

REPORT

REGIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP
'IMPLEMENTATION OF GOOD AGRICULTURE PRACTICES IN
SAARC COUNTRIES'

22-24 September, 2014

Dhaka, Bangladesh



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

*Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,
Bangkok, 2014*

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO.

© FAO 2014

FAO encourages the use, reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product. Except where otherwise indicated, material may be copied, downloaded and printed for private study, research and teaching purposes, or for use in non-commercial products or services, provided that appropriate acknowledgement of FAO as the source and copyright holder is given and that FAO's endorsement of users' views, products or services is not implied in any way.

FAO information products are available on the FAO website (www.fao.org/publications).

Foreword

Food safety has gained increasing importance over the years due to its impact on health of consumers and economic aspects of trade. Production of safe food is essential for protecting consumers from the hazards of food borne illnesses. Food safety is not only an integral part of food security but also contributes towards increasing competitiveness in export markets.

Hazards in food may occur at different stages of the food chain starting from primary production extending to secondary, tertiary processing, storage and distribution, and packaging with issues such as residue contamination, microbial contaminants, heavy metals and others. These issues are common across the global - more so in the SAARC region.

The challenges currently being faced in the SAARC region are further compounded by the absence of standards for good practices in the farming sector (SAARC, 2009). Most of the food safety standards are focussed towards end products, be it the mandatory technical standards or voluntary standards. Implementing Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) during on-farm production and post-production processes resulting in safe agriculture products is of immense importance for assuring a safe food supply. It therefore becomes important to address food safety right from the farm which is the initiation of food production.

Good Agriculture Practices (GAP), as defined by FAO, are a “Collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agriculture products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability”.

Many importing countries as well as domestic buyers, especially organized retail, are requiring producers to implement GAP as a pre-requisite for procurement to ensure quality and safety of their produce. In addition, implementing GAP also helps promote sustainable agriculture and contributes in meeting national and international environmental and social development objectives. It has been documented that implementation of GAP encourages promotion of optimum use of resources such as pesticides, fertilizers, and water, and eco-friendly agriculture. Its social dimension would be to protect the agriculture workers’ health from improper use of chemicals and pesticides, unsuitable working conditions and poor personal hygiene practices. It is a particularly opportune time to promote GAP when second generation of reforms in agriculture in the region is focussed on both by the governments and the agro-processing industry of the countries. A common GAP standard in the SAARC Region will also help promote regional trade.

In SAARC, many of the countries have not adopted GAP and do not even have an institutional infrastructure for supporting the same in terms of standards as well as their implementation, certification and accreditation. Most of the food safety standards in the region are focussed on end products. It is therefore important to support the countries of the Region in development of standards on GAP as well as a certification and accreditation mechanisms to enable the implementation and verification of GAP.

With the above background, FAO, on request of some countries of SAARC, is implementing a regional project on “Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Implementation and Certification in countries of SAARC” under which it proposed to develop a common standard for the horticulture sector as a basis for GAP in the region along with criteria for

certification based on international requirements. The next step will be to support some pilot countries to internalize and adopt the SAARC GAP Scheme through an internal multi-stakeholder consultation. This will ensure development of National Scheme based on international processes, guarantee reliable certification and strengthen quality infrastructure for GAP in the SAARC countries. However, the standard developed, may be used by farmers as a standalone activity to implement good agriculture practices in their farms.

The countries selected for the pilots are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal. The pilots will basically comprise identification of Scheme Owner in each of the pilot country; and facilitating the other processes which would be finalized in the National Workshop in each pilot country. These processes will include adoption/adaptation of the Scheme documents in these countries, strengthening their certification and accreditation infrastructure for SAARC GAP, structured trainings and awareness programmes for the Scheme Owner, certification and accreditation personnel as well as train the trainers (TOTs) programmes, who will be trained to impart further trainings and counselling to farmers/ farmer groups as decided by these countries. The results of the pilots will then be shared in a final regional workshop inviting all eight SAARC countries.

The aim of this inception regional workshop was to finalise the Scheme comprising of standards and certification mechanism and work out an action plan for implementation in the identified pilot countries.

Contents

Page

Foreword	iv
Acronym	vii
I Executive Summary	1
II Introduction	3
III Main Proceedings	6
1. Opening Session	6
2. Technical Session	11
3. Country Presentations	15
4. Working Group Country Action Plan	33
5. Concluding Session	33
6. Annexes	35
Annex 1 List of Participants	35
Annex 2 Programme	38
Annex 3 WELCOME ADDRESS by ADG FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific	40
Annex 4 Speech of Secretary	43
Annex 5 Documentation Needed under the SAARC GAP Scheme	44
Annex 6 Action Plans by countries	48

Acronyms

AB- Accreditation body
ASEAN – Association of South East Asian Nations
AFACI-GAP – AFC Consultants International
AQD - Animal Quarantine Department
AFSI - Asian Food and Agriculture Corporation Initiative
BRC - British Retail Consortium
BAFRA - Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority
CAB- Conformity assessment bodies
CAC: Codex Alimentarius Commission
CB – Certification Body
DAMC – Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan
DFTQC: Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (Nepal)
DoA – Department of Agriculture
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDA-Food and drugs Authority
EPA- Environmental Protection Agency
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation
FSMS: Food Safety Management System
FSQ: Food Safety and Quality
FSSA: Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (India)
FSSAI - Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
GAP – Good Agriculture Practice
GATT- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP – Gross Domestic Produce
GHP - Good Hygiene Practices
GM - Genetically Modified
GMP- Good Manufacturing Practice
GoM – Government of Maldives
GS – Governing Structure
DPP – Department of Plant Protection
IFAD – International Fund for Agriculture Development
IFS – International Food Standard
IPM- Integrated Pest Management
IPPC - International Plant Protection Convention)
ISO – International organisation for standardisation
Ha – Hectare
HACCP - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
M ha – Million hectare
MT – Metric ton
NABCB – National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies
NSB – National Standards Bodies
NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

NRC- National Research Centres
NSOP – National Standard for Organic Production
PARC -Pakistan Agricultural Research Council
POP- Package of Practices
PGR- Plant growth regulator
QCI – Quality Council of India
Q & A – Question and Answer (Session)
RAP - FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
SAARC – South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation
SAC – SAARC Agriculture Centre
SLAB – Sri Lankan Accreditation Board
SLSI – Sri Lankan Standards Institution
SO – Scheme Owner
SOP – Standard Operating Procedure
WTO- World trade organization

I Executive summary

The three-day Regional Consultation Workshop on Implementation of Good Agriculture Practices in the SAARC countries brought together 14 representatives from 7 SAARC member countries and representatives from the SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 22-24 September 2014 and was organized by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC).

The opening session commenced with the welcome address of Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia which was delivered on his behalf by Mr. Mike Robson, Country Representative of FAOR, Bangladesh. Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) then addressed the participants. This was followed by a brief description of the project by Ms. Shashi Sareen, FAO RAP. The technical sessions covered the SAARC GAP Standard, different modules of the Standard, the options for implementing GAP, guidance for establishing a Scheme Owner and Governing Structure, Certification Process, Requirements for Certification Bodies and Rules for use of Certification Mark. In addition, there were country presentations on status of GAP and quality infrastructure by each of the participating country from SAARC.

For the development of a regional SAARC GAP document, participants deliberated on various modules in SAARC GAP standard such as food safety, environmental management, workers health and safety, produce quality and the general requirements that are required in order to facilitate the implementation of GAP by farmers in case they wish to form a group.



It was agreed by the group that the SAARC GAP scheme as presented was broadly in order and various Scheme documents including the GAP Standard would be modified and updated based on the discussions in the Workshop. The group recognised that tackling issues related to the

implementation of GAP in their region would be possible and agreed that a robust quality infrastructure with active government support could ensure that the project is a success. One of the important achievements of the Workshop was that each of the participating country imbibed the concept of the SAARC GAP in entirety which is reflected in the country action plan presentations made by each country representative at the end of the Workshop.

Based on the discussions, the participants recommended the following actions that they believed would greatly benefit their countries:

- i) Presenting a letter to individual country about the identification of a Scheme Owner and formation of a governing structure for internalising the scheme
- ii) Harmonisation of the training modules across the SAARC region.
- iii) Organising a regional training for all SAARC member countries apart from the pilot countries who had volunteered to internalise the Scheme.
- iv) Each country also desired that FAO considers support in implementing the Country Action Plan besides in 4 pilots countries viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal

Further, the participants committed to present their country action plan to their respective ministries/departments and work to adhere to the timelines as mentioned in the country action plan.

II INTRODUCTION:

1. Background

SAARC region comprises of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In most of the economies, agriculture sector is broadly classified as low income or low middle income category in global parlance. The SAARC Agriculture Vision 2020 document has reported that a majority of population in the region lives in rural areas and depends upon agriculture for livelihood and sustenance.

The World Bank has reported that in the SAARC countries, agriculture employs about 60% of the labour force and contributes 22% of the regional GDP (World Bank, 2011). The Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimates that the largest concentration of the world's poor, around 40%, lives in South Asia (Srinivasan, 2012), while World Bank figures show that 76% of them live in the rural areas, contributing at least 65% of the agricultural labour force (World Bank, 2011).

The principal reason for high incidence of poverty in the region is the low per capita income and inequitable distribution of income. Among the contributing factors in these agrarian based economies is the lack of requisite know-how for institutionalizing hygiene and food safety mechanisms in agriculture (SAARC, 2004), which are critical pre-requisites to link agriculture with enhancement of trade in the region.

Today, there is increasing concerns among the consumers and retailers about hygiene and food safety (Vento E, 2009). Noting this, the SAARC Agricultural Vision 2020 has felt the need for urgent intervention to comply with the international requirements to augment trade (SAARC, 2004) within the farm to fork scenario. SAARC has therefore formulated its own SAARC Development Goals (SDG) that focus on livelihoods, health, education, and the environment (SAARC, 2007). Thus the issue of enhancing quality and food safety in agriculture, for eradicating poverty and hunger, is the first Millennium Development Goal MDG of the SDG.

The challenges currently being faced by SAARC region include the absence of standards for good practices in the farming sector (SAARC, 2009). Most of the food safety standards are focussed towards end products, be it the mandatory technical standards or voluntary standards. SAARC nations and other stakeholders' viz., the retailers and the buyers recognize that if farmers in the region opt for hygiene and food safety in their production system through Good Agriculture Practices (GAP), they will enjoy access to guaranteed new markets. The reliable quality inputs will increase farm value and increase farmer's skill in farming operations. GAP for the region needs to be identified and standards formulated by drawing references from requirements already existing under the international regulatory frameworks such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), Codex Alimentarius Commission, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

Good Agriculture Practices as per FAO comprise of sequence of activities and choices in the production process, soil; water; crop and fodder production; crop protection with IPM principles, animal feed and livestock production, animal health and welfare, harvest and on-farm processing and storage, energy and waste management, human welfare, health and safety and wildlife and

landscape in some cases, water management and irrigation, harvest methods, livestock rations and feeding systems, on-farm storage methods, etc. These are often recommendatory in nature that provide a 'basket of choices' that pertains specifically to the agro-ecosystem that a farmer operates (FAO, 2004).

It has been widely reported that GAP adoption along with certification offers three primary benefits to the farmers: (1) Optimization of resources; (2) Reduction of waste and stress situations; and (3) Improved market access opportunities. It has been further observed that the GAP benefits the small holders who could form small groups and attain the objectives of demonstrating food safety and hygiene in agriculture (FSSAI, year unknown). Many retailers and food services are now increasingly demanding GAP certified material as a prerequisite for procurement.

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific felt that designing of a Regional GAP for horticultural produce for the SAARC region – having a GAP Standard complete with certification and accreditation framework - will help in implementation and internalisation of GAP in SAARC countries. The GAP standard by itself is a complete document that may be used for implementing good agriculture practices. The aim is to provide SAARC countries with a framework that is agreed by all stakeholders through regional consultation so that a model Scheme complete with the certification and accreditation frameworks is available which may either be adopted as it is or adapted by respective SAARC member countries to suit their local needs. The steps involve agreement on the draft scheme, agreeing on an action plan and implementing of the GAP Scheme.

The approach proposed ensures development of National Schemes based on international processes, guarantee reliable certification and strengthen quality infrastructure for GAP in the SAARC countries. This in due course will result in recognition of their certification regionally as well as internationally. This national initiative will also support farmers and related domestic trade which will eventually assist them in meeting their domestic regulations and consumers requirements. In case of requests by other countries, some specific activities may be considered by FAO under this project such as specific trainings or support in documentation development.

2. Objective of the Workshops

The objectives of the Workshop were to present the model Scheme to the participating SAARC countries and to develop a country action plan for the adoption/adaptation for implementation of the GAP in each of the identified country. Specifically the objectives were to:

- (i) to develop an understanding of the various components of SAARC GAP scheme;
- (ii) review of the Scheme by seeking suggestions/inputs on various clauses of the SAARC GAP Standard and other Sections of Scheme and finalize the draft Scheme
- (iii) to work out the schedule of implementation of SAARC GAP Scheme in form of 'Country Action Plan'

3. Workshop Outputs

The output of the Regional Consultation Workshop on ‘Implementation of Good Agriculture Practices in SAARC Countries: SAARC GAP Scheme’ are:

- i) Finalized model SAARC GAP Scheme
- ii) Draft schedule of implementation for each participating country;
- iii) Identification of Potential Scheme Owner in each country,
- iv) A report of the Workshop including outlining outcomes as well as case studies to be published as a document

4. Participants

The 3-day Workshop involved 20 participants from 7 countries of the SAARC region, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The list of participants and resource persons is given in **Annex 1**.

5. Workshop Structure and Organisation

The Workshop was organized by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka. The first two days focussed on lectures, and case studies. The third day while including a few lectures, gave extensive time to participants to discuss in group sessions and develop ‘Country Action Plan’ for implementing the SAARC GAP. The group sessions for Country Action Plan were followed by presentations by each participating country.

The detailed programme of the Workshop is given in **Annex 2**.

III Main Proceedings

1. Opening Session

Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative, FAO

This session commenced with welcome and opening remarks of Mr. Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative, FAO Regional office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) which was delivered by Mr Mike Robson, FAOR, Bangladesh, on his behalf. He welcomed all participants to this Regional Consultation Workshop. He highlighted that world over production of safe food is becoming increasingly important for protecting the consumers from foodborne diseases. For ensuring safety of food, the focus has now shifted from end product inspection and testing to building safety into the food products following a preventive approach and ensuring that hazards are prevented from entering into the food chain. He informed that hazards such as pesticide residues above permitted levels, microbial contaminants and heavy metals may occur at different stages of the food chain starting right from the primary production. It is therefore absolutely necessary to address food safety from the production at farm level itself which is possible only through the implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). In addition to food safety, GAP also address issues of quality, environment and social aspects. He informed Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), as defined by FAO, are a “collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability”.

It was informed that since the last few years there has been an increasing trend where importing countries as well as domestic buyers especially organized retail, are requiring producers to implement GAP as a pre-requisite for procurement. This was to ensure that the produce is safe and of the desired quality. Some buyers are now even requiring the implementation by producers of measures in relation to environmental sustainability as well as workers’ health and safety. From the farmers’ perspective, this leads to financial benefits such as higher price to opening of newer markets. Implementing GAP also helps promote sustainable agriculture and contributes to meeting national and international environment and social development objectives.

He opined that implementing GAP is important both in the domestic food business as well as for increasing competitiveness in export markets. He mentioned FAO has already carried out significant work in the area of GAP and has supported the ASEAN countries both through development of a Training Manual on Implementing ASEANGAP in the fruit and vegetable sector, its certification and accreditation and conduct of training programmes. He acknowledged agriculture is the mainstay that provides the basic strength to many of the countries in SAARC. However, he admitted there have not been significant concerted efforts in addressing issues of on-farm food safety and hygiene. This according to him was specifically in relation to both domestic and regional markets. He informed of some isolated activities where the focus was on for certain export markets especially of the developed countries. Taking note of the increasing concern among consumers and retailers about hygiene and food safety, the SAARC Agricultural Vision 2020 has felt the need for urgent interventions to comply with these international requirements to augment trade within the farm to fork scenario.

He mentioned that in SAARC region, many of the countries have still to adopt GAP. He accepted that some of the countries do not even have an institutional infrastructure for supporting the same. He informed that while most of the food safety standards are focussed towards end products there has been no concerted efforts in development of standards on GAP to make it a sustainable activity. He stated the only way to promote GAP is to create the necessary quality infrastructure which has the ability to offer a sustainable and cost effective certification mechanism.

