Dhaka, April 22, 2024: The SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), in collaboration with IFPRI South Asia and the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), has inaugurated the three-day 'Training and Validation Workshop on Modules of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Technologies in South Asia' training workshop on April 22, 2024. The event, featuring the participation of 22 scientists, researchers, extension workers, and policymakers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka was held from April 22 to 24, 2024, at BRAC CDM in Gazipur, Bangladesh. The workshop, organized under the auspices of the 'Consortium for Scaling-up Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia (C-SUCSeS)' aimed to address the pressing need for sustainable agricultural practices in the face of climate change. Through presentations, discussions, and practical sessions, participants will refine 10 modules focusing on CSA technologies tailored to the specific needs of South Asian countries.

The inaugural ceremony on April 22 was attended by esteemed guests - Dr. Debasish Sarker, Director General of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Dr. Harunur Rashid, Director of SAARC Agriculture Centre, Ms. Mamata Pradhan, Research Coordinator, IFPRI and Mr. Kinzang Gyeltshen, Regional Programme Coordinator of C-SUCSeS project.

Director General of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Dr. Debasish Sarker highlighted the pivotal role of CSA in enhancing agricultural systems amidst climate change. Emphasizing its potential for food security and broader development goals, he underscored CSA's ability to boost productivity, resilience, and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Dr. Sarker noted the under-recognized yet impactful CSA practices in Bangladesh and stressed the importance of sharing knowledge through workshops like the upcoming training on CSA technologies in South Asia. He reaffirmed their commitment to delivering location-specific, climate-smart solutions for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He said, "We are happy that this C-SUCSeS project gives our scientists a platform to do inventory on CSA technologies for Bangladesh and they published An Inventory Report as a good reference document. I am personally very happy that BARI is working on this project and trying to contribute to our national agriculture systems. I would like to give thanks to SAC, IFAD, IFPRI, other teams of SAARC member state countries, and the whole OFRD, BARI team for carrying out such outstanding work under this project. BARI will extend her cooperation for such important future endeavors."

Director of SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid said, "We all know that South Asia is one of the world's most vulnerable regions in terms of climate change impacts. Agricultural production in the region is severely constrained by extreme climate events whose frequency has increased in the past few decades. In light of these challenges, scaling up climate smart agriculture practices has become crucial to enable farming communities to adapt to climate change and enhance their resilience to its effects". He also added, "several primary obstacles that impede the expansion of climate smart agriculture technologies in South Asia are the lack of

access to technology, policy and institutional constraints, and the lack of awareness about CSA at local, provincial, and national levels. To address some of these barriers and strengthen the capacity of Member States, SAC and IFPRI with the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute have partnered to organize this important training and validation workshop."

Research Coordinator, IFPRI, Dr. Mamata Pradhan remarked, “The scale of climate change is large so any adoption or mitigation through CSA can only make a dent if done at scale. Therefore, collective efforts can make a difference for millions of smallholders and enhance regional cooperation in agriculture-climate-food security nexus. And a big component has to be capacity building training at the farm level. So, to make these training programs more effective, IFPRI in collaboration with SAC and the National Focal points has been working on developing CSA Training Manual.”

The agricultural sector in South Asia faces significant pressure to adapt to climate change while ensuring food security and livelihoods for a growing population. Extreme weather events and shifting climatic patterns threaten crop yields and livelihoods, necessitating sustainable agricultural practices to enhance resilience and optimize resource usage. Recognizing these challenges, key organizations such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and SAARC Development Fund (SDF) formed the Consortium for Scaling-up Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia (C-SUCSeS) in 2021. This consortium aims to promote sustainable and resilient agricultural intensification through evidence-based strategies and capacity-building initiatives.

As part of the C-SUCSeS project, a series of training modules focused on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies are being developed and tested. These modules will play a crucial role in building the capacity of farmers, researchers, extension workers, and policymakers. This workshop served as a platform to present and refine these CSA training modules. The event

witnessed fruitful discussions, peer learning, and knowledge exchange among participants, contributing to stronger regional cooperation in combating the adverse effects of climate change on agriculture.