6TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRESENTATION OF MODELS OF NGO PO PARTNERSHIP

REGIONAL FORUM ON DEVELOPMENT AND ACTION POINTS IN WTO DOHA ROUND AND US FTA IN ASIA

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SIXTH ASIADHRRA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“Roles of NGOs and POs in Sustainable Rural Development: Models of PO-NGO Partnership”
The 6th General assembly of AsiaDHRRA started at 9:00 in the morning with Soetrisno Kusumohadi, Chairperson, and Marlene Ramirez, Secretary General, anchoring the Assembly. A total of 60 participants were registered coming from the AsiaDHRRA members, secretariat and partners from AFA and other regional / global organizations. The DHARRA Network Malaysia hosted the general assembly.

The assembly started with an opening prayer led by Goffar Rhaman from InDHRRA. This was followed by a ritual led by the staff of DHARRA Network Malaysia and local partners. They performed a simple but beautiful Pongal Celebration or harvesting festival ritual consisting of songs and dances. This festival is celebrated yearly particularly by the farming community as it marks the end of the harvest season. At this time, local people visit temples and invoke the blessing of God for a good and prosperous beginning of the year. This festival is celebrated by preparing the sweet milk rice. Marimuthu Nadason shared uncooked rice from his pot to all the participants and asked each one to put the rice back into the clay pot. The rice was later cooked and shared during break time.

After the ritual Marimuthu Nadason officially welcomed the participants. He shared global facts on poverty (see annex A: Global facts) which the assembly needs to bear in mind as the network looks into its rural development work in the next five years. He mentioned that half of the world’s nearly three billion people live on less than two dollars a day.

In terms of availability and affordability of basic social services particularly education, it is alarming to note that nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names. In addition, approximately 790 million people in the developing world are still chronically undernourished, almost two-thirds of whom reside in Asia and the Pacific. He also noted that the world economy is
dominated by corporations – 51 per cent of the world’s 100 wealthiest bodies are corporations. He affirmed the common observation that there is growing and deepening disparity between the rich and the poor across regions and across countries.

A few hundred millionaires now own as much wealth as the world’s poorest 2.5 billion people. The 48 poorest countries account for less than 0.4 per cent of global exports. These are the challenges that NGOs have to face. Marimuthu Nadason challenged the assembly “to assess our development work and identify more effective strategies to create an impact in reducing poverty particularly in Asia.”

To formally open the general assembly, Soetrisno Kusomohadi, chairperson of AsiaDHRRRA, gave his opening remarks (see annex B: Opening message). In his message, he said that “we need to identify and meaningfully divide our roles in support of our common objectives. We need to have synergy. We need to rediscover our common ties and nurture our common dreams.” He invited all participants to listen and actively engage in the forum of defining the NGO-PO partnership model. “At the end of this forum,” he added, “we will strengthen our commitment to building more empowered POs and to a dynamic partnership towards ensuring that there is a happier and better future for all our children.”

The participants then introduced themselves. This was followed by an orientation by Marlene Ramirez on the flow and process of the General Assembly. She explained that the General Assembly will have three parts. The first part will be a forum on NGO-PO partnership models, the second part will be the business meeting and the third part will be a regional forum on the developments and action points on WTO-DOHA and US-FTA.
The 6th AsiaDHRRA general assembly was held in time to complete the strategic planning process which started in March 2005. It provided an ideal venue to discuss, validate and give full mandate to the outcomes of the 2005 strategic planning.

The first part of the assembly was a forum on NGO-PO partnership. It included keynote messages and presentations of papers to inspire and trigger analysis and understanding. Four cases of PO-NGO partnerships in Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Taiwan were documented (following focused group discussions) and were presented during the forum. Plenary discussions and workshops to distill inputs and facilitate the dialogue and exchanges of views were also provided.

A visit to the community partners of the DHRRA host was made to help build understanding of the partner’s work and instill solidarity in the network. The GA proper had its traditional reporting of accomplishments to the Assembly by the Chairperson and the reporting of every DHRRA member of their achievements and directions. The election of AsiaDHRRA’s new set of ExeCom, which stands as its Board in between general assemblies, for the period of 2006-2010 also took place.

“Roles of NGOs and POs in Sustainable Rural Development: Models of NGO-PO Partnership”

The chosen theme manifests a renewal of the commitment made by the network in previous General Assemblies - to transform DHRRA solidarity into more concrete form which will make the DHRRAs more responsive and relevant to the needs of the rural poor. Specifically the assembly’s objectives were as follows:

1. To understand the current rural development situation in Asia, primarily Southeast Asia, as affected by trade liberalization, government and inter-governmental policies and programs, amidst various development initiatives of CSOs and communities based on sustainable development paradigms.

2. To draw lessons and learnings from the partnership experiences of POs and NGOs and use these as input in strengthening capacities of NGOs in their roles of helping empower and build strong People’s Organizations.

3. To develop a shared (and evolving) framework of PO-NGO Partnership towards building autonomous, strong, and effective POs.

4. To define partnership principles and parameters that could guide and govern strategic and long term partnerships between POs and NGOs and other stakeholders.

