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Expressing her great satisfaction with the achievements of the CDAIS (Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems) project, Claire Coote, the Agrinatura Focal Person said Wednesday that she hoped that the project participants – public sector research, extension and agricultural marketing officials, private sector agro-processors, agricultural universities, training organisations, NGOs and farmers would continue to interact and work together to address and overcome the many challenges faced by the agricultural sector.

The CDAIS National Forum, held in the BARC auditorium, was the final event of the three-year project jointly implemented Agrinatura, the FAO and the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council. The project piloted an approach to improve systems supporting agricultural innovation by strengthening the functional capacities (soft skills) of those involved in them – farmer groups, marketing, processing, extension and research organisations. The Forum provided an opportunity to showcase achievements and farmers and national innovation facilitators shared the outcomes of the approach and their learning with senior ministry staff and other invited guests. The project has been funded by the European Union and Manfred Fernholz, Team Leader, Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Development, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh endorsed the approach, saying that “Development must be sustainable; though tractors and tools last a few years, human capacities last forever. Dr Nur Khondaker, FAO Focal Person for the project concluded, “We see the results and successes today. CDAIS has changed people and given them a voice at policy level by forging links between farmers and the government. And we will strengthen the National Technical Committee as a platform to continue this work.” The event was organised on behalf of the Agrinatura-implementing organisation, the Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, UK and Ascend International, Dhaka.



*Shabana Begum Panna of BAPA sharing the benefits of CDAIS organisational capacity strengthening at a roundtable discussion with representations from DAM and BARC at the National Forum.*



*Azazun Nabar from the Ministry of Planning making an intervention at the CDAIS National Forum.*



*The CDAIS Bangladesh team.*