He informed that with this in the background, FAO, on request of some countries of SAARC, is implementing this regional project under which it proposes to develop a common Standard on GAP for the SAARC countries in the horticulture sector along with a Scheme for certification. This SAARC GAP Scheme is being developed as a Regional Scheme which can then be further adopted as such or adapted by countries to suit their needs.

He further informed that this Workshop will focus on finalising the norms or requirements of the draft Standard as well as the criteria and systems of certification which can then be applied in countries of SAARC with or without modifications. He stated the Scheme will be implemented in four countries as pilots and the country case studies will then be shared in a final regional workshop involving all eight SAARC countries.

Mr. Konuma's address concluded by expressing his appreciation to the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Bangladesh for their support for this important workshop, wishing for a successful consultation workshop and fruitful outcomes and deliberations on this important subject.

Mr Mike Robson after reading out Mr. Konuma's address also welcomed the participants on behalf of FAO Bangladesh and hoped that the deliberations in the workshop in the coming 3 days would assist in the furthering the implementation of GAP in the region.

Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Director SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka; Member Director of Bangladesh Research Council and National Project Co-ordinator for this particular FAO Project

Dr. Azad greeted the dignitaries on the dais and welcomed the participants to the meeting. He began by presenting a brief overview about SAARC which was established in 8 December 1985 to address the need of this region having a population now about 1.7 billion. The SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) in Dhaka was established after three years of establishment of SAARC to assist on issues related to Agriculture in the SAARC. He mentioned the SAC is working on research and technology transfer for agriculture extension, policy initiatives, promoting innovative research and technologies, and conducting innovative studies in agriculture. He updated the participants about SAC's recent work on Value Chain in SAARC. He informed that the main focus of SAC was on capacity building and dissemination of information.

He expressed that as a horticulturist, he realised the importance of GAP in agriculture. He stated that while the term 'GAP' has been catching up in last 5-7 years, good practices in agriculture are already disseminated through a network of National Agriculture Research Systems (NARS) present in all countries for many years now. He said that technologies have been already identified and adopted by NARS which now need to be incorporated as a part of this GAP initiative. He informed that while now food safety is a major concern, the SAARC too have a system in 'Food Banks' to analyse various factors affecting food safety. He mentioned that notwithstanding the capabilities of

some countries to generate surplus, the main concern remains whether the food made available is 'safe'. He acknowledged the consumers are now increasingly concerned about safe food which has become a driver for introducing food safety in agriculture.

Dr. Abul Kalam Azad congratulated Ms Shashi Sareen for taking the discussions further into a concrete form and organizing this Workshop to address the emerging issues of food safety in agricultural production. As member Director of HORTEX, Bangladesh, he informed HORTEX is developing a manual on GAP and formulating a policy document on GAP for Bangladesh.

He emphasized the need to finalise a document at the end of the workshop so that the people of our region get 'SAFE' food. He thanked the FAO for this initiative and declared as SAC they would extend all their support to this initiative.

Ms Shashi Sareen, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, RAP of FAO:

Ms. Sareen gave a brief about the implementation of Technical Co-operation Project implemented by RAP-FAO. She spoke about preventive approaches being key to food safety. She explained one needs to identify the hazards in the food system and work towards getting rid of them. GAP is one of the important aspects of such preventative practices and ensures that on-farm practices result in safe produce reaching farm gate. GAP addresses the aspects of food safety, quality, environment, occupational safety and produce quality. GAP implementation not only helps to achieve higher productivity for farmers and food safety for the consumers, it now is a pre-requisite for the buyers to be able to procure agricultural produce verified for its safety and quality. In recent times, importing countries/ buyers have begun to seek assurance of robust preventative measures in production. She explained that since the buyers / domestic super market cannot verify compliance individually, the role of certification comes in. When the process of certification is undertaken by a third party, the role of accreditation which ensures the competency of third party body becomes important, she added.

She mentioned about the neighbouring ASEAN region which was more informed and evolved in addressing the issue of food safety. She agreed to the observations of Dr. Azad of many scattered initiatives in place which now need to be coherent to deliver results in implementation of GAP in the region. She informed that the countries in the region realised the need which resulted in FAO receiving request from some SAARC countries for designing a system for implementation of GAP. She further explained the objectives of supporting the countries to implement a credible GAP system to facilitate regional and global trade. She spoke of the future possibilities of harmonization of GAP in the SAARC region which may be considered by SAC. She explained the current focus of FAO project was to focus on the infrastructure aspect.

She explained the structure of the Scheme which had been developed with support of QCI who had experience in designing such a Scheme. The scheme is developed in 3 parts; Standards for GAP, the structure for implementation in the country and the Certification aspects. It may be noted the GAP standards can be implemented by the producer without necessarily getting certification. However, in case the producer requires to get his farm certified, Part 3 provides information on the same. Part 2 deals with the role of the government in establishing the structure for GAP implementation and certification in the country. In addition, an Annex covers the list of documents required under the

scheme developed. She informed the model Scheme developed by FAO would be discussed and finalised during the Workshop.

The second step was to implement the Scheme in 4 pilot countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal who had expressed their intent of implementing GAP. FAO would support these countries to develop their own system based on the agreed regional scheme. She then identified various steps each pilot country would need to undertake for implementation of GAP. This included identification of Scheme Owner, national workshops for agreeing to the governing structure in their country, the certification body, the implementation either through accreditation or provisionally through an approval system. She stated this would all be a part of the Country Action Plan. She informed of FAO support in strengthening each of the components including the training programme in the identified pilot country. She mentioned a study visit to either India, Thailand or any other country in the region to demonstrate an operational accreditation and certification structure. She also informed that the activities undertaken by the pilot countries would be deliberated at the end of the project period in another regional workshop around Mar 2016.

She stated that the current Regional Workshop was first in the series of collaborative activities of the Project. She added that in countries where it is decided the Department of Agriculture or any such Government Body would want to become the Scheme Owner to operate GAP, an action plan for its operationalization will be formalised.

She concluded stating that the objective of this Workshop was to achieve a clear understanding of the requirements of the Scheme by all the participants. She requested all participants for actively contributing in the workshop and requested each country to finalise the schedule of implementation in their respective country. She offered to explore possibilities of FAO funding in case non-pilot countries express the desire to implement GAP in their respective country. She stressed the need for identifying the Scheme Owner so that country representatives would go back and take formal approval. She also clarified that the project is for two years and cannot be extended further.

Dr. S M Nazmul Islam, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The Secretary's message was presented by Mr. Md. Jamsher Ahmed Khandker, Joint Secretary (Research), Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of Bangladesh. He opened the addressed by extending his best wishes and welcoming all the delegates from SAARC member countries and the resource persons to Bangladesh.

Dr. Islam informed that SAARC is a unique concept of regional cooperation which has a distinct geographical, cultural, and environmental diversity in which the SAARC member countries comprised of world's highest mountains, land-locked countries, deltaic low-lying flood-prone areas and having one of the smallest low-lying island nation in the world. With the world's most populous countries, SAARC is home to nearly 1.5 billion people or about 22% of world's population of which 50% of the population is engaged in agriculture.

He stated that food safety has gained increasing importance over the years due to its significance both from the health and the economic perspectives. He added that hazards at different stages of the food chain establish the need to address the issue of food safety right at farm level.

Implementing GAP during on-farm production and post-production processes resulting in safe agricultural products is of immense importance for assuring a safe food supply, he added.

He expressed his happiness on collaboration of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (RAP) with SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) in organizing this regional consultation workshop as a very important and timely event. He informed that while experts in Bangladesh are trying to work on GAP, they still have a long way to go. He believed that coordinated efforts of the experts of this region can play a vital role in developing SAARC GAP. He assured that on their part, Government of Bangladesh will extend all types of support to develop SAARC GAP both at national and regional levels.

Mr. Khandker opined that the technical sessions of the consultation would be helpful to promote understanding about the Scheme, and its modification and finalization. He expressed that at the end of the workshop, a well worked out draft schedule of implementation in each country would be helpful to each country.

He called upon the participants to critically analyze the issues and draw conclusions that are in favour of humanity and identify actions needed to apply science in agriculture development.

Finally, Mr. Khandker thanked all his colleagues in his Ministry, FAO and SAC who worked hard to make this workshop a success. He wished this Regional Consultation Workshop all success.

This was followed by introductions where participants were invited to give their name, country and department. Presentations and group sessions were implemented over the course of the three days.

The full text of Mr Konuma's welcome address and speech of the Chief Guest is reproduced in **Annex 3** and **Annex 4** respectively.

2. Technical Session

2.1 Session 1: Background to food safety and introducing GAP as a tool to achieve food safety and quality in farming – Ms. Shashi Sareen

Ms Shashi Sareen, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, FAO Regional Office for the Asia and the Pacific, opened the technical session by briefing about the background to food safety and introducing GAP. She described in detail the importance of food safety and its contribution in terms of nutrition and health status of populations linking it with increased productivity. She explained that if food safety is ensured, it results in reduced food losses and wastage. She said that if food was unsafe, the market access is either restricted or blocked which results in issues related to livelihoods amongst others. The economic implication with respect to food safety is huge – it is in terms of medical care of affected persons, food recall, destruction of contaminated food, loss of brand etc. which ultimately has an adverse financial impact. She underlined that food safety is now considered as an integral part of food security and has an important role in ensuring food security of populations.

To elaborate on the growing importance of quality and safety in fruits and vegetables, she cited specific recent examples with respect to horticulture. These included high usage of pesticides in fruits and vegetables in Thailand leading to increased pesticide residues in final products; *E.coli* (O104:H4) outbreak in Germany which led to bloody diarrhoea and serious complications the source of which after extensive investigations was identified as imported fenugreek seeds; a national food safety incident in Australia due to Hepatitis A in semi dried tomatoes with 420 cases from March 2009 till March 2010.

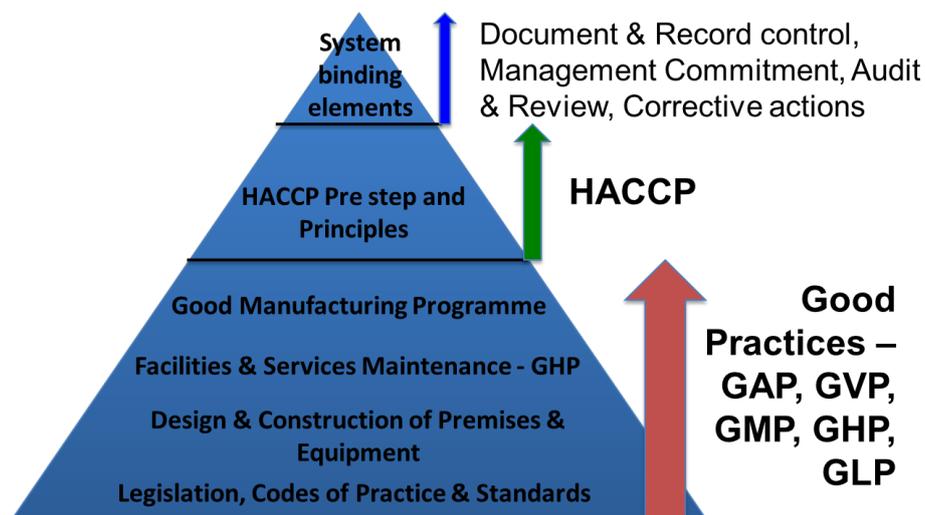
She then presented an exercise of Working Group conducted in Bali 2010 where the participating countries were asked to identify risk factors in their food. She described risk factors in various countries by categorising food risk with respect to Horticulture. She informed pesticide residue was the most common risk while others being food additives, heavy metals, aflatoxin cutting across various countries. She explained the process of risk categorisation undertaken by established mechanism which is available as a published document. She informed farming is categorised as medium risk while the retailers are categorised as lower risk. She informed about the risk categorization module developed for ASEAN countries and also support to Bangladesh to develop its own risk categorisation module. She informed such exercise gives an idea of how to categorise risk including in the horticulture sector. She informed of availability of variety of literature on the subject.

She further elaborated on the importance of food safety and the accompanying challenges in food safety in the region. She pointed out the weak link between primary production and processing. The links are weak in in most countries since the production is dealt with the Agriculture Ministry and processing is under the Health Ministry or in some countries with Industries. The other area is the multi-agency involvement in food safety. Each department works as per its system and coordination with other departments is proving difficult. She also highlighted the issue that while countries agree in workshops to undertake certain actions but once back, the funds are either not allocated/ forthcoming nor they are spent adequately. She admitted that availability of data on food safety is lacking in almost all the countries.

She informed that the current approach has moved to preventive risk based approach on food safety in the entire food chain, which includes good practices namely GAP, GMP/GHP, HACCP and the FSMS approach of the food system. She spoke about the evolution of food safety, various approaches and role of GAP to produce safe food in agriculture. She detailed following food safety approaches:

- Food chain approach explaining hazards may arise at different stages of the food supply
- Preventative risk-based approach now being followed rather than a reactive approach where focus is on GAP, GMP, HACCP
- Requirement of a sound national food control and regulatory systems by setting up of standards and their effective implementation
- Adoption of Codex standards – referenced as baseline in SPS Agreement

She elaborated the roles and responsibilities for food safety of all actors in the food chain namely- farmer or producer, processor, handler, government and consumer. She explained in detail the elements of preventative approach for food safety and the components inherent to it as under:



She gave an overview of Codex as being an intergovernmental body, its organisational structure and its work on fruits and vegetables. She informed that any activity which pertains to laying down of requirements or norms is called standardization. The role of Codex is to protect health of consumers, ensure fair practices in food trade and coordinate all food standards work at international level. She informed that more than 180 countries are members of Codex. She stressed that the countries while framing their regulations need to have Codex as the baseline standards.

Ms. Sareen gave an overview of GAP and defined GAP as practices that need to be applied on farm to ensure food safety during pre-production, production, harvest and post-harvest. In many cases, such practices also help to protect the environment and safety of the workers. She described GAP as a systematic approach which aims at applying available knowledge to address environmental, economic and social sustainability dimensions for on farm production and post-production process, resulting in safe and quality food and non-food agricultural products. She emphasized that the Government should play an enabling role in terms of incentivisation so that the

farmers really make efforts to implement GAP. She also emphasized the role of consumer in bringing in a change in the country.

She explained that GAP focuses on both the farms and pack houses. She informed that the Codex Recommended International Code of Practice General principles for Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1) under Section III deals with primary production while Sections IV-IX are applicable to other stages of the food chain including packhouses.

She mentioned some regional publications on GAP and related areas explaining about each of them.

Different GAP standards – GLOBALG.A.P and ASEANGAP

In this presentation, Ms. Sareen gave an overview of GAP globally and informed that it is mainly being implemented by Asian countries for the export market as it is specified by buyers as a requirement. This trend is also now increasingly being adopted in the domestic markets especially as a requirement by organised retailers. She informed that while most of the GAP implementation is voluntary, in some countries it has been made mandatory e.g. Thailand. She informed about Thailand’s Q GAP system which is being enforced for local and domestic markets and generally addresses the food safety component. She informed about the mandatory and voluntary options for adoption. She then explained the elements of GLOBALG.A.P current version - 4.

She went on to explain about ASEANGAP and mentioned its four modules viz., food safety, environment, workers health safety and welfare and produce quality module. She further elaborated on evolution and implementation of GAP in some of the ASEAN countries - Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam. She also explained the current status of various countries in ASEAN in respect of alignment with ASEANGAP in terms of total, close, partial or no alignment as reflected in the table below.

Country	Food safety	Environmental Management	Worker’s health and safety	Produce quality
Thailand	C	P	P	C
Malaysia	C	P	P	S
Indonesia	C	C	P	P
Singapore	C	N	N	S
Philippines	C	N	P	S
Brunei Darussalam	C	N	N	N

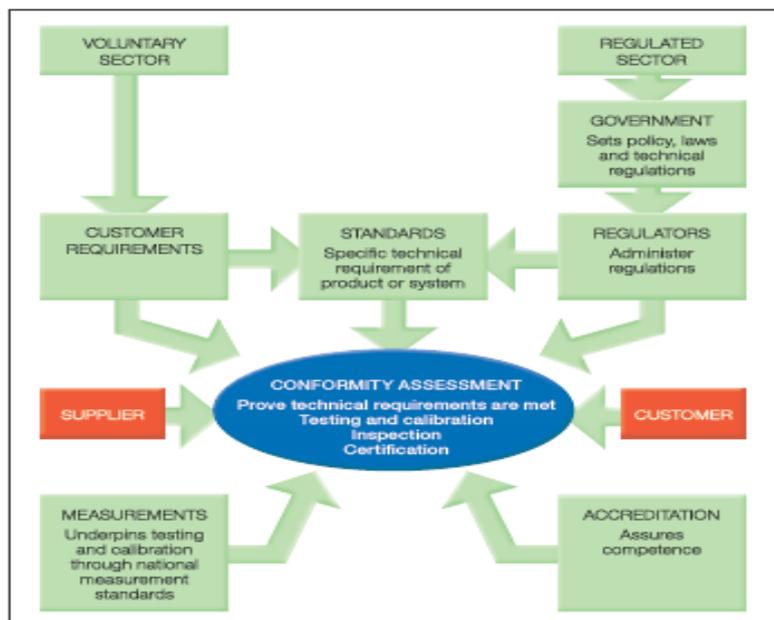
T = Total alignment C = close alignment P = partial alignment
 N = no alignment S = covered by another national standard

She informed that GAP initiatives are mostly external driven rather than pushed internally from within the country. She also elaborated the need of maintaining a balance between food safety and food security.