5. To review and affirm the five-year Strategic Goals of AsiaDHRRA
Good Morning to all of you, the AsiaDHRRA Family and friends!

With joy in my heart, I welcome you to our 6th General Assembly. Let me take this opportunity to express my personal feelings about my fruitful eight years in AsiaDHRRA. I praise God for allowing me to serve you all as the chairperson of the network for the past four years. Taking on this leadership role has been a response to God’s call for service.

My journey with you has been very meaningful and given me great pleasure. I took pride in belonging to this community of committed development workers journeying together in a dynamic yet pleasant and enabling environment.

Aside from the tasks we were able to fruitfully undertake, I am also grateful for the warmth and genuine friendship we all shared. I am proud of the participatory and productive endeavors we have done. We struggled to overcome selfish interest and persisted to work for the benefit of poor rural people.

For me, the acceptance and recognition of many partners in the work we are all doing for sustainable rural development is something very meaningful and significant. With this recognition have come both opportunities and challenges.

For us to seize this opportunity, AsiaDHRRA in the near future would need a young, dynamic and visionary leader. As I end my term of office, I am confident that we have such a leader among our midst. As a family, I encourage each one to continue nurturing our solidarity and DHRRA spirit. Let us allow the dialogue of life to flow freely and productively. It is with great hope and confidence that I look forward to a stronger, dynamic and harmonious AsiaDHRRA that works for the empowerment of rural people.

Thank you for all your support and friendship. Let us continue our journey guided by the same spirit of love, freedom, justice and peace.

FORUM ON NGO-PO PARTNERSHIP MODELS

The first speaker, Dennis Uba, Regional Coordinator of the Southeast Asia Council for Advocacy (SEACA), presented “Perspectives on Social Infrastructure Building in Sustainable Rural Development” (see annex C: Regional Challenges). He mentioned four key challenges in the region, namely;

1. In-country and regional disparity. An assessment of accomplishments of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) shows divisions within the region. Southeast Asia has some of the richest and best performing countries like Singapore and Malaysia as well as those that are slowest in achieving the MDGs, like Timor Leste and Laos.
2. Bilingualism. Advocates are now called upon to understand and speak the language of such disciplines as economics, geology, biodiversity, and socio-anthropology, in addition to their specialized fields. NGOs that work with communities in their organizing efforts have to work doubly hard to keep pace with the development environment, which is continually and rapidly evolving.
3. Glocalization. Thinking and doing locally and globally has become the norm in this age of interdependence and connectivity. Local action is important and critical but its effectiveness ripples beyond its confines and has supra-local dimensions and orientation. Globalization of solidarity is thus a means to advance the gains of civil society.
4. “Nautical highway”. There is a need to bridge islands of successes. Lessons have to be shared and models replicated or upscaled.

The second speaker, SeoJung Eui, Chairperson of the Asian Farmers’ Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), presented AFA’s perspective on social infrastructure building and strengthening. He shared the experience of the Korean Advance Farmers’ Federation (KAFF) as a concrete example of...
how well organized farmers can protect and promote the rights and benefits of farmers. Esther Penunia, secretary general of AFA, provided a synthesis of Seo’s presentation. She mentioned that based on KAFF’s experience, we can draw out three major elements which contribute to strong and effective social infrastructure, namely, wide membership, good management and clear direction. She reiterated that “we need to build our numbers, we have to become big enough to get government’s attention.” She emphasized that “we should manage our organizations. We need to have a clear direction and to secure the participation of our members.” Towards this end, Esther said, education is vital, particularly information on production technology. Leadership development and policy advocacy are also necessary; organizations should be able to present their case convincingly to government.

The presentation of four selected cases followed. Lany Rebagay, Program Officer of AsiaDHRRA, provided an introduction to the case presentation session. She mentioned that central to the attainment of AsiaDHRRA’s vision for just, free, prosperous, peaceful and empowered Asian rural communities is the formation of a critical mass of strong and empowered grassroots organizations. Because of this, most of the DHRRAs are into community organizing / PO building. These experiences in PO building were captured in case studies to serve as trigger point for the members to:

a. identify the historical and existing pattern of relationship between selected DHRRAs and their partner POs,
b. identify lessons and evolving models in building autonomous POs, and
c. define effective partnership principles, strategies and mechanisms beyond autonomy.

She added that the forum on NGO-PO partnership models is intended to build consensus on emerging patterns/models of healthy and empowering partnerships as a potential tool to assess member DHRRAs’ work with POs and to identify action points to address the weaknesses and challenges related to NGO-PO relations.

Five cases were presented covering various typologies. The first set of cases are in-country experiences of four
DHRRAs (PhilDHRRRA, InDHRRRA, TaiwanDHRRRA, CamboDHRRRA) covering partnerships in various stages. The second set of case studies covers the experience of AsiaDHRRRA and AFA at the regional level. (see annex D1-D5: Case Studies). The case presenters were as follows:

1. PAKISAMA experience: Jesus Vicente Garganera
2. InDHRRRA - API experience: Nuruddin
3. TaiwanDHRRRA – TWADA experience: Wenchi Huang
4. CEDAC – FNN experience: Long Dimanche
5. AsiaDHRRRA – AFA experience: Marlene Ramirez

Towards the end of the case presentation, Rachel Polestico talked about “Trends and Patterns in NGO-PO partnership experiences”. (see annex E: Trends and Patterns) She noted the major challenges faced by NGOs and POs, such as PO sustainability, the need to redefine the role of NGOs in the context of new economic and political conditions, and the need to establish the parameters of partnership between NGOs and POs.

