

5th BRIA Steering Committee Meeting



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The BRIA Regional Secretariat organized the 5th Steering Committee Meeting on 8-9 May 2017, in Bangkok, Thailand, attended by BRIA's partners including GIZ-develoPPP.de, BASF, Bayer, Yara, Olam, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP). BRIA benefitted from the observations and suggestions made by the Steering Committee to improve the overall implementation of the project.



Implementation achievements by country teams

BRIA Indonesia has trained 3,540 farmers via the Farmer Field School and the project will reach 6,700 farmers by the end of 2017. BRIA has helped farmers raise yields and lower production costs. In 2016, the Agricultural Extension Institute (STPP) in collaboration with BRIA conducted a study of the young generation on rice farming in North Sumatra with financial support from SNRD Asia. The results show the younger generation would be more interested in farming if more technology were applied. Furthermore, BRIA seeks to train a total of around 150 farmers to become growers of high quality seeds who can support 17,000 hectares or 1,200 farmers in this province. BRIA has created an android app to store farmer database such as GPS locations, age, field size, yield for an internal monitoring purpose, which will be handed over to the Ministry of Agriculture. In the near future, the project will apply the database to support a crop insurance scheme for farmers.

BRIA Philippines has trained 4,605 farmers and the outreach is expected to be 8,905 farmers by the end of October 2017. BRIA held the BRIA School Days to promote to rice farmers, best farming practices specifically focused on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and farm business topics. The School Days were organized by BRIA expert trainers and trained extension workers at public venues (e.g. schools) with four classes per day for approximately 150 farmers. In addition, the demo plots set up by BRIA with farmers were successful in showcasing recommended rice farming technologies and GAP. Finally, the BRIA training modules were published with the two modules 'Farming as a Business' and 'Farmers' Engagement: Basics of Adult Training' reserved specifically for the country owing to a licensing agreement. BRIA will continue with market linkages after testing two models in Leganes and Pototan in Iloilo. Early this year in this province, BRIA contributed to SRP testing in collaboration with Department of Agriculture RFO 6 and IRRI.



In Viet Nam, at least 2,764 rice farmers in the three provinces of Dong Thap, Hau Giang and Kien Giang have been applying the recommended successfully tested smart rice cultivation systems. Concepts for the successful implementation of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models have been developed and submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). Twenty PPP models have been established and operated from 2015 to presently, covering 3,959 ha and 20 farmer cooperatives and groups. When fields inside and outside the models were compared, an average 40% increase in gross margin for farmers was observed. Sixty six provincial staff and lead farmers were provided with Training of Trainers (ToT) on integrating IPM application into smart rice cultivation systems (1 Must Do, 6 Reductions). The Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) standard was introduced to 102 Vietnamese key partners including the private sector, government, farmer cooperatives, NGOs, universities, institutes.

In Thailand, training is intended to cover 200 Community Rice Centres (CRCs) in the four provinces of Ubon Ratchathani, Roi Et, Sisaket and Surin in the Northeast, with 5,678 trained so far including farmers and 'smart' or lead farmers. In the central region, the 'Farmers Love' TV edutainment series has been BRIA's major focus to reach a large audience. The current episode is 'Farmers Love Sustainable Rice,' starting on 20 March this year and being aired every Monday, from 14.15-14.35, on Thai TV Channel 5. This episode aims to promote sustainable rice farming based on the SRP standard and the rice knowledge developed by the Thai Rice Department.

SRP training and rice cultivation according to the SRP standard have become an important aspect of market linkages for BRIA in Thailand. SRP training ranged from an introduction to the SRP, to land preparation, water, and nutrient management, and labour conditions. The sold SRP standard rice resulted in higher income for farmers.

SRP tools include the standard and performance indicators. Also needed are an assurance system, regulations, support policy, decision-making and data collection tools. SRP encompasses 46 requirements created from 160 suggestions to improve rice cultivation towards sustainability. Twelve performance indicators measure the sustainability of factors based on the three pillars of sustainability (business, environment, society). BRIA seeks to employ SRP as a framework for sustainability. BRIA training materials have covered 75-85% of SRP standard topics (which were developed before the SRP standard was on-boarded). In Indonesia and the Philippines, farmers have been assessed against the SRP standard while the 'Market Linkages' component in Thailand has linked SRP with the miller and trader.