2.2 Session 2: Options for implementing GAP; Introduction to the Scheme: Background, Purpose, Scope, Structure and Overview – Mr. Anil Jauhri

Mr. Anil Jauhri, CEO, NABCB/QCI gave an overview of international trade which is governed by WTO agreements and the rules for Standards and Conformity assessment are written in TBT/SPS agreements. The WTO agreements allowed regulations on grounds of national security, prevention of deceptive trade practices, environment, health and safety. He explained that regulation means standards are enforced by law which either are stated as product requirements or require systems approach e.g. GMP/GHP/HACCP in food and GMP in drugs. He informed that the government is responsible for protection of health and safety of its population – and therefore enforces standards through technical regulations. He cited typical sectors where regulations are made viz., food, drugs, electrical appliances, electronics/IT/telecom goods and toys. Regulations, by rule, are Governments responsibility as they need a regulatory framework which can be executed by the government.

He explained voluntary standards are principally developed in partnership with stakeholders, are consensus standards, and are market driven with an option to the industry to implement them or not. He pointed out that although there are regulations in sectors like food, the voluntary standards are also active and strongly co-exist. He gave examples of IFS, BRC, and GLOBALG.A.P. standards. He informed that many voluntary standards are owned by National Standards body in various countries and in some cases are



owned by private entities e.g. Global GAP. He informed that in most of the SAARC countries, it is the national standards body which develops voluntary standards. He explained the emerging structure of compliance both in regulatory and voluntary sectors.

Mr. Jauhri then presented the participants with the regulatory and voluntary mechanism option for adoption of GAP. He stated that the regulatory option would require a suitable legislative instrument to notify GAP for compulsory compliance whereas to offer voluntary option, one needs to identify a suitable scheme owner. He presented a third option where it could be a limited regulation only for exports with suitable legislative instrument citing the Export Quality Control and Inspection Act for products India exported. He also explained the need to have exports regulated especially so in food sector as issues related to safety could harm prospects of other exporters and the country. He gave an overview of Quality Infrastructure needed as under:

Mr. Jauhri further elaborated components of the Scheme and defined various sections including the governing structure, certification criteria, certification process, and requirements for certification bodies to establish and implement the scheme. He elaborated that for requirements to be fulfilled by a farmer, one needs a Standard. Since in GAP (and GMP, GHP etc.), normally 100% compliance is not possible, a Certification Criteria is established classifying requirements into what are essential,

what deviations we can accept, and how much deviations we can accept. He then informed that the procedure for evaluation and certification is mentioned in Certification Process which envisages a multi certification body scenario, and also ensures uniformity in certification. He also mentioned about assessing the competence of certification body by mechanism of accreditation through an accreditation body. He informed that in the absence of accreditation body, regulator or scheme owner may perform this function initially but ultimately accreditation would be needed. He explained the need of defining a Governing structure to aid decision making and supervision of Scheme.

He described various players in the scheme: the Scheme owner for which the guidance is available in ISO 17067, accreditation body which needs to comply with ISO 17011, certification body complying with ISO 17065 and the laboratories complying with 17025. He then elaborated about the SAARC GAP Scheme which dealt with good agriculture practices in fruits and vegetables. He gave a brief overview of Quality Council of India (QCI), as the knowledge partner of FAO, for providing support in developing the Scheme.

He stated that there could be other documents needed during the implementation of the Scheme to address issues which arise as and when the Scheme grows.

During the interaction there were queries regarding group certification, cost of certification, and acceptability of SAARC GAP by global markets.

Ms. Shashi informed SAARC GAP would need to be officially ratified and currently these are guidelines which are to be internalised by individual countries through the process of national consultations and interpretations.

2.3 Session 3: Country Presentations on GAP status in countries

2.3.1. Bangladesh: Dr Hassan, Director Technology Transfer and Monitoring Unit, BARC gave a presentation describing GAP status in Bangladesh. He informed that Bangladesh has a sub-tropical monsoon climate characterized by wide seasonal variation with heavy rainfall. Natural calamities such as flood, tropical cyclones, and tornadoes are a regular phenomenon. He informed that the country produces a variety of fruits and vegetables on a seasonal basis. He further informed that the post-harvest management practices including handling, storage and distribution are far from satisfactory which results in huge losses to producers. The post-harvest losses in fruits and vegetables are estimated to be 20 to 25 per cent which goes up to 40 per cent. He shared statistics on area and production of major fruits and vegetables in Bangladesh with export performance achieved from 2004 to 2014. The current exports are pegged at USD 210 million. He informed that the farmers usually cultivate same crop varieties without proper knowledge of maturity indices with minimum sorting and grading. He further informed that post harvesting and transportation results in high losses due to improper washing, poor handling and application of chemicals such as calcium carbide or ethephon. He mentioned about general improvement in the post-harvest situation due to the advent of focused research and coming of international retail chains.

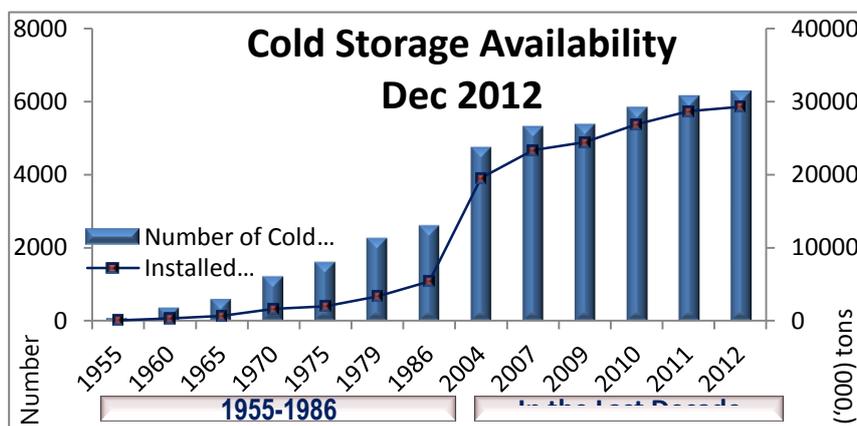
He described the food safety and quality infrastructure in Bangladesh by identifying the Agri-food legislations governing agriculture. He gave a brief on the accreditation, inspection and certification system in Bangladesh. He informed about GAP not currently being adopted for any crops in

Bangladesh. However, GAP manuals and protocols for mango and tomatoes have now been developed under AFACI-GAP project. A GAP network has been established in Bangladesh. He hoped that initiatives like the current one will assist in strengthening GAP implementation in Bangladesh.

2.3.2 Bhutan: Mr. Namgay Thinely from Bhutan gave an overview of the production and trade trends of important fruits and vegetable. The important fruits were mandarin, apple, pears, banana, and mango whereas the vegetables included potato. Current area under vegetable production was 34,000 acres whereas the production was 43,000 MT. He informed that the agri-food regulator is the Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority (BAFRA). The related legal documents with the ministry of Agriculture are Plant Quarantine Act, Seed Act, Pesticide Act, Livestock Act, Food Act, National Biosafety Framework, Forest and Nature Conservation Act, Biodiversity Act and their secondary and tertiary legislations. He explained BAFRA functions as the Focal Point for International Organizations viz., IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention), CAC (Codex Alimentarius Commission), and is the National Enquiry Point for WTO-SPS Agreement (World Trade Organization-Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement). He informed that the Bhutan Standards Body is at its initial stages of development. He informed BAFRA handles Import/export and domestic (important cash crop) for which it develops the Standards/requirement, defines Procedures/SoP and formulates Guideline and manuals.

He informed that currently DoA, DAMC, and BAFRA could be direct stakeholders of GAP. The country has mandatory Standards for apple, mandarin, potato, cordyceps, planting materials. The DoA and DAMC could assist in national adaptation of the GAP Standard.

2.3.3 India: Mr. S.K. Kaul gave an overview about India. He informed that agriculture contributes approximately 14% of country's GDP while horticulture contributes 30% of GDP in Agriculture from 24 million ha which is 15% of area under cultivation. 65% of India's population is engaged in Agriculture. India prides to be the 2nd largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world. He informed that area under horticulture is 24.3 mha. He gave statistics about the trends in horticulture development. He informed the total production of vegetables was 170 MT whereas the fruit production was 84 MT



for the period 2013-14. He informed that Mango and grapes are the biggest revenue earners in forex.

He informed in detail the activities of Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture which focused on productivity, inclusivity, sustainability, technology, quality and marketability. He gave an overview of the infrastructure status of the country and informed more efforts are underway to develop this sector. Recorded national level data, India created 6488 cold storage with a cumulative installed capacity of approximately 30 million Metric Tons.

He informed currently there are farms certified to Global GAP. However, assistance for adoption and certification of GAP standards is available under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Ministry of Agriculture

2.3.4 Maldives: Mr. Adam Manik gave an overview about Maldives and informed that Maldives comprises of 199 inhabited islands with the land mass being 300 sq km. There no. of islands allowed for commercial agriculture and industrial use are only 56. He gave a brief on the vegetable and horticulture production and informed there were large quantities of horticulture produce imported to Maldives.

He informed that the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture, Maldives Food and Drug Authority, Health Protection Agency, (Ministry of Health), Ministry of Economic Development. Atoll Councils and Island Councils are the agri-food regulators in the country. He informed of various regulations and guidelines related to agriculture pertaining to Pesticide, regulation on quarantine plants, palm and forest trees.

Mr. Manik informed that no official standards body exists since Maldives Standard Act has not been passed by the Parliament. Currently all standardization work is officially taken care by the Ministry of Economic Development. All inspection and certification are done both by the government and private sector (for voluntary standards). The inspectors are either from MED, MFDA and HPA or Atoll and Island councils. There is no accreditation system - however, accreditation is done through the agencies of neighbouring countries.

On the GAP status in the country he informed a project *“Support to Integrated farming, Jan 2011 - 2013 ”* project was assisted by MFDA and MoFA. He stated that GAP initiative in Maldives will be taken up strongly by stakeholders since there are lots of tourist resorts which would like to be ensured of the safety of fresh produce. They have now started to incorporate some conditions of GAP in their supply contracts with Agri-Co-ops. Recently a Good Farming Practice Manual has been developed and also implemented under the Fisheries Agriculture Diversification Programme (IFAD-GOM funded Project).

2.3.5 Nepal: Mr. M.N. Pudel gave an overview about Nepal. He stated that agriculture contributed 34.33 % to GDP and provided employment to 66 % people. He informed that the average holding size is 0.68 ha and the total cultivated area is 3 mha (21%of the total area). He stated whole the off season vegetable production and seeds are exported to India and Bangladesh, sweet orange to Gulf countries and China (Tibet), orthodox tea (Organic) to India, Japan, Germany, Canada, USA etc., organic Coffee to Japan and India, and ginger to India

He explained the Agri-food Regulation scenario comprising the Food Act, 1966 (Amendment in Process) and Food Regulation, 1970. The responsible Agencies to handle are the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC), Central Food Lab, and Seed Quality Control Centre. DFTQC is the SPS Enquiry Point. Nepal has regional Food Lab in each development region and have a national quarantine centre addressing issues related to plant animal and food products. There are quarantine check posts on Indian borders.

He informed that GAP is in its initial stages of development in Nepal. There are various agencies which certify to GAP in Nepal. There are various governmental and non-governmental agencies in

the country for the promotion of GAP in Nepal. He informed there are package of practices developed for some horticulture produce. He informed a study has revealed 14% of the produce sold has high levels of MRLs and therefore it is required to have GAP in Nepal at the earliest.

2.3.6 Pakistan Dr. Mubarik Ahmed gave an overview about Pakistan. He informed that agriculture contributed 3.6% to the GDP, the total area under agriculture being 79.61 mha. He listed the major fruits and vegetable grown in Pakistan. He informed that of all fruits, citrus production was maximum at 2148 MT.

He gave an overview of the Agri-food regulators in Pakistan mentioning the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MoFS&R) along with its Department of Plant Protection (DPP) and Animal Quarantine Department (AQD) oversees Agri-food sector. The legislations are the Plant Quarantine Act, 1976, and the Pakistan Animal Quarantine Act, 1079. The SPS Measures are governed as per IPPC-ISPMs, OIE, Codex Alimentarius. The standard body is within Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Islamabad. The inspection and certification system comprises of the department of plant protection (DPP) which undertakes the inspection, treatment and certification of plants and plant products. The Animal Quarantine Department (AQD) and the Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department (FSC and RD) are part of the system. The accreditation system comprises of the Pakistan National Accreditation Council under Ministry of Science and Technology.

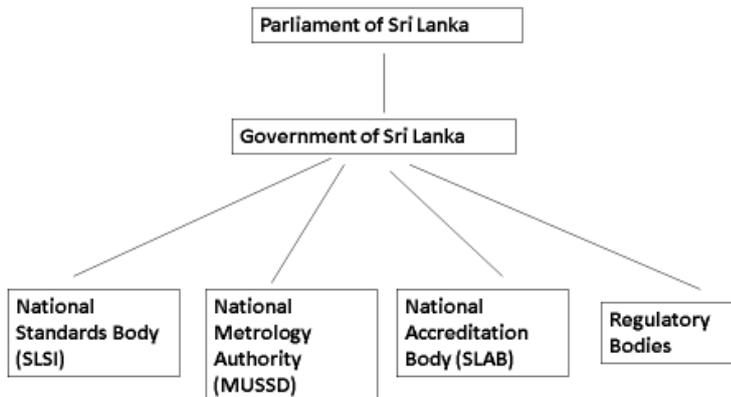
He stated that for implementation of GAP Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), Provincial Agriculture Departments (Extension and Research) and the Certification Bodies shall be important stakeholders. He stated that the current system of instituting quality is the registration by Department of Plant Protection to ensure that the phytosanitary requirements of importing countries are met. During the assessment, check are carried out to ensure that appropriate measures are in place in the Orchards, Pack Houses, Hot water Treatment plants and approved chemicals are used for pesticides and fumigants.

He informed of export of pest free fruits and vegetables to European Union which was done by involvement of all the stakeholders and was a success. This included the visit of Global GAP certified orchards by DPP in two phases and monitoring of all facilities by deputing DDP technical staff. He informed that Pakistan has signed MOUs/bilateral agreements and Work Plans with Various countries for Compliance of Phytosanitary Regulations in general and for import and export of high risk commodities in particular. Significant progress has been made by various functionaries (MoNFS and R, DPP, PARC, FAO, CABI, Farmer Organizations and NGOs etc.) of Government of Pakistan to monitor and regulate pesticide residues issues.

2.3.7 Sri Lanka: Ms Jayasekera and Ms. Sumanasekera gave an overview about GAP scenario in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka produces more than 800,000 metric tons of fruits and vegetables annually and exports both fresh and processed varieties to many destinations in the world. About 90% of the fresh product is targeted to Middle East and Maldives. About 75% of the processed products go to the European market. They presented statistics of annual production of major fruits and vegetables of Sri Lanka. Agriculture contributed 11% to the GDP and the post-harvest wastages totalled to 20-24%. It was informed that 10,000 MT of processing fruits and vegetables, 15,000 vegetables and 40,000 of fruits were exported in 2013. However horticulture produce as Apple, Grapes, Orange and Mandarin were imported to Sri Lanka. The description of the food and quality infrastructure was

schematically presented as under. The major activities of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution are –

FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE



formulation of National Standards, Product Certification, Quality System Certification, Quality Assurances of Exports, Inspection of Imports, Laboratory Testing Services, Industrial Metrology and Instrument Calibration, Training In Standardization and Quality Management, Sri Lanka National Quality Awards, Consumer Education and Protection, Documentation and Information Services , National Enquiry Point on WTO/TBT to name a few. They also explained the accreditation system

of their Accreditation Board (SLAB).