After the case study presentation, an open forum followed which was highlighted by a rich exchange of views on the distinctions between PO and NGO. Soetrison Kusumohadi noted that POs used to be clearly the grassroots organizations but that when they become organized they start behaving like NGOs. Jaybee Garganera of PhilDHRRRA observed that POs are today anxious to distinguish themselves from NGOs: POs are from the community while NGOs are external support groups which provide services to POs.

The open forum led the body to a re-affirmation of the need to make a distinction between NGOs and POs and in order to clarify their constituency, and promote legitimacy and accountability. The assembly agreed that NGOs and POs differ in nature (mandate, composition) but have similar functions and share a common vision for empowerment and sustainable development. NGOs are service providers for their members and primarily to a defined marginalized partner group. POs on the other hand are membership-based organizations usually representing the marginalized sector. Rik Delnoye of Agriterra, a partner of AsiaDHRRRA and AFA, added that POs are groups that are owned and driven by their respective sectors. Rachel Polestico offered the view that NGOs and POs, together with other groups like the academe, media, civic groups and the business sector, comprise a bigger aggrupation now known as civil society organizations (CSOs). She said that CSOs shape the new agenda for global ethics in a dual society. CSOs promote human development, economic growth, poverty reduction, peace, social justice and sustainable development. CSOs also actively participate in engaging the state and the business community.
The second day of the forum on NGO-PO partnership models was anchored by Yoshikuni Yatani. Before the main session, he led the morning exercises, asking everyone to take deep breaths—i.e., count 10 seconds breathing in, and 10 seconds breathing out. He explained that proper breathing helps clarify people’s minds and keeps them active and rested for the rest of the day.

Lany Rebagay then gave a summary of the previous day’s activities. She highlighted the emerging framework on NGO-PO partnerships which included the principles and patterns of autonomy and genuine partnership. (see annex F: Emerging NGO-PO Partnership Framework). The workshop that followed focused on two parts: the first, a sharing of participants’ insights on their NGO-PO partnership experiences; and the second, an assessment and planning on the partnership between the DHRRAs and their strategic PO partners. The group was divided into three; the first one consisting of the DHRRAs and their PO partners, the second group, of AsiaDHRRA and AFA ExeCom, and the third group, of regional/international partners. (see annex G: Workshop Outputs)

**Action Points**

**A. In-country level (DHRRA and PO partner):**

1. **Build joint mechanism for strategic planning, coordination, project cooperation**
   - Regular and periodic exchanges in formal venues (DHRRA and PO Board meetings)
   - Joint policy on Conflict Management between the DHRRA and the PO
   - Harmonizing the DHRRA and PO advocacy agenda
   - Revalidation and re-calibration of the Strategic Plans of the DHRRA and PO partner to accommodate joint areas for cooperation and complementation
   - Organize the strategic planning for five years, to promote sustainability and skills management within the DHRRA-PO partnership

2. **Strengthen cooperation on economic activities and other undertaking towards financial sustainability**
   - Strengthen the marketing/enterprise partnerships as joint projects;
   - Improve collaboration: networking among the DHRRAs-POs to improve income generating projects (IGPs);
   - Improved skills training on IGPs;
   - Learn together to do fund raising

3. **Capacity building on advocacy**
   - learn together the concepts and technical aspects of advocacy;
   - learn together about social, economic and cultural issues.

**B. Regional level (AsiaDHRRA-AFA):**

- Strengthen mechanisms for coordination –
- Participation in strategic meetings (e.g., ExeCom,strategic planning);
- Strengthen existing membership, expand membership –
- AsiaDHRRA members to recruit get potential members from their countries (criteria: adherence to VMG, Peasant Agenda)
- Strengthen partnership between and among members of AFA and AsiaDHRRA-
  - continuous information/technology/resource sharing;
  - big/stronger members to help smaller/weaker members;
  - partnership between AFA and AsiaDHRRA members at the national level.
Based on the above mentioned action points, the groups identified the following interventions needed from AsiaDHRRRA and AFA:

1. **Strengthen the skills of the DHRRAs and PO partners in enterprise development**
   - Develop the marketing/enterprise work of the DHRRAs and their PO partners, particularly with regard to safe/organic products;
   - Promote local products by DHRRRA partners at all levels organized by AsiaDHRRRA and AFA;

2. **Assist in expanding the membership base of the DHRRAs and partner POs**
   - Support the expansion of the membership base of both the DHRRAs and partner POs;

3. **Enhance the capacity of second liners**
   - Build the capacity of second-liners of both the DHRRAs and PO partners;

