Based on the recommendations of an APAARI organized *Inter-regional Workshop on Advocacy and Collaboration for ICT/ICM in ARD* in July 2006, in which representatives of all RFs, GFAR, FAO and other global agricultural information systems participated, APAARI published a collection of success stories and best practices of ICT and ICM in ARD as an advocacy tool. The publication is entitled “Selected Success Stories on Agricultural Information Systems” and available at APAARI web site ([www.apaari.org](http://www.apaari.org)).

This was followed by another advocacy related activity, i.e., a *Sensitization and Awareness Building Workshop on ICT/ICM in ARD for the Leaders and Senior Managers* of member NARS. APAARI in collaboration with GFAR-FAO organized the workshop on 30th August 2007 at PCAARD, Philippines. There were 22 NARS Leaders and Senior Managers,
representing 10 countries and 3 sub-regions of Asia-Pacific. The workshop theme was agreed in several ICT/ICM consultations and inter-regional meetings organized by APAARI and GFAR in recent years.

NARS leaders and senior managers of many developing countries of the region need to develop and advocate appropriate policies to enable and promote effective use of new information and communication technologies to improve communication among various stakeholders, specially researchers and farmers. It is also observed that many NARS have initiated comprehensive ICT/ICM projects and programs in their organizations using state-of-the-art information technology.

The workshop provided a good opportunity to discuss progress of various national ICT/ICM projects and share development experiences of national agricultural information systems (NAIS). APAARI reported the progress of various activities of its Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System, a regional knowledge sharing platform available through APAARI web site (www.apaari.org). GFAR presented new EGFAR initiatives and highlighted the need for stronger NAIS and regional knowledge sharing mechanisms such as APARIS. At the end of the workshop, participants were unanimous in recognizing the important role that ICT plays in linking researchers, farmers and markets. The major recommendations of the workshop included:

1. APARIS should continue to focus its activities on advocacy, capacity building and regional knowledge sharing through greater involvement of various NAIS of the region.
2. To further strengthen linkages between APARIS and NAIS, NARS need to officially designate their ICT/ICM related units or departments as National Information Nodal Points (NINPs).
3. New web technologies and tools should be adopted for cost effective updating of agricultural research information systems and regional information exchange.
4. Information resources available through APARIS and NAIS need to be popularized/promoted among various stakeholders.
5. APARIS steering committee should play a greater role in developing its work plan and monitoring its activities as well as in resource mobilization through developed NARS and international donors.
6. There should be an objective feedback mechanism to evaluate the regional and national agricultural research information systems for their continuous development.

To implement some of the above recommendations, APARIS team plans to undertake a major revision of APAARI web site (www.apaari.org) using newly available web technologies for a better content management system and linkages to other ARD web sites. The revised web site will also make it easier to directly upload information from decentralized input sources such as NINPs, spread across the Asia-Pacific Region and also globally. During the upcoming APAARI general assembly meeting in October 2007, the APARIS steering committee will be reformed in consultation with all APAARI members and its meeting will be organized to finalize APARIS work plan for 2008.