It was informed that the major ministry responsible is the Ministry of Science and Technology / Ministry of Agriculture. The farmers are constantly educated to practise Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) at the nurseries and some farms are certified under the GLOBAL GAP certification. The Processing/ Manufacturing facilities owned by the export companies are certified with local standards (SLSI) as well as International Quality Standards. Traceability throughout the supply chain is monitored.

There is a special project being implemented with AFASI (Asian Food and Agriculture Corporation Initiative) with the activities such as formation of a technical committee, development of GAP codes for Cucurbits and Mango, identification of a pilot area and implementation, establishment of a certification system, preparation of training manuals and training of trainers, farmer training and its implementation.

It was informed that Sri Lanka has standards on fruit and vegetable base products. They are canned mangoes (SLS 536), 'Embul' bananas for exports (SLS 1040/2), Rambutan (SLS 1040/3), fresh bananas (SLS 1227), pineapples (SLS 1229), fruit juices and nectars (SLS 1328) to name a few.

2.4 Session 4: SAARC GAP - Food Safety Module - Mr. Dinesh Menon

The food safety module of the SAARC GAP standard was presented by Mr Menon. He elaborated on various clauses and sub-clauses of the GAP Standard. He informed that food safety is the prime requirement to be met while implementing GAP.

The Food Safety module covered selection of farming site, risk assessment for the sites, requirement and content of management plan, selection planting/seeding materials, its quality and suitability checks. He elaborated on the quality of water used for irrigation/fertigation and plant protection products mixing and its impact on produce safety. There was a discussion on the impact and selection of fertilizers and soil additives, their justified uses, the importance and care of selection and application of chemicals for plant protection, and the importance of following the label

instructions. There was deliberation on the recommendation of technical experts and the care to be taken by the farmer during harvest. He informed that the standard does not prohibit use of GMOs but emphasized the need of adhering to the country's GMO regulations, requirement of communicating use of GMO to the buyers, need of separation of GMO material from Non GMO material as some of the aspects to be kept in view while handling the issue. The importance of pre-harvest interval, and hygiene to be maintained during harvest was elaborated. He emphasized that the post-harvest produce handling is to be undertaken with care if any post-harvest treatment is applied.

He described the importance of various risk assessments, significance of management plan and relevance of records keeping. He also explained the importance of annual review. The significance of maintaining machineries, timely calibration and its importance with respect to food safety was detailed. The requirements of storage of fertilisers, chemicals and produce and its transportation and their contribution towards safety of produce were also explained. There was a discussion on water usage, and use of human sewage vis-à-vis food safety was also deliberated at length.

The importance of training to workers as well as operators was explained for farms, groups and produce handling during primary processing. The importance of traceability system was underlined with examples highlighting it to be an important prerequisite to ensure food safety.

Discussion:

- The concern about the use of treated human sewage sludge and water with respect to food safety was raised. A consensus on non-usage of untreated sewage sludge and usage of treated water only as per the country regulations was reached among the participants after due deliberations
- The use of manures especially bio fertilisers was discussed in view of the risk posed by them in the farms
- The basis of recommendation on chemicals, pre harvest intervals, dosages was sought from various participants. It was informed that each country has a regulating body that decides on the period of chemicals and are recorded in the labels accompanying the chemicals. Label recommendations and advisories of National research centres were also discussed.
- Bhutan informed that since the country has declared itself organic, how they would address to the chemical requirements of the clause. It was clarified that since Bhutan is organic and if no chemicals are used as inputs then the entire clause will be reported not applicable – as provisions are built in the checklists for the same.

2.5 Session 5: SAARC GAP Environmental Management Module - Mr. A.K Sen

The environment management module was presented by Mr Atish Kumar Sen. He informed that this module lends importance to environment so that the future generation inherit a healthy earth.

He explained the various clauses mentioned in the module including the importance of selection of farming site, its slopes, importance of preventing soil erosion, the use of substrate, its recycling and impact on the environment. He informed about planting materials, impact and selection of fertilizers and soil additives, the importance and care in selection and application of chemicals for plant

protection, their impact to increase environmental pollution, the importance of noise control and air pollution.

He explained the rationale and the need for disposal of empty containers being an important activity to save the environment. The importance of water conservation, water and water source management and its significance were also explained in detail. The importance of biodiversity in the eco-system, waste management and its impact on environment were further elaborated. Mr. Sen also emphasised the importance of various threats and the need for risk assessment, significance of management plan and relevance of records keeping and review of all activities as necessary for the upkeep of the environment.

Discussion:

- The concern about the use of slopes of mountains for cultivation as major part of the land is mountainous was highlighted from countries which have terrace/hill cultivation. It was clarified that there is no bar on the use of hill land if the country regulations allow terrace farming.
- Participants raised the query of feasibility of farmers monitoring energy use. It was explained that they could monitor their expenses in use of electricity, diesel, and other fuels.
- Participants expressed their concern over the annual review of practices and suggested review to be undertaken once in 2 years

2.6 Session 6: SAARC GAP Produce Quality Module - Mr. P. Sainath Naidu

Mr P Sainath Naidu, outlined the requirements of the produce quality module. The elements explained in detail were quality plan, planting material, fertilisers and soil additives, aspects related to water, chemicals, harvesting and handling produce, traceability and recall system, training and the documents and records that are needed to be maintained to ensure the scheme is implemented. The provision of review and its importance was explained to the participants.

Besides deliberating on the above 10 elements, he mentioned the optional requirements, covering chemicals, harvesting and handling.

Dwelling upon the individual elements, he laid importance on identification of practices to manage produce quality across production, harvesting and post harvesting stages. The need for quality planting material/seed material was stressed to be obtained from certified sources/nurseries. The need for use of fertilisers based upon recommendations of competent persons was highlighted. Besides facilities for composting and prevention of cross contamination were also stressed. The need for maintaining fertiliser/soil additive records was also indicated. He mentioned that the use of irrigation water is based on crop specific requirements, water availability soil moisture levels. He also mentioned the suitable irrigation records to be maintained. About use of chemicals, he stated that only trained farmers be allowed to apply the chemicals, which should be obtained from licensed suppliers. The need for IPM practices was also detailed during this talk. Crop rotation as means of anti-resistance measure was also dealt with.

The need for proper maintenance of chemical application equipment backed by application records was stressed by him. As a prelude for proper harvesting and handling of produce, affecting produce quality, he expressed the need to assess proper maturity indices; timing of harvest during early part of the day; use of clean harvesting tools; use of clean harvesting containers and storing of the harvested produce in shade. Besides, to avoid produce damage, the need for proper stacking was also stressed upon. The need for use of potable water for washing of produce, and avoidance of re-circulated water to the extent possible was stressed upon. Maintenance of clean equipment/containers coming in the direct contact of the produce was also dealt with. He advised that the produce should never be placed directly on the soil to prevent contamination. The need for packing and storing under a roof / in cool places, and meeting grading and packing requirements of customer was also explained.

Speaking about the transportation requirements to maintain produce quality, he stated, the produce should be held at the requisite temperature, be always covered to prevent transit contamination and transported in the minimum time possible. Another important area covered by him related to the establishment of suitable traceable mechanism across the chain of production to supply, backed by appropriate records.

The importance of the farmers training on relevant GAP and the need to document the training was highlighted by him. He stated that GAP documents should be maintained for 2 years or longer as per the legal requirements of the country and the obsolete documents be discarded.

He stated that all practices need to be reviewed annually and corrective actions be effected for identified deficiencies. The need for maintaining complaints record about produce quality was also dealt with. The optional requirement about chemical handling and filling as per label recommendations and recording of temperature and humidity parameters was also explained.

Discussions:

- The participants suggested that for composting, a permanent structure need not be insisted upon. However, after extensive deliberations, it was agreed to do away with the need for permanent structure, but to ensure there is no scope for contamination.
- On review of practices, the participants opined that the need for review of all practices may be reconsidered. Accordingly, it was decided to modify the requirement and the review was limited to emerging risks on an annual basis.

2.7 Session 7: SAARC GAP Workers Health, Safety and Welfare Module- Mr P.Sainath Naidu

Initiating talk on this module, he elaborated on the 7 basic elements and described the optional requirements that the farm may wish to address. The basic elements are – chemicals, working conditions, personal hygiene, workers welfare, training, documents and records along with the review of practices.

In order to safeguard the health of workers, he informed, the usage of chemicals needs to be done only by trained workers equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills. On storage requirements, he explained that the storage structures should be well lit, secure and access limited to only

authorised persons. He further stated that facilities should be in place to contain spillage and contamination to workers. He stressed that there should not be any reuse of empty chemical containers and identity of the original containers needs to be retained with label instructions in the event of damage. The necessity of retaining MSDS of chemicals was also stressed by him. The importance of displaying accident and emergency instructions prominently in the vicinity of chemical storage area; availability of first aid measures; availability of protective clothing and its proper maintenance was highlighted by him.

The issue of display of hazard signs, guarding of electrical installations/dangerous places and maintenance of farm equipment/tools/vehicles in good working condition was discussed in detail. The aspect of personal hygiene of the workers, related training and the availability of toilets and hand washing facilities was dealt with at length during his talk. He also emphasised the need of displaying written instructions on personal hygiene at prominent location in the farm to create hygiene awareness amongst the workers. The need for reporting serious health issues and provision of health cover was impressed upon. He also stated access to domestic animals should be prevented from production, handling, packaging and storage area.

The need for providing habitable living quarters, designated eating areas, and drinking water facilities was emphasized with a view to increase workers' productivity. He further stated that workers above 15 years of age be employed or age limit as mentioned in country regulations needs to be adhered to and minimum wages need to be paid. The paramount importance of training workers and thereby ensuring their safety was stressed in areas like health and safety, personal hygiene, safe use of chemicals, accident and emergency measures, and maintenance of farm tools, equipment and vehicles. The need of retaining records for 2 years or in accordance with local regulations and discarding of obsolete documents was also stressed in this module.

The annual review of practices, record of corrective actions and maintenance of complaints records was also dealt in his talk. The optional elements like identification of responsible management person, records of two way communication meetings and conducting annual health check-ups of workers handling chemical were also highlighted.

Discussions

- Participants sought clarification about the definition of workers - it was clarified that the workers include owners who are also involved in working at the farm besides casual labour.
- Some of the participants suggested the employable age be in terms of country's regulations and not limited to 15 years. This was agreed upon.
- On issue of review of practices, the participants opined that the need for review of all practices may be reconsidered. Accordingly, it was decided to modify the requirement and the review was limited to emerging risks on an annual basis

2.8 Session 8: SAARC GAP General requirements - Dr. Manish Pande

General Requirement Module of the SAARC GAP standard was presented by Dr. Manish Pande. He explained that these are the requirements to be fulfilled in case a farm seeks to go in for certification. His presentation was segregated in two parts – part A part being requirements to be

followed by individual farms and part B to be followed when two or more farms come together in the form of a group for implementation and certification of GAP.

The concept of legal entity and its relevance in the context of implementation of GAP and prerequisite for seeking certification was explained. Visitor's safety and food safety threats caused by visitors, and their control were informed to the participants. The need for complaints handling and maintenance of records, relevance and importance of site details in farm map as a tool for traceability, record keeping and importance of internal inspection/ self-assessment was explained with example. The need for undertaking calibration exercise either by the owner or by authorised agencies (if required by law) was explained citing rationale and examples.

The part B detailed the requirements to be followed by the group for those who would like to go for certification as a group. The clauses covered were the requirement of the group to be registered as a legal entity, the administrative structure, and the need of a written contract between the Group and its members. The requirement of maintenance of producer register and its contents were explained in detail. The structure of the group was explained so that effective control to implement GAP is ensured amongst the members. The competency and training requirements were also explained for key functions of the group.

The requirement of quality manual, the document control, complaint handling, internal audit, inspections, non-compliance and corrective actions were explained. Other requirements like withdrawal of certified products, common pack house requirements, agreement with buyer, and sub-contracted operations were also explained.

Discussions:

- Participants raised a query on calibration of sprayers since they informed that no government bodies were involved in such calibration. It was explained that the government authorised body calibrations are required only when they are stipulated by law for e.g. it is required in weighing scales. The calibrations can be calibrated internally by a trained person in routine if there is no such regulation in the country.
- All countries informed that it would not be possible for each individual farm to be a legal entity. It was clarified that by term legal entity – it is meant that one can sue any one and in turn can be sued in its own name. It was clarified that an individual is a legal entity and that a group, if it is registered as a body or as a legal entity, it could be certified as a Group.
- Participants informed that in the buyer agreement there may be issue in mentioning of prices. It was explained that the agreement is mainly a terms of reference where if both parties agree not to insert a specific clause then it is not necessary to put financial terms.
- Participants sought clarification on feasibility of parallel production in GAP. This was explained and informed that parallel production is possible in GAP if proper controls are exercised.
- Participants wanted to know the maximum number of members permissible in a group. GAP scheme has no bar on the number of members but that the group needs to adhere to the requirements of GAP scheme.

2.9 Session 9: Guidance for Establishing a Scheme Owner (SO) and Governing Structure (GS) – Mr. Anil Jauhri

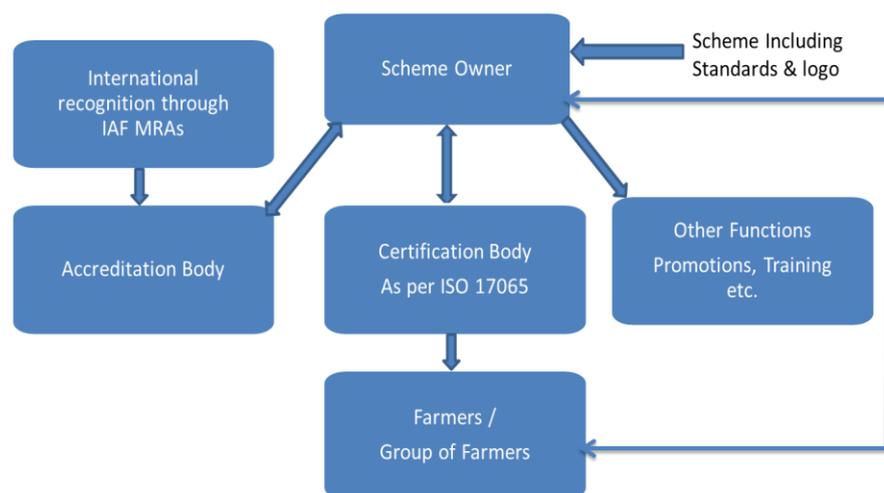
Mr. Jauhri took up the session to guide the participants with information and options while making the Scheme Owner (SO) in their respective countries and the governing structure (GS) that needs to be established in order to implement the Scheme.

He gave a background by explaining the use of standards for products, services, processes and systems was either by regulation or voluntary. He informed that in regulatory regime, regulator is at the apex. However the emerging trend is the unbundling of regulations – accreditation and conformity assessment being separated. In a voluntary regime, as the SAARC GAP, the scheme owner is at the apex who typically owns the standards while the accreditation and conformity assessment are carried out by professional bodies. The SO exercises supervision over the entire scheme. The challenge in the operating voluntary schemes is the financial sustainability and the promotion.

He cited the examples of Voluntary Scheme by giving examples of Global GAP, SA 8000, Forest Stewardship Council, BRC, SQF etc. The Scheme owner was the one who owns standards and logo. As explained earlier, certification is done by approved certification bodies based on the accreditation to international standards. The training modules are delivered by competent training bodies that may be approved by SO. Also the auditors, trainers, and consultants may be approved by SO. It is important that budget is allocated for promotion and acceptability. He explained this concept schematically as under depicting the relationship between different entities:

He explained the role of the Governments and compared the role of Government in developed and developing economies. In developed economies, governments only deal with regulations and the voluntary schemes are generally left to non-governmental/private sector. However, in developing and SAARC countries, governments are involved in voluntary standards setting due the very reason that the industry, other stakeholders not yet organized or strong enough to sustain voluntary standards and schemes. Therefore, one can assume that all countries would have their governments involved in scheme ownership, directly or indirectly. He informed that if the SAARC GAP is to be implement by regulation, then the regulator would be the SO; otherwise the country needs to identify a suitable organization.

