory activities have taken place such as: identification of the country resource persons, constituting an Advisory Committee, development of the country extension profiles, printing of brochure reflecting the aims, objectives, functional modalities and a core team in place laid a strong foundation to move forward (please see a copy of brochure attached).

In order to have an in-depth discussion on progress already made, future activities, its ownership and sustainability of AEPSA, a meeting is proposed to be organized at Hotel Bhadgaon, Barahasthan, Bhaktapur, Kathmandu, Nepal on 6-7 June, 2025. About 25-30 key participants, representing different stakeholder groups and senior government officials from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan are likely to attend.

On behalf of the organizers, we are pleased to invite you to kindly make it convenient to participate in this important meeting and act as **Co-Chair Session II** as per the program. Being a distinguished leader and the lead person for agricultural extension in Bangladesh, your participation is considered critical for strengthening and sustainability of this initiative. The Michigan State University has agreed to meet your expenses towards international travel and accommodation. A copy of tentative program is attached for your kind perusal and information.

You are requested to kindly confirm your participation preferably by **21 April, 2025**. On hearing from you, a formal letter of support by Michigan State University, USA will be mailed to you. You are also requested to provide your passport details (first and last page) and mobile number to us at your earliest please. Please send your confirmation to Ms Simmi Dogra (taasiari@gmail.com) with cc. to Dr VV Sadamate (sadamatevv@gmail.com) and Dr Yogendra Karki (ykkarkee@gmail.com).

Looking forward to seeing you at Kathmandu.