4. **Facilitate information exchanges and dialogue on agriculture and rural development**
   - Provide valid and relevant information on agriculture in Asia and on the situation in agrarian countries;
   - Provide supplements and reading materials focusing on global trends and socio-economic issues;
   - Provide special free information on good practice/experiences by DHRRRA-AFA partners;
   - Conduct exchanges/exposure programs on community development;
   - Continue to do case studies on NGO-PO partnerships while ensuring that the choice of case studies reflects other models (NGO-PO; GO-PO; INGO-PO; I/PO-PO; religious O-PO; multi partnerships); Continue the rich exchange/dialogue among the DHRRAs, their strategic partners and other partners on the issue of People’s Autonomy (particularly in the aspect of decision making; agenda setting; financial control and enabling conditions; accountability);

5. **Mobilize human and financial resources**
   - Introduce the DHRRAs and POs to donor agencies;
   - Mobilize resource persons and pool of experts;
   - Mobilize technical and financial support;

6. **Strengthen networking and advocacy work guided by the varying context of each sub-region**
   - Ensure that advocacy actions take into account conditions under central government control (e.g., in Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar);
   - Provide networking support;

7. **Strengthen organizational development support to AFA towards autonomous operations**
   - AsiaDHRRRA to assist in systems development and installation within AFA;
   - AsiaDHRRRA members to respond to effective translation needs of AFA members;
   - AFA to promote PO participation/leadership in advocacy at the national and regional levels;
   - AFA to produce and host the PAKISAMA website and make use of other internet technologies;
   - Promote leadership formation in AFA;
   - Additional indicator for AFA autonomy: at least 85 per cent of AFA’s membership should come from partner-farmers’ groups of AsiaDHRRRA members.
After the workshop, the body unanimously reaffirmed the commitment of AsiaDHRRA to building autonomous POs by pursuing the development of an NGO-PO partnership framework and a tool to assess the development of autonomous POs. The body also resolved to continue assisting AFA in expanding its membership in countries where the DHRRAs operate and to provide support to DHRRAs and AFA members in accordance with recommendations from them.

A community field visit (see annex H: community field visit) was done in the afternoon to allow the participants a first-hand look at the partnership experiences of DHRRRA Network Malaysia.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

The third day of the General Assembly (GA) was focused on the business meeting. Kya Mu opened the session with a prayer, including a special prayer for Annie Corpin of PhilDHRRA, whose father had died suddenly while she was attending the assembly. (Annie said her farewells to the assembly and went home with her family). Soetrisno Kusomohadi gave a few opening remarks stressing the relevance of the GA in the context of the strategic planning processes of the network. He then recognized the GA participants and confirmed the quorum. He requested Marlene Ramirez, Secretary-General, to resent the proposed agenda and the schedule.

The body unanimously approved the proposed agenda and schedule of the business meeting.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE 5TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES**

The body was asked to review the minutes of the 2005 GA, as well as the minutes of the business meeting. There being neither comments nor modifications, the minutes were approved without revision.

**GA Resolution 01-622-2006**

Resolved that AsiaDHRRA pursue the development of an NGO-PO partnership framework including tool to assess the development of autonomous PO.
CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Soetrisno Kusomohadi reported to the assembly the achievements of AsiaDHRRRA in the years 2004-2006. He mentioned that AsiaDHRRRA has expanded its partnership efforts in the region with other fellow CSOs. The network has also forged ties based on shared agenda with partners such as AGRITERRA and Open Society Institute (OSI). Through the Asian NGO leader’s Dialogue, which is supported by OSI, the network has been able to reach out to other NGO leaders. AsiaDHRRRA also continued its support towards the strengthening of AFA by providing the necessary secretariat support to the association.

The Chairperson requested the Secretary General, Marlene Ramirez, to present the detailed report (see annex I: 2004-2006 Accomplishment Report) and the summary of the ExeCom’s major decisions for the GA’s confirmation (see annex J: Major ExeCom Decisions). The body reviewed and confirmed the decisions made by the ExeCom, including two major ones, namely:

the decision to take out SEARCH-Nepal from the membership list following sustained deliberation by the ExeCom; and to provide a seat for an AFA representative at the ExeCom of AsiaDHRRRA as a way to promote the strategic partnership with AFA. Marlene also provided an update on actions taken on the resolutions made in the last GA.

GA Resolution 03-622-2006

Resolved that the decisions made by the ExeCom from the period August 2004 – June 2006 be approved without revisions, including taking out SEARCH-Nepal from the membership list and the provision of a seat for AFA in the ExeCom of AsiaDHRRRA thru its Chairperson and/or Secretary General as concrete manifestation of its commitment to becoming more grassroots responsive and as a mechanism to promote a strategic partnership between AFA and AsiaDHRRRA.
**DHRRA REPORTING AND SHARING**

In line with the Member’s Accountability Act, the Chairperson encouraged each member to provide an organizational update. The following are the highlights of the DHRRA reports.

**SOUTHEAST ASIA CLUSTER**

**InDHRRA**

InDHRRA celebrated its 30th year anniversary last year. InDHRRA continue to work on the issues of agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, food security, women concerns and other rural development issues in the context of the challenges of globalization.

