

Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESA) organized trainings, workshops, participated in webinars and meetings, worked on strengthening country fora, and published several outputs during the period from October 2023 to March 2024.

### Knowledge Management

AESA, through its website, published eight Blogs, one Good Practices Note, five Book Reviews, eight Meeting Notes, six Face-to-Face interviews and one Blog Book. AESA is also active on social media, using Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp channel, Instagram, and uses its WhatsApp groups, and email list to promote the exchange of knowledge on extension and advisory services (EAS). AESA is also handling the knowledge management functions of APIRAS ([www.apiras.net](http://www.apiras.net)).

The Blog Book *Beyond Conversations on Extension: Enhancing Capacities to Address Emerging Challenges*, second in the series, is a compilation of 100 AESA blogs (101-200), and Field Notes published between 2019 and 2023. The book is comprised of blogs that elucidate AESA's core thematic thrust on enhancing the capacities of EAS and various other actors in the Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) in addressing emerging challenges.



As part of the TAP-AIS project, AESA published six Good Practices Notes on types of Institutional Innovations. These Notes capture the evolution and impact

of six of the institutional innovations that have strengthened the AIS in four countries across the Asia-Pacific, namely, Bangladesh, India, South Korea and Vietnam. This was a joint initiative, led by APIRAS in collaboration with APAARI, with the support of the Office of Innovation (OIN) at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

## Networking

AESA provided support in organizing the launch of the Arab Forum for Rural Advisory Services (AFRAS) held in a hybrid mode in Cairo, Egypt, on 8 February 2024. AESA is also a member of the Technical Advisory Committee of AFRAS.

AESA participated in the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) co-organized by the North American Agricultural Advisory Services Network (NAAAN), with GFRAS, held at Denver, Colorado, USA, from 16 to 18 October 2023. The meeting theme was 'Building the Next Generation of Leaders in Agriculture'.



AESA also participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Partner Assembly of the FAO-Tropical Agricultural Platform held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 21-23 November 2023, and provided substantive inputs on leveraging knowledge management for

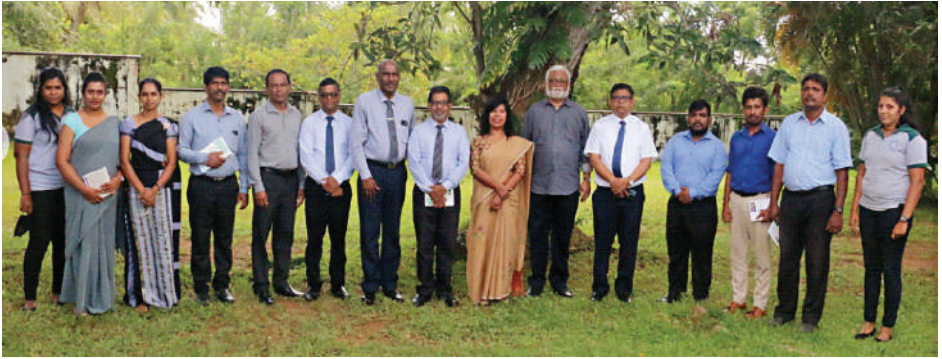
promoting cross learning and strengthening capacities for agri-food system transformation.

## Strengthening Country Fora

The Bangladesh Agricultural Extension Network (BAEN) organized a learning sharing workshop for highlighting innovative Austagram cheese production, and the extension services model supported under the Innovation Grant Fund of LMP Project. This workshop was held on 18 October 2023, at Hortex Foundation, Sech Bhaban, Dhaka, Bangladesh.



The Network of Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Sri Lanka (NAEASSL), with the support of the Coconut Cultivation Board (CCB), Sri Lanka has translated six NELK Modules into Sinhalese language for training extension and advisory providers in Sri Lanka. A meeting to launch the Sinhala version of these NELK modules was organised by the CCB, the NAEASSL and AESA at the Coconut Development Training Centre, Lunuwila, on 6 November 2023.