SCHEME CONCEPT



He briefed about scenario in case the Government – a ministry directly or regulator if one exists and has agriculture in its domain or any other suitable organization can be the SO. The biggest merit of Government being the SO is the government endorsement of scheme automatically leads to incentivizing and better adoption by stakeholders. He then explained the scenario of the national standards bodies (NSBs) becoming the SO as they are the hub of voluntary standards worldwide. These are private bodies in developed economies but governmental in developing countries. He said that all SAARC countries have national standards bodies except Maldives. He however cautioned that the national standards bodies in SAARC certify to their own standards and do not allow other certification bodies creating exclusive certification. This is contrary to growing worldwide concept of multiple certification bodies; he cited an example of IFOAM recently admitted in PAC on promise of opening up accreditation to IAF members

He then discussed the possibility of accreditation bodies (ABs) that operate as per ISO 17011 being scheme owners as there is no bar on their being scheme owners. There are some examples around the world of the same. In SAARC, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have ABs. He told stressed that though this is not an ideal option, it could be exercised if no other option works.

There are also certification bodies with their own schemes – one can see that all NSBs in SAARC are scheme owners as well besides being certification bodies. In USA, many CBs have their schemes – UL, NSF, WAQ etc. In GAP for SAARC countries, exclusive certification is not desirable. He also mentioned that a group of certification bodies could be a SO citing OHSAS as a case.

The trade/industry body could also be a possible option - however the membership organization would pose a challenge on impartiality. Any private entity could be a SO.

Mr. Jauhri explained the features of the SO that it needs to be a legal entity. He informed that all governmental bodies are legal entities by virtue of their status. Others need to be as per local laws. In India proprietorship/partnership companies are not legal entities. A legal entity is a body that either can sue or can be sued in its own name. The SO needs to take full responsibility for the operation, supervision, and decision making through a Governing structure. The SO needs to have access to competent personnel to develop, operate and maintain the Scheme. There needs to be transparency by means of public availability of information, stakeholder consultation and only client information needs to be confidential. It is desirable that the entity is non-profit e.g. governmental bodies are deemed non-profit. For financial stability, especially funds needed for promotion, the SO needs to have a funding model to be decided. The ABs and CBs charge for their services, and farmers will need to pay, and therefore the SO may need to devise modes for subsidy to farmers. The scheme needs ideally to be self-sustaining and the SOs could charge entity being certified. A scheme owner needs to be protected against liability and if sued, should have arrangements as liability insurance or reserves to pay if required.

The role of the SO is to own the standard, the Scheme and the Mark. They need to approve accreditation bodies and certification bodies acceptable under the Scheme. They need initially to have a provisional approval system and ultimately ABs to be IAF MLA signatories for ISO 17065 and the CBs to be accredited. He cautioned about the private ABs and CBs outside the IAF system which are under no oversight. He informed that if there is no accreditation body in country, external ABs could be used citing examples of Bhutan and Nepal who have arrangements with ABs in India.

The SO should have its own norms for approval and needs to provide supervision to all elements – ABs, CBs, certified farmers/farmer groups. There needs to be a Complaints handling system at all levels – CBs, ABs – as per their international standards – and SO needs to have its own system seeking guidance in ISO 10002. There needs to be an appeals process against any decision of SO. The SO should review and update the Scheme and have documentation for the same.

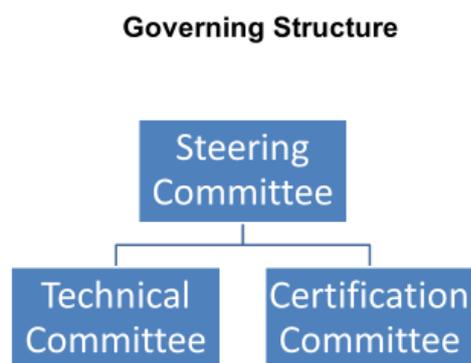
Mr. Jauhri explained the need of the Governing Structure. The objective is to provide guidance to the Scheme Owner on the establishment of the governing structure which would be required for setting up and operating the GAP Certification Scheme. He schematically showed the governing structure and explained its components.

He explained the composition and terms of reference of committees and informed the general principles:

- Representation of a balance of interests in the Steering Committee, such that no single interest predominates.
- While nominating representatives for technical/certification committee, predominantly personnel from subject experts shall be ensured.
- Key interests includes rep. of regulatory bodies/other governmental agencies, standards body, user/producers/industry associations, AB and CB (subject to availability), laboratories, academic/research bodies, consumer organisations etc.
- Technical committee may have additional rep. from persons competent in agriculture science viz., areas like plant entomology/pathology, horticulture, agronomy, soil.
- Certification committee needs to have representation from certification bodies, accreditation body and experts that have understanding of conformity assessment.
- Rep. to individual experts should be given exercising due care in their selection to avoid any conflict of interest.
- It is desirable to invite organizations to nominate Principal and Alternate members in the interest of higher attendance and continuity.

He explained the quorum, as per the Scheme, to be at least 30% members of the committee, terms of reference and minimum of one annual meeting for conducting their affairs.

In the context of SAARC GAP, he informed that as the GAP Scheme for SAARC has already developed Certification Criteria, Certification Process and the Certification Body Requirements, the committees of the Governing Structure will be required to adopt the Scheme in its current form or adapt the Scheme to local conditions/requirement. They need to launch the Scheme once agreed by SC and assist in dissemination to various stakeholders. They need to work with other Govt. Bodies for incentivisation and also work with



- In case deemed appropriate, Scheme owner could have a single committee dealing with all the matters;

retailers/buyers to create a market pull so that farmers have an immediate return on adopting it.

2.10 Session 10-14: Certification Criteria - 5 Modules

This section described the requirements for compliance by a producer or producer group for getting certified. This session was to discuss with the participants the degree of importance needed to be assigned to each of the modules that were discussed in the GAP Standard modules viz., Food Safety, Environment Management, Workers Health and Safety and Produce Quality. The participants were explained the relative importance of various elements of GAP standard and as applicable to individuals or group.

The participants were explained about the control points requirements and their categorization as Critical, Major and Minor based on the importance of criteria. Each of the control point is deemed critical when the control points relates to those requirements required to maintain integrity of the produce and food safety, failing which it could lead to serious food safety incidence, the major control points are mandatory in nature and the minor control points are those which are important but not essential.

In this session, each of the modules was presented in the form of a checklist and each of the participants were requested to review the classification mentioned and to inform if they have any other suggestion in terms of its categorization with rationale.

Based on the feedback the checklist of all the modules were reviewed and modified.

2.11 Session 15: SAARC GAP Certification Process – Mr. P. Sainath Naidu

Mr. Sainath gave the overview of the certification process aiming at harmonising International accreditation requirements for uniform application by the CB vis-à-vis scheme owner of the participating country. He informed that the type of certifications in this Scheme are two - individual certification and group certification.

Each of the section was dealt at length and co-related with various sections of the standard. He informed that primarily certification process starts with the filing of applications by the producer / producer group in the prescribed format followed by execution of certification agreement between the CB and applicant. The rights and the obligations of the producer group was detailed by him. On the farm end he informed that the application filed is reviewed by the certification body and vetted against the scheme requirements. In case of rejections, he stated, that fresh application shall be accepted after a gap of one year. Dwelling upon the evaluation process, he stated that a pre-assessment is carried out as an off-site review followed by scheduling of audit plan, in mutual consultation with the auditee. This step is followed by actual farm evaluation using a structured check list and compliance or otherwise recorded against the corresponding control points, stipulated in the check-list. The deployment of the auditors / inspectors is based on their meeting qualification requirements prescribed by the scheme owner.

He highlighted that, while individual evaluation process involves only farm inspection, the group certification process involves farm inspection of members sampled on random square-root basis besides conducting audit of quality management system of the producer group. In both the cases, non-conformities observed shall be recorded during the closing meeting of the evaluation process.

Enumerating the norms, relating to inspection duration, he stated that the timing of farm inspection is synchronised as close to the harvesting period of the crop to ensure maximum coverage of the controlled points. He informed that the normal duration of the farm inspection is minimum 3 hours without packing operations and minimum 6 hours for operations involved in farm packing. For operations of produce handling involving QMS audit with a centralised pack house the duration is 8 hours.

Citing instances, where-in all control points are not visited during the inspection, he stated, that either a follow-up visit may be scheduled or satisfactory proof may be submitted by the auditee. He categorically stated that no certification will be issued unless all control points have been verified and non-conformities satisfactorily closed. He stated that the initial evaluation time shall normally be of one man-day of 8 hours and minimum one man-day for report preparation. Additional 0.5 man-days maybe consumed, depending on complexities of farms and systems. He further stated, that the non-conformities observed shall be classified as critical / major / minor as the case maybe.

Explaining the process of evaluation report review, he stated, that the evaluation report, which is recommendatory in nature is reviewed by an independent committee / persons who has no role in the evaluation exercise. He further stated that the certification decision process is undertaken by persons, who are impartial and devoid of conflict of interest. The certification decision is thereafter communicated to the auditee and certificate issued in the prescribed format. He also indicated that the web-site of the CB shall reflect status of the valid certificate /certificate with sanctions.

He explained that the certification process is subjected to annual surveillance before the expiry of the certificate and maximum delay of one month is permissible under exceptional circumstances. He also cited that in the event of MRL exceedance / customer complaints, unannounced evaluation shall be carried out. Detailing the norms of sanctions, he said that, the sanctions involved:

- warning - on observance of non-compliance,
- suspension - auditee (producer) not taking corrective action
- Revocation / cancellation -- producer not taking CA within 6 months. Revocation of suspension upon satisfactory verification of CA.

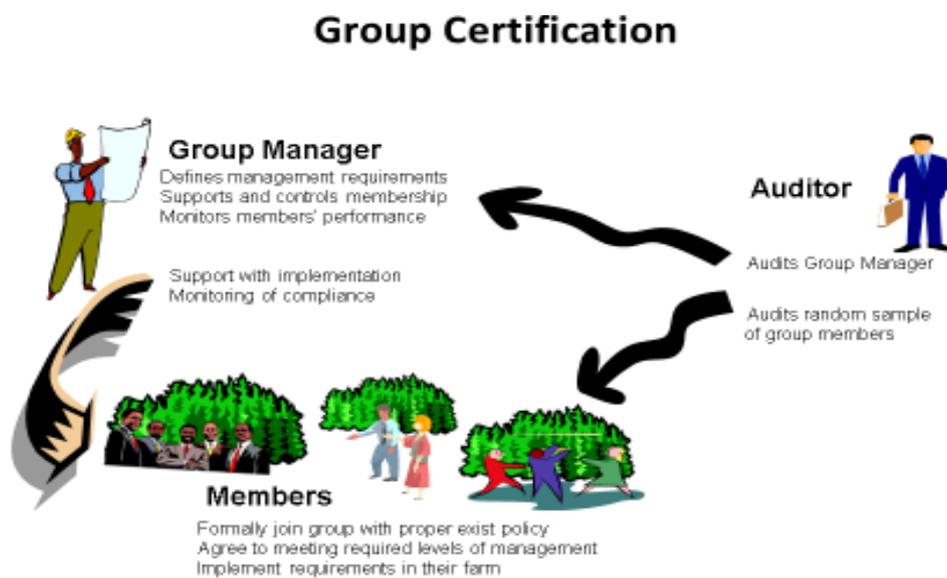
Referring to the renewal process, he stated, that normally the contracts for certification covers a period of 3 years with annual surveillance, subject to no sanctions. He also stated, that in case of non-renewals, the certificate validity shall expire at the end of the 3rd year. He stated, that the CB shall communicate any changes in GAP scheme to all certified producers and that they are mandated to implement the same based on certification agreement. Similarly he stated that the producer (auditee) is required to inform the CB in case of change in location / cultivation practises / change of product, etc. He further stated that evaluation of the changes may be carried out on a case to case basis. He stated, that, the CB shall publicly make available the fee structure and put in place the system of appeals and complaint mechanism and ensure that the same are addressed to its logical ends. He stated, like the certification decision process, the appeal process should be independent of individual persons involved in decision to avoid subjective decisions.

The talk concluded with the requirements of CB documenting policy and procedure in retention of records in a confidential manner for 2 certification cycles.

2.12 Session 16: SAARC GAP Group Certification and Its Control Points – Dr. Manish Pande

The Group Certification concept was shared in a schematic way explaining the process of certification of farms that are implementing GAP in a group for seeking certification. A list of documents that are required by the group to maintain along with farm document are detailed in annex 5. The importance of modalities of formation of group, entry and exit procedures and compliance by each of the member of the group was explained in details.

The participants were explained the role of the group manager in ensuring compliance so that the auditor from a certification body could take a sample for verification of compliance.



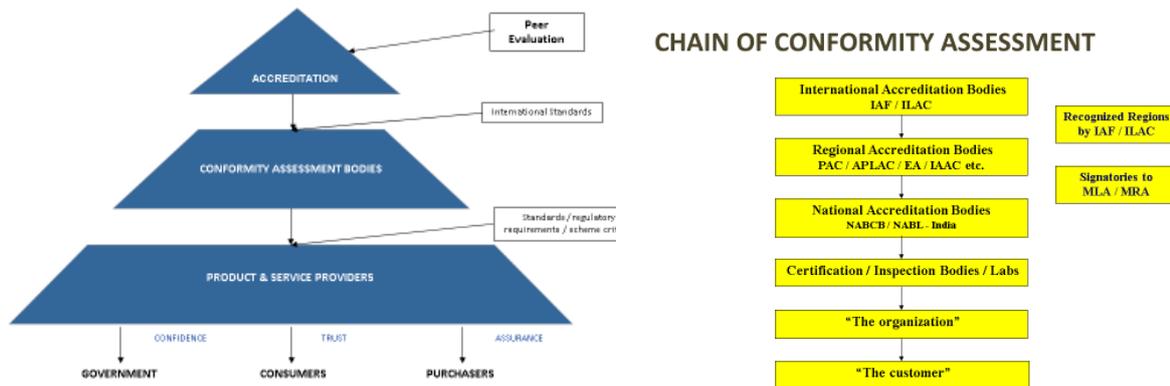
2.13 Session 17: SAARC GAP Certification Body Requirements - Mr. Anil Jauhri

Once GAP has been implemented in the farms, there would be an expectation that the farms are certified to GAP in near future. With this as background the participants were sensitised by Mr. Jauhri to the various terms associated with the process of certification and the requirements of a Certification Body (CB). Reference of ISO 17000 was made to explain term of conformity assessment as the demonstration that a specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled. The term certification is the third-party attestation related to products, processes, systems or persons.

He informed that anyone could set up a CB as there is no legal bar on anyone setting up a certification body, it could be a proprietorship, partnership, society, private or public limited – profit or non-profit – governmental or private or non-governmental organization. As it only requires people and documentation unlike in the case of laboratories, therefore it becomes that much simpler to set up a CB. However, the simplicity of forming a CB creates issue in terms of authenticity. For this the means of authentication is the process of Accreditation. Accreditation and conformity assessment are the internationally acceptable tools for facilitating trade and accreditation is now an important need for recognition of inspection/testing/ certification across borders. He further mentioned Article 6 of the

WTO/TBT agreement that cites accreditation as a tool for verifying compliance amongst member countries.

Mr. Jauhri presented the example of NABCB and it being signatory as member of the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) and of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). He informed about the utility of accreditation as realizing the free-trade goal of 'Tested, Inspected or Certified Once and Accepted Everywhere'. He schematically presented the accreditation framework as under:



He informed about role of ISO's policy development committee on conformity assessment (CASCO) and the various Accreditation Standards including about ISO 17065 that stipulates the requirements for Product Certification Bodies that covers Products, Process or Service certification. He further informed that all Accreditation Bodies comply with ISO 17011 and post peer assessment– if successful, signatory to MRAs. He informed that NABCB has signed PAC and IAF MLAs for QMS, EMS, Product and APLAC and ILAC MLA for IBs. With this NABCB accreditation has gained equivalence worldwide and certificates with NABCB logo acceptable internationally. He also informed about the benefits of accreditation in terms of global acceptability and lowering of cost in economies making them more competitive.

He explained the principles of certification to be impartiality, competence, responsibility, openness, confidentiality and responsiveness to complaints. He then explained the ISO 17065, with focus on clause 4 to 8 and the additional requirements. ISO 17065 framework has been used to formulate the SAARC GAP Scheme.

He concluded by reiterating the need for establishing an authentic third party assessment system, and use of accreditation and international system, for reducing risk in using third party assessment. He emphasized the need for insisting on certificates bearing AB logo. He also informed that as a Scheme Owner, one is free to exercise oversight over ABs and CBs.