InDHRRA continues to take leadership in advocacy and networking. It serves as the focal organization of various regional and international groups working on issues of agricultural trade, food sovereignty, human rights, women and other rural development issues. In Aceh, InDHRRA has been engaged in the Emergency and Reconstruction and Rehabilitation program. The emergency program is charged with the distribution of food, clothes, women's basic need, agriculture and fishing tools, stationery and slippers. The program facilitated the building of homes for tsunami victims in four villages, a meeting room, organizing of communities in four villages, including women's groups, and developing small business enterprises at household level.

**PhilDHRRA**

Mr. Jesus Vicente “Jayvee” Garganera is the new Executive Director of PhilDHRRA with Mr. Cesar “Ange” Belangel moving on to CODE-NGO, a coalition of various social development networks in the Philippines, of which PhilDHRRA is an active and founding member.

PhilDHRRA is anchoring the anti-mining campaign which is a joint effort of various groups funded by MISEREOR as well as other environment advocacy groups in the country. PhilDHRRA is also very much engaged with the rest of the CSO community in pushing for the creation of a truth commission to ferret claims of election fraud committed by President Gloria Arroyo.

The network conducted its General Assembly in November 2005 where the members approved the financial sustainability plan of PhilDHRRA.

**DHRRA Network Malaysia**

DHRRA Network Malaysia, through its key member ERA Consumers, is implementing its EU project focusing on the installation of counseling centers for women in various selected villages. The center is aimed at providing information and opportunities for rural women to engage in socio-economic activities not only for their family but also for the community. Concretely, the network conducted training workshops for Community Facilitators to popularize WTO issues. A Leadership Training Program was conducted for the 25 community center personnel and a skills training workshop was held for 30 Indian women on income generating projects.

Efforts were also undertaken to build partnerships, mobilize resources, and secure the commitment of government institutions and private companies in support of community development work as well as in support of some AsiaDHRRA regional activities, like the farmers exchange visit.
The network was able to continue and maintain the process of people-to-people dialogue and spirit of working together with DHRRRA partners. It has reviewed and created closer networking with AsiaDHRRRA Secretariat.

MEKONG CLUSTER

VietDHRRRA

VietDHRRRA has expanded its membership to 19 organizations (5, NGOs, 9, mass organizations, 5 government agencies). It is implementing a new project in partnership with KZE/MISEREOR focusing on building the capacity of extension workers in participatory techniques in agricultural extension work.

Impact evaluation related to the application of new techniques in agricultural production, productivity of crops and cooperation in production among farmers was also conducted in the three pilot sites.

Ten case studies of high-performing farmers were written up featuring the good farming practices of each of the selected farmers.

CNAC/ CamboDHRRRA

CNAC/CamboDHRRRA through SEDOC is into exploratory partnership with Village Focus International (VFI) related to the export of organic spices (e.g. pepper, garlic, basil, etc.) to Italy and Germany. Last year, there was a meeting with CEDAC, GTZET and VFI regarding potential cooperation on organic rice and organic spices export to Europe. It was projected that within 2006, CEDAC through GTZET and CNAC through VFI will export agricultural product to Germany and Italy. Systems and mechanism are being discussed.

Mr. Sil Vineth, CNAC chairperson, encouraged by previous dialogues with AsiaDHRRRA key leaders entered into exploratory talks with CEDAC and SILAKA towards transforming CNAC into a more dynamic network by expanding its leadership and cooperation with other key local NGOs in Cambodia.

CNAC also conducted the profiling of its member as part of the organizational development technical assistance from AsiaDHRRRA.

ThaiDHRRRA

ThaiDHRRRA conducted its Strategic planning last April 25-27 and was also able to hire a Project Coordinator who is now anchoring the four sub-regional consultations related to the planning and promotion of ThaiDHRRRA in four strategic regional clusters, e.g., North/Changmai, Central/ Bangkok, South and South Eastern region of Thailand. The sub-regional consultation hopes to provide the network the opportunity to touch base and identify the community needs that ThaiDHRRRA would be interested to pursue given its existing capacity.

MyanDHRRRA

MyanDHRRRA has a new set of officers headed by its new president, Ms. Naw Phaw Gaw. It also has a new office, in a building it shares with the Karuna national office. AsiaDHRRRA has allocated technical assistance for the core operations of MyanDHRRRA. They had an annual meeting late last year.
LCDA

LCDA, a potential DHRRRA partner, successfully hosted the visit of VNFU in 2005. The visit was part of the exploratory effort between LCDA and VNFU to build a farmers’ union in Laos. A memorandum of understanding between the two groups was signed and preliminary work has been undertaken.

NORTH CLUSTER

TaiwanDHRRRA

TaiwanDHRRRA actively participated in major AsiaDHRRRA and AFA activities such as the 2nd Asian Rural NGO Leader’s Dialogue, the Asian Farmers’ Exchange Visit-Thailand Seminar, the AFA Strategic Planning Seminar, the 12th AFA ExeCom Meeting and the 2nd Commemoration of Lee Kyung Hae.

