

# *Investments for Food Security in Asia-Pacific:*

## **For Whom and For What?**

We, representatives from national and regional organizations and cooperatives of small scale women and men farmers, fishers, and indigenous peoples, rural youth and women, and development NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region, wish to present to the delegates of this investment forum organized jointly by Asian Development Bank (ADB), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) the following:

### **Away from “Business as Usual” Approach**

Partnerships and investments to promote food security in the Asia-Pacific region cannot proceed in the “business-as-usual” approach. Our work and study with poor communities consistently show that large scale trade, technology and business practices of large agro-industrial corporations have marginalized and further displaced small holder producers, who lost their access to and control over productive resources and assets.

National and regional policies, particularly in financing and trade, have reinforced these failures and continuing food insecurity in many countries.

We welcome socially responsible private investments in agribusiness with the condition that they are benign and equitable and work for the betterment of the small scale farmers. We are totally opposed to business models that are exploitative and result in the marginalization and displacement of the small scale rural sectors.

### **The Need for Change**

There is a need to bolster investments in food security. But these investments should be within the framework of sustainable, pro-poor agricultural policies in the region and should correct the misguided priorities on export-oriented agriculture production, market solutions and industrial, chemical intensive agriculture. In line with this, we propose that investments should:

- Adhere to the principles of Human Rights, Farmers’ Rights, Fishers’ Rights and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights. There must be recognition and institutionalization of the farmers’ rights to land and other productive resources in agriculture. This includes as well the rights to benefit sharing from the use of plant and animal genetic resources.
- Support sustainable food production using integrated, diversified, organic and eco-intensification farming systems and approaches.
- Increase public investments in irrigation, post-harvest facilities, rural infrastructure and research and technology.
- Oppose monopoly control in domestic food and agricultural trade, and strengthen

farmers' participation in markets and in the value chain through farmers' organizations and cooperatives.

- Make the policy shift towards enhancing food self sufficiency and away from export –oriented agricultural production, and towards enacting appropriate land use policies, import control and tariffs, price support and subsidies.
- Promote changes in the design of partnership agreements among stakeholders that will truly empower smallholders producers.
- Urgently invest in disaster risk reduction and adaptation to protect farmers from the effects of climate change

Along this, responsible public and private investments and grants should be made to:

- Governments, CSOs, small-scale farmers', fishers' organization, small-scale private sector
- support public R&D
- quality and appropriate extension services and systems
- infrastructure which will improve access to agriculture and aquaculture resources to the poor women and men farmers, fishers, indigenous peoples, and that would enable them to produce food for communities and secure their livelihood systems
- Promote ecologically sound farming, forestry and fisheries systems
- Validate and upscale sustainable and farmers' led pilot projects including community-based seeds and breeds initiatives
- Support production, post-harvest and marketing services for the development of local value chains and give access to market
- Promote and enhance farmers and fishers associations and cooperatives and social enterprises as the social economy institutions of these small scale farmers and producers.
- Ensure that women are given priority in all investment on agriculture and food security and are meaningfully engaged in the designing, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of these sustainable agriculture and food security projects

### **Our Calls**

- We call for significant participation of CSOs in setting and/or reviewing the food security and sectoral policies of ADB
- We call for ADB to ensure its commitment of 2 billion dollars a year and increasing it to support smallholder sustainable agriculture related to food security and sovereignty initiatives including concern on nutrition
- We call on governments in Asia and Pacific region to devote at least 10 % of national budgetary resources to sustainable agriculture
- We call on governments to ensure rationalized land and water use to ensure protection of natural resources for food production which guarantees access and

control of small-scale farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples to these natural resources

On institutionalizing meaningful participation of social movements and civil society in processes related to investments for food security processes

The space provided for civil society in the Investment Forum is appreciated and is considered a basis for further improved dialogues, notably enhanced support for participation of small scale food producers. We call on ADB, FAO, IFAD and its member states to:

- Create a permanent mechanism to facilitate the meaningful participation of smallholder agricultural producers, workers and enterprises that will guarantee that their interests are adequately represented at such fora and in accompanying processes building on existing initiatives, processes and institutions
- Encourage and facilitate the participation of CSOs in on-going and future agricultural investment related programs on capacity building, research, extension, etc.