2.14 Session 18: SAARC GAP Rules for use of Certification Mark - Dr. Manish Pande

Dr. Manish Pande elaborated on the rules for use of Certification Mark. He informed that all certified producer or producer groups approved by respective Scheme Owner of each SAARC country are eligible for use of the Scheme Certification Mark. The rules describe the process for approval of the Producer for use of the Certification Mark and the rules for use of the Scheme Certification Mark. The

Scheme Certification Mark, is a protected mark owned by the Scheme Owner in the respective SAARC member country. Its use would indicate that the processes of the relevant Producer's farm are in conformity with specified criteria (Certification Criteria for the Scheme) under the Scheme. The "Certification Mark" is also commonly known as a "Logo", however for the sake of aligning it with the international requirements the same will henceforth be referred to as the "Mark".

He informed that the certified producers or producer groups under the Scheme by the certification bodies approved by the Scheme Owner, are eligible to use the Certification Mark and need to apply for approval for use of the Certification Mark(s).

The certified producer shall sign a legally enforceable agreement with the Scheme Owner/ Certification body whereby it is allowed to use the Mark after agreeing to all the relevant conditions so prescribed. The scheme owner could have more more than one Mark(s) depending on whether some or all modules are used as the standard or criteria to certify producers/producer groups. The Mark(s) shall be distinct for each standard/ criteria used by the Scheme owner for certification of the producers/producer groups. The Mark may be used as any photographic reduction or enlargement. The Mark shall be used in such a manner as to imply that the farm produce (fruits/ vegetables) has been produced using good practices. It shall not be used to imply that the produce itself is certified i.e. it shall not be applied on produce.

The Mark shall be used on any document accompanying the lot of certified produce along with the address of the certified farm to indicate to the recipient that the produce is GAP-certified. The Mark may be used in publicity material, pamphlets, letter heads, other similar stationary; media for exchange of any communication, for promoting the awareness of the Scheme, or the Mark, etc. The certified producer may also use the certificate issued by the certification body as part of publicity material. While using the above documents, care shall be taken to ensure that the Mark is used only with respect to the farm(s) certified and it shall not imply that the non-certified farms having common ownership are also certified. The certified producer shall not make any misleading claims with respect to the Mark. The certified producer shall not use the Mark any manner as to bring the Scheme Owner into disrepute. The certified producer, upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification, shall discontinue use of the Mark, in any form.

The certified producer, upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification, shall discontinue use of all advertising matter that contains any reference to its certification status. Depending upon the extent of violation, the suitable actions may range from advice for corrective actions to withdrawal of certification in situations of grave or repeated violations. In case the certified producer does not take suitable action against the incorrect use of the Mark, the certification body shall withdraw the Certification. The Scheme owner may direct the approved certification body to take any of the actions for incorrect use of the Mark or take appropriate legal action itself, if deemed necessary.

He also outlined the obligations of the approved certification body wherein the approved certification bodies shall obtain the agreement for use of the Mark duly signed in duplicate from the producer/producer group found conforming to the criteria for certification and forward it to the Scheme owner, if required. The Scheme owner, after duly signing the agreement, shall send one original copy to the certified producer/producer group with a copy to the concerned certification body. One original copy shall be retained by the Scheme owner. The certification body shall during their surveillance of the producer/producer group monitor the use of the Mark to assist the Scheme

Owner in protecting the integrity of the Mark. In case the Certification Mark is observed to be used by a certified producer contrary to the conditions specified, the certification body shall take suitable action in accordance with the relevant requirements of ISO 17065 and those specified in the documents “SAARC GAP Certification Process” and “SAARC GAP Requirements for Certification Bodies”.

The certified producer shall pay a fee as prescribed by the Scheme Owner, for the use of the Mark. This payment may be made to its certification body for onward submission to the Scheme Owner or as decided by the scheme owner.

Discussion: The main issue raised during this session was proposal to insert a statement that the produce has been originated from a GAP implemented/certified farm.

3. Working Group: Session 19 – Country Action Plan

Based on the sessions on Day 1 and 2, the participants were given formats to develop a country action plan. Each of the pilot countries were assisted with international consultants to assist them in completing the Action Plan. Each of the country presented their inputs by modifying the formats aligning to the processes that they deemed appropriate in terms of approach to the implementation of the GAP in their respective country. The action plans were further aligned and will be the starting point for country activities.

The detailed action plans are annexed in the Annex 6 a – g.

4. Concluding Session – The Way Forward

The participants felt that the regional workshop was valuable in that it provided participants with a new dimension of a Scheme Concept, and gave them information of aligning the requirement of the Scheme to that of their countries context. The sharing of information, experiences from their countries and identification of good practices in the area of food safety, environment, workers health and safety and produce module added to their knowledge of good agriculture practices. The working group sessions facilitated significant discussions towards identifying critical, major and minor areas of the standard in the sector and how the same could be modified based on their countries requirement. The workshop also identified priority areas and actions and interventions for pilot countries to implement the GAP in their countries.

The regional workshop identified various possibilities and mechanism for implementation of GAP. The success of the workshop was evident in the form of the country action plan presented by each of the participating country. The nature of inputs and clarity of the concept came out clearly from each of the presentations made by the representatives of various country.

Based on the priority areas identified, the participants recommended FAO led support specifically in the following areas which in their view would be very beneficial to countries:

- i) Issuing a letter to all pilot countries on forming of the Scheme Owner and the associated governing structure
- ii) Each country volunteered to send the details of their decision makers so that actions are initiated early
- iii) SAC was of the view that the training modules and publications need to be centrally agreed and controlled by FAO
- iv) Maldives requested for a greater monitoring of the progress by FAO to give necessary impetus to this important initiative.
- v) International consultants and observers complimented the proceedings of workshop and emphasized the need to keep processes simple to make things effective on ground.
- vi) Pakistan and Sri Lanka requested that FAO may also provide support to them for implementing the scheme as one of the pilot should there be an opportunity

Further, on the side of the participants, they committed to providing all the necessary support and information for making this initiative a success.

List of Participants

BANGLADESH

Dr. Mian Sayeed Hassan
 Director, Technology Transfer &
 Monitoring (TTMU)
 Bangladesh Agricultural Research
 Council (BARC)
 New Airport Road, Farmgate
 Dhaka-1215
 Tel: +88 02 9122475 (off)
 Mobile: +88 01911740390
 Email: sayeed63@gmail.com;
dir-ttmu@barc.gov.bd

Dr Rafiqul Islam
 Managing Director
 Hortex Foundation
 22, Manik Mia Avenue, Sher-e-Bangla
 Nagar, Dhaka
 Tel: +88 02 9125181; 01711565731
 Email: hortex@hortex.org;

Enamul Hoque
 Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute
 (BSTI)
 116/A, Tejgaon, Elenbari
 Dhaka
 Tel: +88 02 8870275
 Email: bsti@bangla.net

BHUTAN

Mr. Karma Namgyel, Sr.RQI, BAFRA
 (National Project Coordinator)
 Bhutan Agriculture and Food
 Regulatory Authority,
 Ministry of Agriculture & Forests
 Tel: 77231983
 Email: karmanamgyel75@yahoo.com

Mr.Namgay Thinley
 Deputy.Chief Horticulture
 Officer,Department of Agriculture,
 Ministry of Agriculture & Forests
 Tel:77223366
 Email: nthinley123@gmail.com

INDIA

Mr. Shri S.K. Kaul
 Assistant Director, Mission for
 Integrated Development of
 Horticulture (MIDH)
 Department of Agriculture &
 Cooperation, Krishi Bhawan
 Ministry of Agriculture
 New Delhi – 110001
 Tel: +91 11 23071325
 Fax: +91 11 23382444
 Email skkaul.nhm@gmail.com

MALDIVES

Mr. Satheesh Moosa
 Microbiologist
 Maldives Food and Drug Authority
 Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
 Velaanaage, 7th Floor
 Ameer Ahmed Magu
 Male – 20096
 Tel:
 Fax:
 Email: satish@health.gov.mv

Mr. Adam Manik
 Deputy Director General
 Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
 Velaanaage, 7th Floor
 Ameer Ahmed Magu
 Male – 20096
 Tel: (+960) 333 9240
 Fax: (+960) 332 6558
 Email: adam.manik@fishagri.gov.mv

NEPAL

Mr Kanchan Raj Pandey
 Senior Agriculture Economist
 Department of Agriculture
 Harihar bhawan
 Kathmandu,
 Tel: 9841309551
 Fax: 977- 5524093

Email: kanchanrp07@gmail.com

Mr Mahendra Nath Poudel
Senior Agriculture Economist
Ministry of Agricultural Development
Singha Durbar
Kathmandu,
Tel: 9841306136
Fax: 977-4211935
Email: mnpoudel2012@yahoo.com

PAKISTAN

Dr. Syed Waseem-UI-Hassan
D.F.S.C-I, Ministry of National Food
Security & Research,
Block-B, Pak- Secretariat,
Islamabad
Tel: +92-51-9207695
Fax: +0092-51-9210616
E mail: drwaseemqta@hotmail.com

DR. Mubarik Ahmed
Director General, SARC, Pakistan
Agricultural Research Council/ PPA&
DG,
Department of Plant Protection,
Ministry of National Food Security &
Research,
Jinnah Avenue, Malir Halt,
Karachi
Te;; +92 21 99248607 & 99261555
Fax: +92 21 99248673 & 99261561
E mail: dg1@plantprotection.gov.pk;
gqtl_parc@yahoo.com

SRI LANKA

Ms M. I.S. Jayasekera
Director(Standardization)
Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI)
No 17 , Victoria Place
Elvitigala Mawatha
Colombo 08
Sri Lanka
Tel: +0094-011 –2672614
Fax :+0094-011-2642614
Email: ipsitha@slsi.lk;
ipsithas7@gmail.com

Ms. L.U.N.Sumanasekara
Director
Ministry of Agriculture, Battaramulla
80/5, “Govijana Mandiraya”
Rajamalwatte Avenue
Battaramulla
Sri Lanka
Tel: 2869553, 2888902
Fax: 2868910
Email: lekha_56@yahoo.com

OBSERVERS

FAO

Ms Shashi Sareen
Senior Food Safety & Nutrition Officer
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the
Pacific
39 Phra Athit Road
Bangkok 10200
Tel: (+662) 6974143
Fax: (+662) 6974445
Email: Shashi.sareen@fao.org

QCI, INDIA

Mr. Anil Jauhri
CEO, National Accreditation Board for
Certification Bodies (NABCB)
Quality Council of India (QCI)
2nd Floor, Institution of Engineers
Building
2, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi – 110002, India
Tel: +91-11-23378056/57,
23378837/38
Tax: +91-11-23378678
Email: ceo.nabcb@qcin.org

Dr. Manish Pande,
Joint Director,
Quality Council of India (QCI)
2nd Floor, Institution of Engineers
Building, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
New Delhi - 110 002, India
Tel: +91 11 2337 8056/ 57
Fax: +91 11 2337 9621

Mobile: +91 85272 85303
Email: manish.pande@qcin.org

Mr. Dinesh Karunakara Menon
Prashanti, Nareekanvally P.O.,
Mandoor (Via), Kannur, Kerala
670501.

India

Mobile: +91 95390 65116

Email : dineshkmenon@gmail.com

RESOURCE PERSONS

Mr. Atish Kumar Sen
DDG Bureau of Indian Standards
(Retired) currently Consultant
11 DESHAPRIYA PARK WEST,
THIRD FLOOR,

KOLKATA – 700 026, INDIA
Mobile: +919830539100.
Email: atishksen@gmail.com

Mr. P. Sainath Naidu
Scheme Manager,
Prefarm Certification Services
M/s.FoodCert India Pvt Ltd,
First Floor Plot No.69,House No. 8-2-
248/1/7/69/1,
Sree Nagarjuna Co-operative Society,
Punjagutta, Hyderabad – 500 082,
A.P, Tel:+91 -40 2331 3547, 0031
Mobile: +9246276352
Fax No: +91 40 23313048;
Email: psnaidu@foodcert.in

PROGRAMME

TIME (Hrs)	ACTIVITY
DAY 1 22 September 2014	
08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 10:00	Opening Ceremony Welcome and Opening Remarks : Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative, FAO Regional office for Asia and the Pacific (presented by Mr Mike Robson, FAOR Bangladesh) Remarks – Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) Background and Introduction of the project and overview of the programme: Ms Shashi Sareen, FAO RAP Remarks by Chief Guest Mr.Md. Jamsher Ahmed Khandker, Joint Secretary (Research), Ministry of Agriculture, Govt of Bangladesh Introduction of participants Photographs
10:00 – 10:30	Tea / Coffee Break
10:30 – 11:15	Session 1 Background to food safety and introducing GAP as a tool to achieve food safety and quality in farming Different GAP standards – GLOBALG.A.P and ASEANGAP – Ms. Shashi Sareen
11:15 – 12:15	Session 2 SAARC GAP – Options for implementing GAP; Introduction to the Scheme :Background, Purpose, Scope, Structure and Overview – Mr. Anil Jauhri
12:15 – 13:15	Session 3 Country Presentations 1 (4 countries) Status of GAP in the countries and quality infrastructure – Agri-Food regulators, standards bodies, CBs available, ABs if available – their involvement in GAP current or potential (10 minutes each country)
13:15 – 14:15	Lunch Break
14:15 – 15:15	Session 3 Country Presentations 2 ... Contd (4 countries) Status of GAP in the countries and quality infrastructure – agrifood regulators, standards bodies, CBs available, ABs if available – their involvement in GAP current or potential
15:15 – 16:15	Session 4 SAARC GAP – Details of the four modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Safety: Mr. Dinesh Menon Including 15 minutes for discussion
16:15 – 16:30	Tea / Coffee Break
16:30 – 17:15	Session 5 SAARC GAP – Details of the four modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Management Module: Mr. A.K Sen Including 15 minutes for discussion
17:15 – 17:30	Conclusion of Day 1
DAY 2 23 September 2014	
08:30 – 09:00	Session 6 SAARC GAP – Details of the four modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Quality Module: Mr. P. Sainath Including 15 minutes for discussion
09:00 – 09:30	Session 7 SAARC GAP – Details of the four modules:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers Health, Safety and Welfare Module: Mr. P. Sainath Including 15 minutes for discussion
09:30 – 09:45	Session 8 SAARC GAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional General requirements: Mr. Manish Pande
09:45 – 10:15	Discussion on Standards
10:15 – 10:45	Tea / Coffee Break
10:45 – 11:45	Session 9 Guidance for Establishing a Scheme owner and Governing Structure – Mr. Anil Jauhri Discussion on Guidance for Scheme owners
11:45 – 12:30	Session 10 SAARC GAP Certification Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Safety Module: Mr Dinesh Menon
12:30 – 13:00	Session 11 SAARC GAP Certification Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Management Module: Mr. A. K. Sen
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 14:30	Session 12 SAARC GAP Certification Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce Quality Module: Mr. P. Sainath
14:30 -14:45	Session 13 SAARC GAP Certification Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers Health, Safety and Welfare Module: Mr. P. Sainath
14:45-15:15	Session 14 SAARC GAP Certification Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Requirements: Mr. Manish Pande
15:15 – 15:45	Tea / Coffee Break
15:45 – 16:30	Session 15 SAARC GAP Certification Process: Mr. P. Sainath Including 15 minutes for Discussion
16:30 – 17:15	Session 16 Group Certification and its Control Points: Mr. Manish Pande Including 15 minutes for Discussion
17:15 – 17:30	Conclusion of Day 2
DAY 3 24 September 2014	
08:30 – 10:30	Session 17 SAARC GAP Certification Body Requirements : Mr. Anil Jauhri Participants Discussion on Certification Body Requirements
10:30 – 11:00	Tea / Coffee Break
11:00 - 11:45	Session 18 Rules for Use of Certification Mark: Mr. Manish Pande Participants Discussion on Use of Certification Mark
11:45 - 12:30	Session 19 Working Group Session Each country representatives in groups to deliberate possible structure in their countries and action plan for way forward
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 – 14:00	Group deliberations to continue
14:00 – 15:00	Group presentations – 10 mins each
15:00 – 15:30	Tea / Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:00	Group presentation – 10 mins each to continue
16:00 – 17:00	Way Forward – Summation
17:00 – 17:30	Concluding session

WELCOME ADDRESS

by

Hiroyuki Konuma

Assistant Director-General and
FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

delivered by Mr Mike Robson, FAO Representative
at the

Regional Consultation Workshop Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Implementation and Certification in Countries of SAARC

Dignitaries, Participants, ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this Regional Consultation Workshop on ‘Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Implementation and Certification in Countries of SAARC’ organized by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) in collaboration with the the SAARC Agriculture Center (SAC), Bangladesh. I would like to thank the *SAARC Agriculture Center (SAC), Bangladesh* for collaborating with us on this extremely important event. I am extremely pleased to welcome participants from all SAARC countries representing the Agriculture Ministries and Departments and also in some cases the certification Departments. I also welcome experts who will be sharing their knowledge on this important subject with participants.