TaiwanDHRRRA helped TWADA (AFA ExeCom member) in the translation of four issue papers from English to Chinese including the reprinting of it in the local language.

One of TaiwanDHRRRA’s second liners, Ms. Shu Hui Tsai, finished her on-the-job training (OJT) stint at the AsiaDHRRRA secretariat, which started in August 2004 and ended in July 2005. Ms. Shu Hui Tsai presented her OJT evaluation and reflection to both AsiaDHRRRA and TaiwanDHRRRA. She is now back in Taiwan and will be joining the Asia-Pacific Public Affairs Forum (APPAF) as program officer.

JaDHRRRA

Dr. Yatani together with around 10 JaDHRRRA members had a fellowship activity in Takao, Mei. Exposure of Japanese students to rural life was also continually done. JaDHRRRA and Ainokai plan to host the next AFA training on fair trade sometime in the middle of next year.

Ms. Ryoko Tsuboi, JaDHRRRA volunteer, has successfully finished her OJT with the AsiaDHRRRA secretariat. Her OJT lasted for one and a half years, deepening her understanding of the network and teaching her basic skills in networking. Ryoko is now working in Ainokai, an association of organic farmers in Japan and a PO partner of JaDHRRRA.

KoDHRRRA

KoDHRRRA continues to provide support to KAFF in its participation in AFA activities. KoDHRRRA is also thinking of ways to engage KAFF in more meaningful and useful cooperation. KoDHRRRA key leaders are finding time to get together and discuss how to strengthen itself to become a more effective partner of KAFF. One such measure is to provide reliable translation support to KAFF during AFA activities.

After all the DHRRRA reports, Soetrisno commended the assembly and noted that the DHRRRAs have truly grown in the past years. He observed that most DHRRRAs have done significant rural development projects in partnership with other donors and other civil society groups.
REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (2006-2010)

Marlene Ramirez presented an overview of the Strategic Planning process—how it evolved and which mandates were referred to in the process. She also talked about the participation of key stakeholders, including pioneers, ExeCom members, member DHRRAs, regional partners, and the Secretariat. The whole of 2005 was devoted to this process and initial presentations have already been made to the DHRRAs and partners for feedback while awaiting the GA’s imprimatur.

Marimuthu continued the session by presenting the overview of the five-year Strategic Plan (see annex K: Strategic Plan).

**Strategic Objectives identified for GA deliberation and ratification:**

1. Strengthen the capacity of the DHRRAs to respond to the problems of rural poor communities especially the farmers, fishers and rural women;
2. Strengthen the capacity of Asian NGO leaders (especially DHRRAs) in responding to the challenges of globalization as it impacts on rural communities;
3. Strengthen the partnership between the DHRRAs and POs at national and regional levels towards more self-reliant operations of POs;
4. Promote policies on sustainable rural development, people empowerment, rural peoples’ rights (farmers, fishers, rural women) at the regional and international levels based on grassroots alternatives/experiences/local wisdom;
5. Develop and promote a holistic resource mobilization model that includes value reorientation of stakeholders/donors and sustainable generation of resources; and
6. Strengthen network leaders and secretariat capacity to deliver the five-year development agenda.

**WORKSHOP ON THE FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

The participants were divided into sub-regional clusters to allow for a richer discussion. The other partners were invited to join a cluster of their interest. The results of the workshop are as follows:
Southeast Cluster (InDHRRA, PhilDHRRA, DHRRA NETWORK MALAYSIA, API, PAKISAMA)

1. Major comments and suggestions

a. The plan is clear but may not be realistic according to each DHRRA’s current situation;
b. There is not enough time to internalize it, but we all agree that it is a well-drafted, well-thought out document/reference document;
c. Some output indicators are not measurable;
d. The plan needs more focus on human resources (staffing) of NGOs so they will become better service-providers for POs (or else, pooling the experts should be given focus);
e. Some networks may not be self-sustaining or self-reliant by 2010. At least each DHRRA should adopt a policy stating that they are moving in this direction of self-reliance/sustainability;
f. The plan should be “flexible” (according to each DHRRA’s capacity);

- Some outputs can be easily achieved
- Some are too difficult
- Some are totally inapplicable
- Some need re-calibration

2. Relevance of the Plan to DHRRAs

a. As a guide and blueprint for each DHRRA network, it is very sufficient, and each DHRRA should translate it according to its current capacities;
b. AsiaDHRRA must “respond” to these enhanced/revised DHRRA strategic plans;
c. The advocacy agenda is very relevant as it is consistent and very applicable to us;
d. But the formulation of the objective can be improved to be more focused (e.g., on Agrarian Reform).

3. Contributions of the DHRRAs

The DHRRAs commit to be prompt, timely and consistent in our submission of reports, documentations and other requests from AsiaDHRRA. Each DHRRA will establish a “set of minimums”, then commit these to AsiaDHRRA.

a. Commitment on three levels:
b. Sense of belongingness;
c. Each DHRRA will “claim” the strategic plan;
d. Implementation will be done in solidarity;
e. Contributions should be made according to each DHRRA’s capacity and with a specific focus.

