

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Asia-Pacific Countries Adopt Dhaka Declaration on Rural Development**

Dhaka, 28 December 2010. Ministers from the Asia-Pacific region adopted the Dhaka Declaration on Rural Development today. The declaration came as the conclusion to the 5-day long Second Ministerial Meeting on Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific. Syed Ashraf Islam, LGRD&C Minister of Bangladesh pronounced the declaration on behalf of the ministers/representatives of 15 countries of the Asia-Pacific region in presence of the press/media at a hotel in Dhaka today. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the ministerial meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

The declaration reiterated the countries' commitment towards Integrated Rural Development as a holistic approach to ensure sustainable livelihoods to the rural poor through decentralised governance for a development framework that ensures pro-poor policies and resources; strengthens the mechanism to listen to the voices of the hard core poor and other vulnerable groups; empowers local governments etc. The declaration further calls for policy reforms for rural poor's access to resources (land, water, ICT and finance), support to decentralised governance with transparency and accountability, strengthening capacities of national RD institutions and making CIRDAP an effective regional platform for providing timely interventions and appropriate issues in rural development and poverty alleviation process.

The Second Ministerial Meeting on Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific was held on 24-28 January 2010 jointly hosted by the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division of the Ministry of LGRD&C of Bangladesh and the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) with support from the Government of Japan. The theme of the meeting was Working Together for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods. Rural Development Ministers and/or their representatives from all 14 CIRDAP member countries namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam along with Fiji Islands attended the programme as well as representatives from some international / donor organisations.

The concluding two-day ministerial meeting was preceded by the CIRDAP Executive Committee and Governing Council meetings and a Regional Policy Dialogue on 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods' during 24-26 January 2010.

Zeenat Ahmed  
Asst. Information and  
Communication Officer  
CIRDAP