World over production of safe food is becoming increasingly important for protecting the consumer from foodborne diseases. For ensuring safety of food, the focus has now shifted from end product inspection and testing to building safety into the food product following a preventive approach and ensuring that hazards are prevented from entering into the food chain. Hazards such pesticide residues above permitted levels, microbial contaminants and heavy metals may occur at different stages of the food chain starting right from the primary production. It is therefore absolutely necessary to address food safety from production at farm level which is possible through the implementation of Good Agricultural practices. In addition to food safety, GAP also address issues of quality, environment and social aspects.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), as defined by FAO, are a “collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability”.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Since the last few years there has been an increase in trend where importing countries as well as domestic buyers especially organized retail are requiring producers to implement GAP as a pre-requisite for procurement to ensure that the produce is safe and of the desired quality. Some buyers are even requiring the implementation by producers of measures in relation to environmental sustainability as well as workers health and safety. From the farmers’ perspective, this leads to financial benefits such as higher premium to opening of newer markets. Implementing GAP also

helps promote sustainable agriculture and contributes to meeting national and international environment and social development objectives.

Implementing GAP is important both in the domestic food business as well as for increasing competitiveness in export markets. FAO has carried out significant work in the area of GAP and has supported the ASEAN countries both through development of a Training Manual on Implementing ASEAN GAP in the fruit and vegetable sector: its certification and accreditation and conduct of training programmes.

As we are all aware, agriculture is the mainstay of many Asian economies especially in the SAARC region. It is noted that basic strength of many of the countries in the region lies in their agriculture. However, there have not been significant concerted efforts in addressing issues of on-farm food safety and hygiene in this part of the world specifically in relation to both domestic and regional markets, although there have been some isolated activities focusing on certain export markets especially of the developed countries. Taking note of the increasing concern among consumers and retailers about hygiene and food safety, the SAARC Agricultural Vision 2020 has felt the need for urgent interventions to comply with these international requirements to augment trade within the farm to fork scenario.

In the SAARC Region, many of the countries have still to adopt GAP and do not even have an institutional infrastructure for supporting the same in terms of standards as well as their implementation, certification and accreditation. Most of the food safety standards are focused towards end products there has not been much concerted efforts in supporting the Region in development of standards on GAP and making it a sustainable activity by creating quality infrastructure and offering a sustainable and cost effective certification mechanisms to enable the implementation and verification of GAP.

Ladies and gentlemen,

With the above background, FAO, on request of some countries of SAARC, is implementing a regional project on “Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Implementation and Certification in countries of SAARC” under which it proposes to develop a common standard on GAP for the SAARC countries in the horticulture sector along with a scheme for certification based on international requirements. This SAARC GAP Scheme which is being developed as a Regional Scheme can then be further adopted as such or adapted by countries to suit their needs.

It is hoped that this will encourage not only increased safety of products in domestic markets but also increased regional and global trade.

This workshop will focus on finalising the norms or requirements of the Standards as well as the criteria and systems of certification which can then be applied in countries of SAARC with or without modifications. Once finalised, the scheme will be implemented in four countries as pilots to help them to adapt the standards and certification criteria based on their country scenario and support in strengthening their certification and accreditation infrastructure for GAP. The results of the pilots will then be shared in a final regional workshop involving all eight SAARC countries.

The aim of the current workshop is to finalise the GAP scheme and working out an action plan for implementation of the same in the pilot countries.

Ladies and gentlemen

In conclusion I would also like to once again express my appreciation to *the SAARC Agriculture Center (SAC), Bangladesh* for their coordination support for this important workshop. I would also like to thank Dr. S M Nazmul Islam, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt of Bangladesh for his presence in the opening session. I also thank all the participants from the SAARC countries and look forward for strengthened collaboration amongst the SAARC countries and I am confident that their inputs and experiences will support to develop a scheme which can be further implemented by countries in the Region.

Finally I wish you a successful consultation workshop and look forward to a fruitful outcomes and deliberations in this important subject.

Thank you.

Speech

of

Dr. S M Nazmul Islam, Hon'ble Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Bangladesh Secretariat, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

at the

Inaugural ceremony of Regional Consultation Workshop on Implementation of Good Agriculture Practices in SAARC Countries: SAARC GAP Scheme'

Chairperson, Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka

Special Guest, Dr. Md. Kamal Uddin, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council,

Guest of Honour, Mr. Mike Robson, FAO Country Representative in Bangladesh

Dear Ms. Shashi Sareen, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and Pacific

Distinguished participants and Resource persons from SAARC Member Countries

Ladies and Gentlemen

Very Good Morning

It is my great pleasure to take this advantage and opportunity to say a few words in the inaugural occasion of the Regional Experts Consultation Workshop on Implementation of Good Agriculture Practices in SAARC Countries: SAARC GAP Scheme" during 22-24 September 2014. This workshop is highlighting the implementing Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) on Production of safe food is essential for protecting consumers from the hazards of food borne illnesses and is important both in the domestic food business as well as for increasing competitiveness in export markets. Let me extend my best wishes and warm welcome to all the delegates from SAARC Member Countries and distinguished participants in the consultation workshop.

Distinguished Guests

SAARC is a unique concept of regional cooperation. With very distinct geographical, cultural, environmental diversity, the SAARC member countries comprises the world's highest mountains, land-locked countries, down to the deltaic low-lying flood-prone areas and one of the smallest low-lying island nation in the world. With the world's most populous countries, SAARC is home to nearly 1.5 billion people or about 22% of world's population and 50% of the population engaged in agriculture.

Food safety has gained increasing importance over the years due to its significance both from health and economic perspectives. Hazards may occur at different stages of the food chain starting right from the primary production such as residues above permitted levels, microbial contaminants, heavy metals and others. It therefore becomes important to address food safety right from food production at farm level. Implementing GAP during on-farm production and post-production processes resulting in safe agricultural products is of immense importance for assuring a safe food supply.

Considering the importance, FAO is implementing a regional project on “Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Implementation and Certification in countries of SAARC” under which it proposes to develop a common standard for the horticulture sector as a basis for GAP in the region along with criteria for certification based on international requirements

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to know that Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (RAP) in collaboration with SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) is organizing a regional consultation workshop on Implementation of Good Agriculture Practices in SAARC Countries: SAARC GAP Scheme’ a very important and timely issue. In SAARC, many of the countries have not adopted GAP and do not even have an institutional infrastructure for supporting the same in terms of standards as well as their implementation, certification and accreditation. Most of the food safety standards are focused towards end products. It is therefore important to support the countries of the Region in development of standards on GAP as well as a certification and accreditation mechanisms to enable the implementation and verification of GAP.

In Bangladesh, experts are trying to work on GAP but still we have a long way to go. I believe that coordinated efforts of the experts of this region can play a vital role to develop SAARC GAP. On our part we will extend all types of support to develop SAARC GAP both at national and international levels.

Dear Professionals

This consultative workshop will discuss the scheme comprising of standards and certification mechanism and working out an action plan for implementation of the same in the pilot countries.

I believe that the technical sessions of the consultation would be helpful to make an understanding of the draft scheme developed, review the scheme and finalise the draft scheme understood and agreed as well workout the schedule of implementation in each country finally make a report of workshop

I wish the delegates and all the participants to critically analyze the issue holistically and draw conclusion that is in favour of the humanity and prepare doable actions to apply the science in agriculture development. To sum up, please allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to the organizers, delegates from the SAARC countries and distinguished guests, dignitaries for kindly attending the inaugural function.

Finally, I would thank my colleagues FAO and SAC who have worked hard to make this workshop a success.

I wish this Regional Consultation Workshop all success

Thank you very much again.

LONG LIVE THE SPIRIT OF REGIONAL COOPERATION

Documentation Needed under the SAARC GAP Scheme

This list has been brought out under two main categories: first the documents required to be maintained by producer/ producer groups desirous of getting certification as per the scheme, and second the certification bodies. These are listed below.

A. Producer/ Producer groups

1. Farm Management Plan

2. Affidavit (if subcontracted)

3. Land Record ⇒ Ownership documents / records

4. Farm Map ⇒ Showing boundaries, neighboring plot details, permanent features of the farm, cropping pattern.

5. General Information ⇒ About the project, climate, rainfall, temperature, soil characteristics.

6. Crop Plans ⇒ Plans for the whole farm for one year including rotation crops, green manure crops mixed crops etc. Details should include

Crop	Area	Variety	Planting Material Quantity	Planting Time	Harvest Time	Estimated Yield

7. Input purchase and Stock record – Should have the following minimum details

Date of Purchase	Particular of the product	Quantity	Bill No.	Suppliers Address	Product date/ Information Received	Total Stock.

8. Farm Operation Dairy.

Date	Details Of the operation	Plot/Field No.	Equipment's / Implements Used	Supv. Remarks
	Eg. Sowing			

9. Soil Fertility Management Record

Date	Product Applied	Plot/Field No.	Quantity / rate	Supv. Remarks

10. Plant Protection Record.

Date	Pest/ Disease Observed	Rate and Quantity of pesticide used	Other measures taken	Supv. Remarks

11. **Storage Areas** on the farm for the inputs and products should be recorded.

Store No.	Product stored / to be stored	Capacity of the store

12. **Product sales / dispatch record**

Date	Particulars of the products	Quantity sold/ dispatched	Lot No.	Balance in stock	Mode of Dispatch	Consignee

13. **Labeling:**

Labels should be used on documents during transaction amongst legal entity and they should contain

- name and address of the producer
- name of the product including reference to production method
- Lot No./ identification number
- Stamp or any other marking by certified producer

14. **For Group Certification**

- Farm Management Plan
- Quality Manual
- Affidavit for following GAP standards
- Proof of Land records for all the farmers
- Farmer's farm diary (to have information as above)
- Agreement with farmers
- Overview map of the project and Map of individual farmers
- Declaration of Management Representative
- Consultant letter if any
- GM free declaration
- List of farmers with area/crop/ yield
- Agreement of group certification service
- Internal inspection audit checklist
- Internal inspection report
- Risk assessment report for each unit
- Complaint Log
- Training Records
- Purchase order register
- Sales Register
- Storage Records
- Traceability Records
- Reconciliation of production for each and every crops

B. Certification Bodies

The documents required to be maintained are covered under four broad heads; general documents, procedures, formats and work instructions. These are as given below:

<p>1. General Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Manual • Control master list • Internal Audit Checklist • Internal Audit Report • Assessor Experience Record • Audit Plan • Audit Report • Off Farm Input Permission • Competency criteria for inspectors and others functioning in Certification • Certification process for individual and group certification 	<p>2. Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales and Contract • Complaints and Appeals • Document Control • Unannounced Audits • Complaint Handling • Subcontract • Rules for Certification Mark • Training • Record Keeping
<p>3. Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check List – Individual Certifications • Check List – Group Certifications • Corrective Action Request forms • Complaint Form • Field Specification - template • Sanctions forms (On Hold/Suspension/ Cancellation/ Withdrawal Form) • Certificate Format • Client Subcontract Form 	<p>3. Work Instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification Timelines • Guidelines for Group Certification • Roles and Responsibility of various roles in organisation structure

Action Plan for the Project (Bangladesh)

<u>I. No.</u>	<u>Action Points</u>	<u>Responsibility</u> (FAO/ Country/ QCI)	<u>When</u> (Month/date)	<u>Output</u>
<u>National or In-country Activities</u>				
1.	Identifying the Scheme Owner (approval/ ratification as needed)	BARC & MoA	<u>15 Oct, 14</u>	<u>Approval</u>
2.	Identification of national consultant to support some activities as identified below (75 days WAE basis max)	FAO/ BARC	1 st week,14	Selection of NC
3.	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee	NPC/ Scheme owner)	Mid November 2014	Committees formed
4.	Country Inception workshop in countries	FAO/NPC with support of IC/NC	January'15	Sensitization
5.	First meeting of Steering Committee	NPC/ IC	December 2014	Meeting Held; Approval of Plan of Action, formal approval of TC/CC; identification of CB and approval/ accreditation mechanism
6.	Meetings of Technical Committee for finalization of Country GAP Standard (2 meetings)	NPC/IC with support of NC	December 2015	Adoption of GAP Standard
7.	Identification of CB and approval mechanism (Accreditation Body/ others) and ratification of the same (see point no 5)	NPC	December 2014	Formalization of CB and approval system
8.	Meetings of Certification Committee for finalization of	Bangladesh Accreditation	January'15	Accreditation and certification mechanism

	accreditation and certification mechanism (2 meetings)	Board (BAB) with IC		
9.	Review of functions of Scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner – Scheme, governing structure, others	NPC/IC with support of NC	1 st week of February 2015	Review of Scheme owner function and documentation
10.	Review of existing documents with CB and development of documentation for it to function as CB for GAP	NPC/IC	Mid February 2015	Development of documentation for CB in line with Scheme
11.	Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication	Consultation meeting with producer, retailer, consumers and exporters	End of February 2015	Awareness
12.	Existing accreditation mechanism reviewed and deciding on best option for accreditation / approval mechanism in country (through Steering Committee)	NPC with support of IC	1 st week of March 2015	Review of accreditation mechanism
13.	Support Scheme owner/ AB in developing documentation for approving/ accrediting CBs	NPC with support of Int Consultant	1 st week of March 2015	Accreditation/ approval system and documents developed
14.	Preparation of Training Manual / material	FAORAP/ IC	Jan 2015	Training manual in English
15.	Adaptation of manual to country situation and translation of training manual in national language	NPC with support of NC	End of May 2015	Finalization of Translated material
16.	Publishing training materials	NPC	July 2015	Training Materials
17.	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner, AB, CB – Scheme, auditing techniques, etc	NPC/FAO (IC)	August – September 2015	Training programme
18.	One training programme for Consultants on elements of the National GAP Scheme and implementation aspects	NPC/ FAO (IC)	Aug/ Sept 2015	Training

19.	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders – producer groups, potential buyers and retailers	NPC/ IC/NC	September 2015	Awareness Programme conducted for stakeholders
20.	Study visit to India/ other countries in region	FAO	Sept – Oct 2015	--
21.	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	SO with support of IC	--	Case study documented for presentation in regional workshop
Regional Activities				
22.	Documentation including procedures and formats for pilots	FAO	30 October 2014	Draft Scheme available based on Consultations of regional WS in September 2014
23.	Training manual preparation	FAO	Nov 2014	
24.	One regional training on ---	FAO	TBD	
25.	Trainings in other interested SAARC Country	FAO	TBD	
26.	Regional Workshop for finalization of Regional GAP Scheme and publication of report	FAO with participants of all SAARC countries	Jan 2016	Scheme finalized
27.	Publication of Reports/Training Modules	FAO	Feb 2016	Scheme available in printed form

Action Plan for the Project (Bhutan)

<u>Sl. No.</u>	<u>Action Points</u>	<u>Responsibility</u> (FAO/ Country/ QCI)	<u>When</u> (Month/date)	<u>Output</u>
National or In-country Activities				
1	Identifying the Scheme Owner (Approval / ratification, as needed)	NPC-Bhutan	15th Oct 2014	Scheme owner finalised (BAFRA)
2	Identification of National Consultant (NC) as needed (75 days WAE basis)	NPC	15th Oct 2014	Mr Sonam Tobgay (potential)
3	Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication	DOA & BAFRA assisted by NPC	20th Oct 2014	Stake holders identified
4	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee	NPC/ Scheme Owner	30th Oct 2014	Proposed Composition of Committees Steering Com. - DG, BAFRA-Chairman, Members- DG, DOA; Dir, DAMC; CHO; CRQO; Secretary - Sr RQI Tech Com - CHO - Chairperson; Members: CLO; DyCRQO; Rep of NPPC; Rep of NOP; Rep of NSC; Farmer's rep. Rep of BSB, Secy - DyCHO Certification Com - DG, BAFRA, Rep of NPPC; Rep of NOP; Rep of NSC; Rep of BSB, Secretary - Sr RQI
5	Country Inception workshop in countries	FAO & NPC with support of (International and National Consultants - IC/NC)	10th Dec 2014	Participants - BAFRA, DOA & other officials of the 3 committees + major grower groups/growers (to be identified by NC)
6	First meeting of Steering Committee	BAFRA & IC	12th Dec 2014	Approval of Plan of Action, formal approval of TC/CC; identification of CB and approval/ accreditation mechanism
7	Review of functions of scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner – scheme, governing structure, others	BAFRA, NC and IC	15-Mar-15	Approval of the GAP Scheme