North Cluster (JaDHRRA, TaiwanDHRRA, KoDHRRA, TWADA, KAFF)

- Strategic objective no. 1 … add “aging community”
- Strategic objective 2 … add “young leaders”
- Operational strategy: add “marketing component”
- Strategic objective 4 …for north DHRRAs AR is not relevant, AR implementation is already completed
- Strategy objective 5 … qualify – mutually agreed value orientation

Mekong Cluster (ThaiDHRRA, VietDHRRA, CamboDHRRA, MyanDHRRA, SORKORPOR, FNN)

1. Major comment and suggestions on the strategic plan of AsiaDHRRA:

a. AsiaDHRRA as an organization should strengthen and develop programs directed at the grass roots, especially women’s groups;
b. AsiaDHRRA should fully promote the participation of people and support these activities;
c. AsiaDHRRA should play an important / effective role in advocating with the government and to share their strategy, methods, using grassroots level experiences;
d. AsiaDHRRA should play a role in linking people and in making the grassroots the focal point in developing Human Resources in the subregion.

2. The relevant / support of AsiaDHRRA to the Mekong River Sub-region DHRRA

a. Everything is relevant. We accept it.
b. The support of AsiaDHRRA to the DHRRA is not yet clear to each country, so AsiaDHRRA should make clear / find out the more specific support of the network to each DHRRA based on their unique situation.
c. AsiaDHRRA should think about the position/ context of the Mekong river sub-region.
d. AsiaDHRRA should be mapping the grassroots movement in each DHRRA country.
e. AsiaDHRRA should make an evaluation of the country DHRRA

3. The contribution of Mekong River Sub-region DHRRA to the strategic plan of AsiaDHRRA:

a. Pay attention, try to advocate, and try to get full participation in our country DHRRA.
b. Mekong sub-region should do a grassroots survey (first, find out the situation; second, evaluate the project);
c. Each country should build a strong advocacy model / specific advocacy model in the cluster and AsiaDHRRA should have an outreach model of a specific country;
d. Host some AsiaDHRRA activities, mobilize local partners.

After the presentation of the subregional cluster workshop output, the body unanimously approved the strategic plan for 2006-2010 incorporating all the suggestions put forward by the subregional clusters.

**GA Resolution 04-622-2006**

Resolved that the Strategic Plan (2006-2010) be approved, taking into consideration the suggestions put forward during the workshop, including the following:

a. include the aging community as well as the young people in the strategic plan;
b. each DHRRA to adopt a policy stating that they are making efforts towards sustainability and self-reliance;
c. include marketing in the operational strategy;
d. assist in the development of advocacy models based on each sub-regional context.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The Chairperson opened the session by reminding the assembly that the term of office of the current set of ExeCom has ended, and that the General Assembly has to elect a new set of officers. The Chairperson requested the Secretary General to review the policies and procedures of election.

The incumbent ExeCom then unanimously nominated Marimuthu Nadason to be the new Chairperson of the network. The body confirmed the nomination of Marimuthu Nadason as the new Chairperson of the network for years 2006-2010.

The Participants conducted sub-regional caucuses to elect their respective vice-chairpersons to represent the sub-regions. The following were unanimously elected as Vice-Chairpersons:

Vice-chairperson (SEA Cluster) : Jesus Vicente Garganera
Vice-chairperson (Mekong Cluster): Sil Vineth
Vice-chairperson (North Cluster): Sung Lee
Napasri Maneewong, the outgoing women representative (at large), nominated Dwi Astuti for the post. Meanwhile, Bosco Lee put up Wenchi Huang’s name for the same position.

The body had to consult the constitution and by-laws (CBL) of the network relative to the election of the women representative. The Secretary General called the body’s attention to Article 7 of the CBL which states that there is one slot for a woman representative nominated at large from the floor.

Marimuthu Nadason suggested that the CBL provision related to women representation in the ExeCom be amended to increase the number of women representatives in the ExeCom. Bosco Lee affirmed this suggestion but proposed that the number of women representatives be increases to at most two. The body unanimously approved the proposed amendment, and confirmed the appointment of Dwi Astuti and Wenchi Huang as the new women-representatives at large in the ExeCom.

**GA Resolution 05-622-2006**

Resolved that Article 7 of the constitution and by laws be amended to allow for increasing the number of women-at-large in the ExeCom to a maximum of two. Hence the slot will be for one or a maximum of two subject to the GA’s review if there is a need for one or two representatives in a particular term of office by the ExeCom.

**GA Resolution 06-622-2006**

Resolved that the following shall be the new set of ExeCom members for the period covering 2006-2010:

Chairperson: Marimuthu Nadason  
Vice-chairperson-SEA: Jesus Vicente Garganera  
Vice-chairperson-Mekong: Sil Vineth  
Vice-chairperson-North: Sung Lee  
Women-Representative-at-large: Dwi Astuti and Wenchie Huang  
Secretary-General (Ex-officio): Marlene Ramirez
After the election of the new ExeCom members, the outgoing Chairperson Soetrisno Kusomohadi congratulated the new leadership and wished them God’s blessings. The new Chairperson, Marimuthu Nadason, expressed his gratitude to the outgoing ExeCom and to all DHRRA members for the trust and confidence given to him to lead the network in implementing its strategic plan for the next five years. He also proposed a resolution expressing appreciation and gratitude to the service rendered by the outgoing ExeCom members.