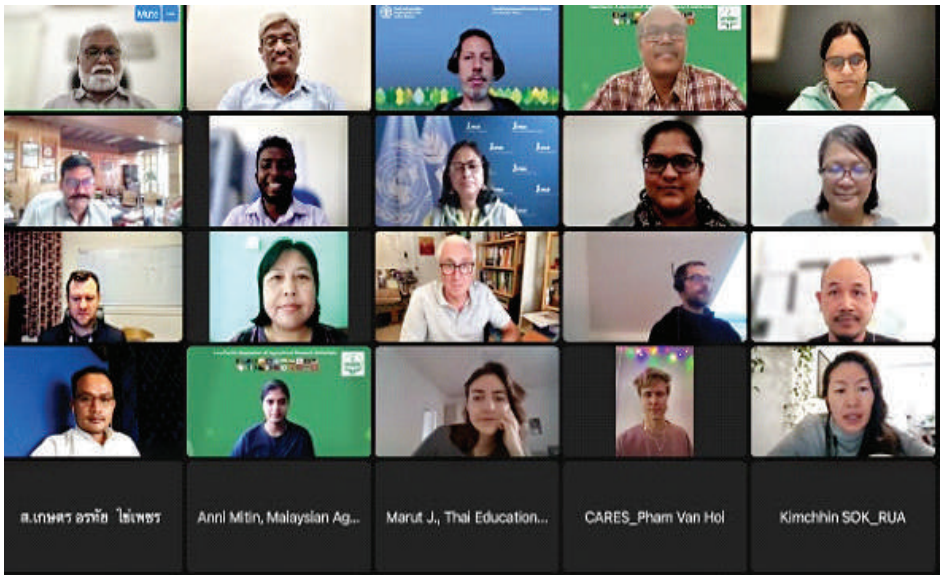
## Workshops

AESA partnered with Vertiver for organizing the Multi-stakeholder Workshop on 'Behaviour Change Communication for Natural Farming in India' on 8 December 2023 in New Delhi, India.



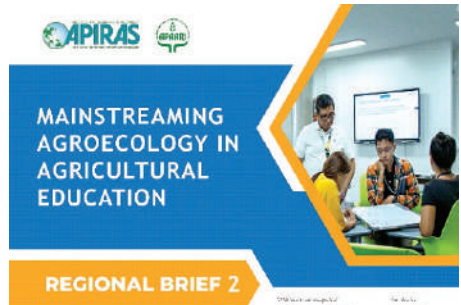
AESA also participated in the International Conference on 'Transformation into Organic and Agroecology-based Agriculture in Karnataka' organised by the Government of Karnataka, India, in collaboration with German International Cooperation (GIZ) during 5-7 January 2024 at Bengaluru, India.

# Capacity Development



AESA organized the Third Meeting of the Working Group (WG) on Agroecology on behalf of APIRAS in collaboration with APAARI and the FAO Office of Innovation as part of the TAP-AIS project on 7 December 2023. Twenty-seven participants from the Asia-Pacific region shared their experiences in designing and promoting courses on agroecology in higher education during this meeting. A Regional Brief titled ‘Mainstreaming Agroecology in Agricultural Education’ has been published based on the working group discussions.

AESA technically supported the Training of Trainers Workshop on ‘Strengthening Agricultural Innovation Systems for Agricultural Machinery in Pakistan: TAP Approaches and Tools’ organized from 11 to 13 December 2023.



**BACKGROUND**

Agroecology is a promising approach that is transforming agricultural systems across the Asia-Pacific region. Indeed, there is increasing evidence of positive results with the transition to agroecology, and these include stable yields, crop resilience, higher incomes for farmers, farmers and producers, improved nutrition and food security and enhanced biodiversity (Global Alliance for the Future of Food 2023). Several events and workshops across the region over the last year (including DAPAR22) have emphasized the need for agroecological approaches. However, to promote agroecology at scale, the demands include more professionals who can understand, appreciate, adapt and promote agroecological practices to suit varied agroecological systems, and to support farmers in care giving and managing sustainable and resilient farming systems.

But area our educational institutions developing professionals who can effectively support this transition to agroecology? Currently a gap exists in agricultural education programs (both in higher education and vocational education systems), in developing a deeper understanding of agroecological approaches. Thus, the regional (Asia-Pacific) working group on agroecology was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s TAP-AIS project, funded by the European Union (EU) to discuss the integration of agroecology into the agricultural education systems. The working group was led by the Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (AP-IRAS) in close collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (AAPARI), the Office of Innovation (OI) and the Farm Production and Protection Division (FPPD) of FAO. This Regional Brief primarily serves to present results from the productive discussions among working group members.