8	Meetings of Technical Committee for finalization of Country GAP Standard (2 meetings)	NPC & IC + NC to support	1st meeting -13th Dec 2014 & 2nd meeting - 20th Dec 2014	Finalization of Country GAP Standard
9	Review of existing documents with CB and development of documentation for it to function as CB for GAP	NC and CB in consultation with IC	15-Apr-15	Approval of documentation by BAFRA
10	Meetings of Certification Committee for developing approval and certification mechanism and documents (2 meetings)	NPC & IC + NC to support	Dec-14	Approval of certification and approval mechanism
11	Formalization of GAP standards, CB and approval mechanism (Accreditation Body/ others) and	BAFRA & NPC	25th Feb 2015	Approval of CB & AB
12	Support Scheme owner/ AB in developing documentation for approving/ accrediting CBs	NPC with support of IC & NC	Jun-15	Approval by BAFRA
13	Preparation of Training Manual / material	FAO/IC	Jan-15	Training Manual
14	Adaptation of manual to country situation and translation of training manual in national language	NPC with support of NC	Feb-15	Finalization of translated Manual
15	Publishing training materials	BAFRA	Feb-15	Training Material for use
16	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner, AB, CB – scheme, auditing techniques, etc	NPC/FAO (IC)	March, 15	Training for implementation
17	One training programme for Resource persons (TOT) on elements of the National GAP scheme and implementation aspects	NPC/FAO (IC)	March, 15	Training
18	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders –producer groups, potential buyers and retailers	NPC & IC/NC	March, 15	Training of stake holders
19	Study visit to India/ other countries in region	FAO	Sept/Oct 2015	Thailand/Vietnam
20	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	BAFRA with support of IC	Nov-Dec, 2015	Case study documented for presentation in regional workshop
Regional Activities (only for information at this stage)				

21	Documentation including procedures and formats for pilots	FAO	30-Oct-14	Draft scheme available based on Consultations of Regional Workshop in September 2014
22	Training manual preparation	FAO	Nov-14	
23	One regional training on ---	FAO	TBD	
24	Trainings in other interested SAARC Country	FAO	TBD	
25	Regional Workshop for finalization of Regional GAP Scheme and publication of report	FAO with participation of all SAARC countries	Jan-16	Scheme finalized
27.	Publication of Reports/Training Modules	FAO	Feb-16	Scheme available in printed form

Draft Action Plan for India

<u>Sl. No.</u>	<u>Action Points</u>	<u>Responsibility</u> (FAO/ Country/ QCI)	<u>When</u> (Month/date)	<u>Output</u>
National or In-country Activities				
1.	Identifying the Scheme Owner	Scheme already prepared by QCI and another in final stages by BIS. Needs to be formally launched by MOA		
2.	Identification of national consultant (75 days WAE basis)	Resources in the shape of consultants are available in country		
3.	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee	Already done		
4.	Country Inception workshop in countries	Do		
5.	First meeting of Steering Committee	Do		
6.	Meetings of Technical Committee for finalization of Country GAP Standard (2 meetings)	Do		
7.	Identification of CB and approval mechanism (Accreditation Body/ others)	Accreditation body in the form of NABCB is already available which is recognized by Global GAP secretariat		
8.	Meetings of Certification Committee for developing accreditation and certification mechanism (2 meetings)	Already done		

9.	Review of functions of scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner – scheme, governing structure, others	Review will be undertaken in consultation with stakeholders		
10	Review of existing documents with CB and development of documentation for it to function as CB for GAP	Review will be undertaken		
11	Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication	Communication will be established with stakeholders		
12	Existing accreditation mechanism reviewed and deciding on best option for accreditation mechanism in country (through Steering Committee)	Already in place		
13	Support Scheme owner/ AB in developing documentation for approving/ accrediting CBs	Already in place		
14	Preparation of Training Manual / material	Needs to be done. May be before formal launch of scheme		
15	Adaptation of manual to country situation and translation of training manual in national language	Translation will be carried out by implementing agencies at state level		
16	Publishing training materials	Training material in local vernaculars will be undertaken under existing scheme of MIDH		
17	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner, AB, CB – scheme, auditing techniques, etc	Training programmes will be organized by QCI for resource persons and AB, CB		
18	One training programme for Resource persons (TOT) on elements of the	Do		

	National GAP scheme and implementation aspects			
19	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders –producer groups, potential buyers and retailers	Awareness programmes through dailies,TV and radio will be organized, once scheme is formally launched		
20	Study visit to India/ other countries in region	Study visit to EU countries will be required		
21	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	Case study could be ready by June 2015		

Action Plan for the Project (Nepal)Action Plan for the Project (Countries/ Regional level)

<u>Sl. No.</u>	<u>Action Points</u>	<u>Responsibility</u> (FAO/ Country/ QCI)	<u>When</u> (Month/date)	<u>Output</u>
National or In-country Activities				
1.	Identifying the Scheme Owner (Approval/ ratification as needed)	NPC/ Policy and international coordination cooperation division (PICCD)/MOAD/ Jt Sec	October End-2014	SO identified
2.	Identification of national consultant, as needed (max 75 days WAE basis)	NPC/ FAO	Nov 3 rd Week	National consultant identified
3.	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee	NPC (PICCD/MOAD, DoA , DFTQC, NARC)	Dec -2014	Committees established
4.	Country Inception workshop in countries	FAO/ NPC with support of International and National Consultants)	1 st Week of JAN-2015	Awareness
5.	First meeting of Steering Committee	NPC (PICCD/MOAD) and IC	2 nd week of Jan-2015	Policy decisions - Approval of Plan of Action, formal approval of TC/CC; identification of CB and approval/ accreditation mechanism
6.	Meetings of Technical	NPC & IC + NC to	2 nd - 3 rd week	Country GAP

	Committee for finalization of Country GAP Standard (2 meetings)	support as needed	of Jan-2015	standard finalised
7.				
8.	Meetings of Certification Committee for developing accreditation and certification mechanism (2 meetings)	NPC/ IC/ NC to support	March and May, 2015	Draft Documents
9.	Review of existing documents of scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner – scheme, governing structure, others	SO, NC, IC	March, 2015	SO documents developed
10.	Review of existing documents with CB and development of documentation for it to function as CB for GAP	NPC and CB in consultation with IC	March, 2015	Document finalization
11.	Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication	NPC alongwith DoA, DFTQC	March, 2015	Scheme launching initialised
12.	Existing accreditation mechanism reviewed and deciding on best option for accreditation mechanism in country (through Steering Committee)	FAO	2 nd week of Nov, 2015	AB established
13.	Support Scheme owner/ AB in developing documentation for approving/ accrediting CBs	NPC and SO/AB in consultation with IC	May-2015	Draft documents for SO/AB
14.	Preparation of Training Manual / material	FAO/ IC	4 th week of Jan-2015	Common Training materials available
15.	Adaptation of manual to country situation and translation of training manual in national language	NPC with support of NC	May -2015	Local language documents available
16.	Publishing training materials	DoA,	June-2015	Printing and publishing
17.	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner, AB, CB –	NPC/FAO (IC)	June-2015	Capacity building

	scheme, auditing techniques, etc			
18.	One training programme for Resource persons (TOT) on elements of the National GAP scheme and implementation aspects	NPC/ FAO (IC)	June-2015	Resource person development
19.	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders – producer groups, potential buyers and retailers	NPC/IC/NC	1 st week of Aug2015	Scheme popularization
20.	Study visit to India/ other countries in region	FAO	Sept/ Oct-2015	Motivation
21.	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	DoA with support of IC	Nov- Dec-2015	Success story documented for presentation in Regional WS
Regional Activities				
22.	Documentation including procedures and formats for pilots	FAO	30 October 2014	Draft scheme available based on Consultations of Regional WS in September 2014
23.	Training manual preparation	FAO	Nov 2014	
24.	One regional training on ---	FAO	TBD	
25.	Trainings in other interested SAARC Country	FAO	TBD	
26.	Regional Workshop for finalization of Regional GAP Scheme and publication of report	FAO with participants of all SAARC countries	Jan 2016	Scheme finalized
27.	Publication of Reports/Training Modules	FAO	Feb 2016	Scheme available in printed form

Action Plan for the Project (Maldives) - DhiGAP

Sl. No.	Action Points	Responsibility (FAO/ Country/IC/N ational Support)	When (Month/date)	Output
National or In-country Activities				
28	Review of functions of scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner (MoFA/MFDA)	IC and National Support	15 Oct 14	Scheme Owner requirement, Governing structure – SC/TC/CC as per Maldives existing set up
29	Identification of National Consultant (75 days WAE basis), as needed (to support NPC and IC)	FAO and NPC	2 Nov 14	Interview and finalisation
30	Identifying the Scheme Owner (DG MFDA – Approval and ratification from MoH)	NPC	20 Nov 14	SO identified
31	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee and identifying stakeholders in consultation with SO (All in Male’)	NPC / SO	25 Nov 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of SC/CC/TC finalized and approved by SO • Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication
32	Country Inception workshop to inform about the Scheme	FAO and NPC with support of IC and NC	10 Dec. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling all SC/TC/CC • Presenting SGAP • Explaining role of SC/TC/CC • Agreeing on Module prioritization • Approach for implementation – either SO Govt. route or SO AB/CB route
33	First meeting of Steering Committee	SO/ NPC/IC	15 Dec.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the composition and ToR of TC and CC approved by SC • Roadmap for Scheme Develop as per FAO ToR presented and approved

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of CB and approval/ accreditation mechanism
34	Simultaneous Meetings of TC and CC (3 meeting - 1 st meeting introducing GAP/ 2 nd Meeting – Penultimate draft/ 3 rd meeting finalization, concurrence put up to SC)	SO/NPC/IC	By 20 April 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Criteria finalised • Certification Process finalised (Identifying AB/CB; Criteria for AB/CB requirement) • Use of Certification Mark/Logo approved
35	Review of existing documents of SO and develop documents for approval of CB	IC alongwith SO		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO established to implement scheme
36	Review of existing documents of CB and development of documents for it to function as a CB for GAP	IC alongwith CB		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CB documentation prepared
37	Put up DhiGAP document - Certification Criteria, Certification Process, AB.CB/SO approval mechanism / Use of Rules for Certification Mark document ready	SC/TC/CC along with SO with IC	2 May 15	DhiGAP document approved for launch
38	Preparation and publishing training materials	FAO/NPC and IC	15 May 15	Training Material ready for dissemination
39	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner/AB/CB scheme, auditing techniques, etc.	NPC/SO and FAO (IC)	May 15	Training Programme achieved and capacity built for SO/AB/CB
40	One training programme for resource persons (TOT) viz., consultants, technical resources of private bodies, quality managers or managers of Co-ops, Govt. extension officers/staff etc.	NPC/SO and FAO (IC)	May 15	Local resource person trained and approved to assist local producer/groups
41	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders –producer groups, resort owners, potential buyers and retailers	NPC/SO and FAO (IC)	May 15	Sensitization of Stakeholders achieved
42	Study visit to India/ other countries in region	FAO	Sept 15	Overview presented to SO/AB/CB
43	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	SO with support of IC	Jan 16	Case Presented

Draft Action Plan for Pakistan

Sl. No.	Action Points	Responsibility (FAO/ Country/ QCI)	When (Month/date)	Output
National or In-country Activities				
1.	Identifying the Scheme Owner	M/O NFSandR	Nov, 2014	
2.	Identification of national consultant (75 days WAE basis)	M/O NFSandR/ (DPP/PARC)	Nov, 2014	
3.	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee	M/ O NFSandR	Dec, 2014	
4.	Country Inception workshop in countries	M/O NFSandR (DPP/PARC/ FAO)	Dec, 2014	
5.	First meeting of Steering Committee	M/ O NFSandR	Jan, 2015	
6.	Meetings of Technical Committee for finalization of Country GAP Standard (2 meetings)	DPP/ PARC	Feb, 2015 Mar, 2015	
7.	Identification of CB and approval mechanism (Accreditation Body/ others)	M/O NFSandR/ (DPP/PARC)	Feb, 2015	
8.	Meetings of Certification Committee for developing accreditation and certification mechanism (2 meetings)	DPP/ PARC	Mar, 2015 Apr, 2015	
9.	Review of functions of scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner – scheme, governing structure, others	M/O NFSandR/ (DPP/PARC)	Jun, 2015	
10	Review of existing documents with CB and development of documentation for it to function as CB for GAP	M/O NFSandR/ (DPP/PARC)	Jul-Aug, 2015	
11	Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication	M/O NFSandR / DPP	Jul, 2015	
12	Existing accreditation mechanism reviewed and deciding on best option for accreditation	PARC	Jul, 2015	

	mechanism in country (through Steering Committee)			
13	Support Scheme owner/ AB in developing documentation for approving/ accrediting CBs	M/O NFSandR/ (DPP/PARC)	Aug-Sep, 2015	
14	Preparation of Training Manual / material	DPP/PARC	Sep, 2015	
15	Adaptation of manual to country situation and translation of training manual in national language	DPP/PARC	Sep, 2015	
16	Publishing training materials	M/O NFSandR	Oct, 2015	
17	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner, AB, CB – scheme, auditing techniques, etc	PARC/Accredited Bodies	Mar, 2015	
18	One training programme for Resource persons (TOT) on elements of the National GAP scheme and implementation aspects	M/O NFSandR/PARC	Feb, 2015	
19	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders –producer groups, potential buyers and retailers	PARC/DPP	Mar, 2015	
20	Study visit to India/ other countries in region	M/O NFSandR / (DPP/PARC)	Mar, 2015	
21	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	M/O NFSandR / (DPP/PARC)	Apr, 2015	

Draft Action Plan for Sri Lanka

<u>Sl. No.</u>	<u>Action Points</u>	<u>Responsibility</u> (FAO/ Country/ QCI)	<u>When</u> (Month/date)	<u>Output</u>
National or In-country Activities				
1.	Identifying the Scheme Owner	Ministry of Agriculture	10.10.2014	Nominating a SO
2.	Identification of national consultant (75 days WAE basis)	Ministry of Agriculture	01.11.2014	Nomination of a NC
3.	Setting up Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee	MOA/ SLSI	01.12.2014	SC TC CC
4.	Country Inception workshop in countries	MOA/ DOA/SLSI	January 2015	One day Workshop
5.	First meeting of Steering Committee	MOA	December 2014	Deciding major roles and responsibilities
6.	Meetings of Technical Committee for finalization of Country GAP Standard (2 meetings)	MOA/FAO	Feb 2015	Country GAP Standard
7.	Identification of CB and approval mechanism (Accreditation Body/ others)	SLSI/ SLAB	Feb 2015	Certification procedures
8.	Meetings of Certification Committee for developing accreditation and certification mechanism (2 meetings)	SLAB/ SLSI	March 2015- May 2015	Certification documents
9.	Review of functions of scheme owner and development of documentation for Scheme owner – scheme, governing structure, others	MOA/ DOA/ SLSI	April 2015	Document on scheme
10	Review of existing documents with CB and development of documentation for it to function as CB for GAP	SLSI	May,June 2015	New document
11	Identification of stakeholders and establishing communication	MOA/DOA	July2015	List of stakeholders
12	Existing accreditation mechanism reviewed and deciding on best option for accreditation mechanism in country (through	SLSI	July 2015	Amended accreditation docs

	Steering Committee)			
13	Support Scheme owner/ AB in developing documentation for approving/ accrediting CBs	MOA/SLSI/DO A	August 2015	Criteria on accreditation
14	Preparation of Training Manual / material	DOA/MOA	September 2015	Training manual
15	Adaptation of manual to country situation and translation of training manual in national language	DOA/MOA	October 2015	Manual
16	Publishing training materials	DOA	October 2015	Publishing training manuals
17	Training programmes (2) – for Scheme owner, AB, CB – scheme, auditing techniques, etc	FAO(MOA/SLSI)	November 2015	Two training programmes
18	One training programme for Resource persons (TOT) on elements of the National GAP scheme and implementation aspects	MOA/SLSI/DO A/FAO	December 2015	One training programme
19	Awareness programmes on GAP for various stakeholders –producer groups, potential buyers and retailers	MOA/SLSI/DO A	December 2015	One awareness programme
20	Study visit to India/ other countries in region			
21	Preparation for case study for Regional Workshop	MOA	February 2016	Case study doc.