#### **Our Commitments**

We, the civil society participants in this gathering, are committed to working together to make our governments, intergovernmental bodies and the IFIs/ multilateral agencies, other donors and socially responsible private sectors to respond to the needs of the poor and marginalized.

We will continue our efforts to make these agencies and its member states--our governments--accountable to the needs of the region's peoples through constructive and principled engagement in various processes and the monitoring and evaluation of their work.

- We will contribute our expertise in the deliberations on the substance and methodologies of the various agricultural investments for agriculture at national, regional and international levels;
- We will cooperate with development partners who are respecting the principles set forth and are willing to work along the agenda proposed herewith.

We will intensify our efforts in empowering local communities to contribute towards and benefit from sustainable development efforts in the Asia Pacific region.

## ANNEX 1: List of Specific Recommendations

### **1. Replication and Up-scaling of Sustainable, Organic Agriculture**

These agricultural systems have been developed over the past three decades without or with little assistance. They have proven to increase productivity and smallholders' income and quality of life. Technologies such as integrated and diversified farming, System of Rice Intensification, bio-composting, vermiculture, low-input agriculture, integrated pest management, community seed banking, use of small-scale community based renewable energy such as bio-gas, charcoal briquette domestication of other livestock species (other than cows, pig, sheep, chickens, goats), early warning systems and weather forecasting combining both traditional and modern science based knowledge.

It is time to increase investments and assistance to replicate and upscale them in the interest of sustainable food security and poverty alleviation through the following:

#### ***Agricultural research and development (ARD)***

- a)* Agricultural research development and extension investments should be based on the needs of smallholders and should bring immediate relief as well as mid and long term solutions. Smallholders shall be involved directly in the identification, design, implementation and monitoring of research activities
- b)* Invest in the research and documentation of various traditional, local knowledge and practices on crop breeding, seed banking, integrated pest management, organic fertilizers, energy-efficient mechanisms (small scale bio-energy technologies ) and other technologies and practices; in knowledge sharing, information dissemination
- c)* prioritize public research on soil fertility, pest & disease management, seeds and breeds for low input and organic agriculture
- d)* Investments in ARD shall be increased and be shifted from agro-chemical agriculture systems to agro-ecological organic systems. Other priority areas in ARD should include protection of the environment, promotion of biodiversity, natural resources management, climate change adaptation.
- e)* We are gravely concerned about the growing interest on the focus and resource allocation on GMOs, and the growing pressure on governments of developing countries to devote the meager R&D funds to capital intensive and high input technologies.

We urge ADB, FAO and IFAD to conduct a study on the cost-benefit analysis of public investments on GMOs and agro-chemical farming systems, as compared to low-input, agro-ecological agricultural systems.

- a) The precautionary approach as adopted by the Rio Convention on Sustainable Development should be used in ARD.
- b) ADB, FAO and IFAD shall seek cooperation with additional research initiatives and institutions promoting agro-ecological organic research institutions, rather than limiting its support and activities to its traditional partners such as IRRI, CGIAR.
- c) Strengthen links between research, advisory and extension services to promote sustainable agriculture; strengthen partnerships between research institutions, extension workers and organizations of smallholder farmers, particularly women.

#### ***Support services and infrastructure***

Invest in the important support services that directly benefit small farmers : community-based irrigation, accessible and affordable credit, farm -to-market roads, crop insurance, early warning and weather forecasting systems , post harvest facilities.

#### ***Connectivity***

Invest in the development and improvement of traditional, local markets including wholesale markets owned and managed by local government in partnership with organized small-scale food producers

Invest in enhancing the position of small-scale farmers in sustainable agricultural food value chain to become significant player in the management and coordination of the sustainable value chain through:

- farmer-friendly market information mechanism to help small-scale farmer make informed decision (price, demand, market standards/requirement)
- promote collective/group marketing by investing in formation, organizing of commodity-based producer's association/cooperative support service providers that will assist in capacity building (organizational development, skills e.g. negotiation, etc) and networking of producer's cooperative/association as well as consumer groups
- Soft loan for Start-up capital for trading and marketing
- Subsidy for basic infrastructure – pre and post harvest facilities (drying, milling, etc), stable energy source

## **2. Sustainable Management of Land and Natural Resources**

Access and control of land, water and common property resources by small scale farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples are critical in enhancing food security and leads to sustainable natural resource management.

