

# Knowledge-sharing Workshop on Processes and Outcomes of Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD)

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## Background and Rationale

Since January 2015, SEARCA has implemented the project Piloting and Up-Scaling Effective Models of ISARD in accordance with its 10th Five-Year Plan. Through two pilot projects in the Philippines, SEARCA aspires to make a meaningful difference in the lives of farmers and rural communities through active engagement of, and collaboration with, rural communities and institutions; facilitating increased and better communication among major stakeholders; and strengthening their capabilities.

SEARCA had engaged in action research like these pilot projects even in much earlier decades, such as “social laboratory” and “integrated area development” projects as well as pilot testing of farm technologies. Its 50 years of experience in ARD provides a fertile ground for harvesting lessons, principles and concepts, and good practices and technologies that characterize an effective agricultural system or ISARD model.

While implementing the project, SEARCA has seen to it that it provides relevant learning opportunities to its partners and stakeholders in its two pilots, while opening the same opportunity to other interested development researchers and practitioners in the region. In June 2015, the Center offered a training-workshop on

## Objectives

At the end of the five-day workshop, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Review and analyze their project designs and KM set-up if any, adding value with a better-informed KM and communication strategy;
2. Enhance their knowhow on selected needed KM and communication skills, from planning, designing, to executing KM/communication initiatives;
3. Design a KM and communication plan appropriate for the requirements of their action projects; and
4. Prepare a draft prototype KM/communication tool or material most useful for their respective action projects.

## Expected Outputs

At the end of the workshop, participants will be expected to have the following outputs:

1. New or reviewed and improved KM/communication plan/strategy appropriate for an existing action project or development initiative
2. Draft prototype KM/communication tools or materials that participants may refine and finalize back at work

Developing, Planning, and Implementing ISARD Projects to a total of 21 participants comprising 10 project partners and 11 other interested participants from three Southeast Asian countries and the Philippines. Participants of this training-workshop applied an innovative and integrative systems-based research framework and examined the commodity system approach, commodity trap analysis, and smallholder empowerment as applied in packaging an ISARD project proposal, mindful of adaptive project management principles.

The Center's partners in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro and Inopacan, Leyte then got organized and had their start-up activities until they formally launched their respective pilot projects in February and March 2016. In May 2016, SEARCA again invited them to send representatives to a forum-workshop on Innovation Platforms, Advisory Services, and Knowledge Management in ISARD here at SEARCA. Here, seven of pilot project representatives joined 18 other participants from five Southeast Asian countries and the Philippines and distilled emerging and best practices in innovation platforms (IP), rural advisory services (RAS), and knowledge management (KM) as pathways toward ISARD.

In August 2016, pilot project counterparts again participated in a SEARCA training-workshop, this time on Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for ISARD. The training-workshop aimed to equip participants to track whether the project and its various components on the ground are traversing their intended outcome pathways; whether the flow of resources or inputs and implementation of project activities are on time; and to safeguard transparency, accountability, and integrity in the project.

This fourth offering for pilot project partners and stakeholders now focuses on knowledge management (KM) toward ISARD. The offering is timely because the pilot projects are now full-swing in their implementation and learning phase and have reflected on their envisioned outcomes in the earlier training workshop held last August.

One common pitfall of action research projects is their focus on interventions and relegation of learning, reflection, and knowledge sharing to the tail-end of their project terms. On the other hand, much value is gained if and when KM, just as with M&E, are factored, designed, and implemented side-by-side with development interventions. This workshop is therefore designed as a learning-by-doing event that would enable participants to conceptualize the KM and communication components of their pilot projects, equipping them with necessary skills to start-up their knowledge-sharing and policy advocacy initiatives toward ISARD.

## Modules

Module 1. Rationale of and Opportunities for KM and Communication in ISARD Action Projects

Module 2. Processes and Outcomes of ISARD Action Projects

Module 3. Planning and Strategizing KM and Communication Initiatives in ARD

Module 4. KM/Communication Skills and How-to Workshops

Workshop 1 – Sharing knowledge via images – basic photography and graphics

Workshop 2 – Communicating with policymakers via briefs

Workshop 3a – Basics of audiovisual presentation

Workshop 3b – Basics of social media, web tools and techniques

Workshop 3c – Case story and feature writing

## Modalities

The workshop will include practice-oriented lecturettes, presentation of cases and exemplars, and hands-on exercises. Some workshops will provide opportunities for parallel learning, providing choices as may be relevant to the needs of participants.

Module 2 on processes and outcomes of ISARD action projects will be a recurrent theme and comprise the content of Module 3 and Module 4 workshops. Workshops 3a, 3b, and 3c will be parallel, allowing participants to focus on developing their knowledge-sharing scheme they are most interested in. They may join more than one of the parallel workshops and have different outputs depending on their entry skills and learning pace.

Each workshop will have a designated tutor. Resource persons and workshop tutors will present principles, pointers, and guidelines based on practice and real cases.

On Day 5, participants will present their workshop outputs and allow shared learning with their fellow participants as they critique and provide suggestions on the outputs for further improvement.

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