Land and natural resource management is nowhere in the priorities or core areas of operation of ADB's Strategy 2020. We call on ADB, FAO and IFAD to ensure that all of their investments will facilitate promotion and protection of the rights of farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples, including their right to lands, water, forests and seeds as contained in the UN Voluntary Guidelines on the Realization of the Right to Food, Article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, UN Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples as basis.

ADB, FAO and IFAD should assess large agricultural investments on how these rights are respected and promoted. Investments that could alter the natural balance of the environment or the ecosystem should be prohibited.

Civil society organizations supported by a diversity of development partners, including FAO and IFAD have developed models and systems on community based agro-forestry/coastal resource/watershed management, as well as integrated, diversified, organic farming systems and System of Rice Intensification which are worth replicating and upscaling. They should be more aggressively advocated and promoted towards private sector and governments.

### **3. Participatory Governance and Management**

Along these lines, we recommend ADB, FAO and IFAD to:

- a)* Use participatory approaches in decision making and management of projects. Mechanisms for consultations which have a real bearing on subsequent decision-making and management processes should be institutionalized.
- b)* Review of the food security and sectoral policies of ADB with the participation of the CSOs
- c)* We call on FAO and IFAD to continue the reform process of the Committee on Food Security, particularly at national and regional levels
- d)* We call for independent mechanisms for monitoring investments in agriculture across the region including CSOs and development partners

### **4. Focus on Women Farmers, Fishers and Indigenous Peoples**

At the UN Millennium Review Summit this year, it was highlighted that supporting women farmers must be the focus of coherent, appropriately budgeted national plans to make a five-year breakthrough against hunger. This is because in Asia and Pacific, women are in charge of putting food on the table, and do 50-80% of agriculture work. Investments can go on labor-saving devices for women, improving their crops and varieties, training and extension work with them, securing their rights to land and access to financial services. Researches and experiences have shown that projects and activities managed and implemented by women generate more success.

**5. Invest in Activities that Motivate the Rural Youth to Engage in Agriculture**

Young farmers are the future of agriculture. Capacity-building and enhancement programmes for rural youth to engage in sustainable food production and agriculture and rural employment shall be supported.

**6. Invest in Organizing and Capacity Building with Farmers, Fishers and Indigenous Peoples**

Massive replication and promotion of technologies will be more efficient and rapid if we work with organized groups of small rural producers. Emphasis can be placed on developing peoples' organizations and cooperatives along geographical and crop / commodity lines, as well as in investing in business associations and scientific organizations supporting the needs of small scale producers and entrepreneurs to capture and add value to on-farm, post harvest and off-farm enterprises .

*Adopted by participants to the CSO Side Event and the CSO Special Event during the Investment Forum for Food Security in Asia and the Pacific (Manila, 7 to 9 July 2010):*

**Agribusiness Action Initiative (AAI)**  
**Aliansi Petani Indonesia (API)**  
**Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)**  
**Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)**  
**Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (AsiaDHRRA)**  
**Center for Agricultural Extension Volunteer – CAEV-VietDHRRA**  
**Cambodia Farmers' Association for Agricultural Development (CFAD)**  
**Cambodian Center for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC)**  
**Cambodian NGO Alliance for Cooperation (CNAC-CamboDHRRA)**  
**Farmer and Nature Net (FNN)**  
**Farmers' Federations' Association for Development in Thailand (SorKorPor)**  
**Farmers' Life Improvement and Future Light Youth Organization**  
**Indonesian Farmers and Fishers Society Organization (WAMTI)**  
**International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP-Asia)**  
**International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)**  
**National Cooperative Union of India (NEDAC) and NEDAC-Asia**  
**Organic Agriculture Association of Thailand**  
**Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO)**  
**Pambansang Kilusan ng Mga Magsasaka (PAKISAMA)**  
**Peoples Service Organization**  
**Phil Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)**  
**Philippines Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF)**  
**Regional Network for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific**  
**Save the Children-Philippines**  
**Social and Economic Developers Association (SEDA)**  
**STAR Kampuchea**  
**Taiwan National Pingtung University of Science & Technology (NPUST)**  
**Vietnam Farmers Union (VNFU)**  
**Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management (WOCAN)**  
**World Vision International**  
**World Fair Trade Organization (WFTOA)**