Resolution 07-622-2006

To thank the outgoing set of ExeCom headed by Soetrisno Kusomohadi for their dedication, deep commitment and genuine service to the network.

CLOSING PROGRAM

Towards the closing of the session, the Secretary General presented the list of all resolutions made for the confirmation by the GA, including the announcement that following the constitution and by-laws, the next GA would be held in 2008. The details of the next assembly would be decided by the ExeCom.

Before closing the business meeting part of the GA, representatives from the DHRRAs, AFA, partners, the host DHERRA and from the secretariat were given time to give their insight and closing messages. In behalf of the partners, Rik Delnoye rendered a short presentation focusing on the role of NGOs to bind, bond and link farmers’ groups (see annex K: Agriterra’s message). He reiterated the challenge for NGOs to build autonomous POs and to be stirred by POs. In his closing message, Soetrisno Kusomohadi expressed his gratitude first to God for the blessings showered to the network. He also thanked DHERRA Network Malaysia for being a very good host, the DHRRAs for their active participation, the partners for their valuable contributions, and most especially to the Secretary General and her whole team for a job well done. He also gave special thanks to the AFA leaders, headed by Seo for joining AsiaDHERRA in its 6th GA and for committing to the mutual aim of harnessing a meaningful relationship between AFA and AsiaDHERRA in the coming years.

The business meeting ended at 6:30 in the evening, and was followed by a dinner. A recognition and solidarity night was held. One of the highlights of the solidarity program was the presentation of a plaque of recognition to the outgoing ExeCom members and a commissioning exercise for the incoming set of ExeCom. All DHRRAs and partners also presented rich cultural numbers.

Resolution 08-622-2006

To thank DHERRA Network Malaysia for warmly hosting the 6th AsiaDHERRA General Assembly in Taiping. Resolved further to thank the secretariat for the hard work done in preparing and coordinating the said event, and the members and partners for their active participation and the camaraderie shown during the 6th GA.
GA Resolution 01-622-2006

Resolved that AsiaDHRRA pursue the development of an NGO-PO partnership framework including necessary tools to assess the development of an autonomous PO.

Resolved further to monitor the partnership of DHRRAs with their strategic PO partners.

Resolved, finally, to continue assisting AFA in expanding its membership in countries where the DHRRRA operates and to provide support to DHRRRA and AFA members as recommended by them.

GA Resolution 02-622-2006

Resolved that the minutes of the 5th General Assembly of AsiaDHRRA held in Manila, Philippines on August 14, 2004 be approved without revisions.

GA Resolution 03-622-2006

Resolved that the decisions made by the ExeCom from the period August 2004 – June 2006 be approved without revisions, including taking out SEARCH-Nepal from the membership list and the provision of a seat for AFA in the ExeCom of AsiaDHRRA to signify its commitment to becoming more grassroots responsive and as a mechanism to promote the strategic partnership between AFA and AsiaDHRRA.

A Resolution 04-622-2006

Resolved that the Strategic Plan (2006-2010) be approved, taking into consideration the suggestions put forward during the workshop, including the following:

a. include the aging community as well as the young people in the strategic plan;

b. each DHRRRA to adopt a policy stating that they are making efforts towards sustainability and self-reliance;

c. include marketing in the operational strategy;

d. assist in the development of advocacy models based on the context of each sub-region.

GA Resolution 05-622-2006

Resolved that Article 7 of the constitution and by laws be amended to allow for increasing the number of women-at-large in the ExeCom to a maximum of two. Hence, the slot will be for one or maximum of two subject to the GA’s review if there is a need for one or two representatives in a particular term of office of the ExeCom.

GA Resolution 06-622-2006

Resolved that the following shall be the new set of ExeCom members for the period covering 2006-2010:

Chairperson: Marimuthu Nadason
Vice-chairperson-SEA: Jesus Vicente Garganera
Vice-chairperson-Mekong: Sil Vineth
Vice-chairperson-North: Sung Lee
Women-Representative-at large: Dwi Astuti & Wenchie Huang
Secretary-General (Ex-officio): Marlene Ramirez

GA Resolution 07-622-2006

To thank the outgoing set of ExeCom headed by Soetrisno Kusomohadi for their dedication, deep commitment and genuine service to the network.

GA Resolution 08-622-2006

To thank DHRRA Network Malaysia for warmly hosting the 6th AsiaDHRRA General Assembly in Taiping. Resolved further to thank the secretariat for the hard work done in preparing and coordinating the said event, and the members and partners for their active participation and the camaraderie shown during the 6th GA.
The fourth day of the GA was devoted to a regional forum on development and action points in WTO-DOHA round and the (US-FTA) in Asia. The forum was moderated by Indrani Thurasingham of DHRRA Network Malaysia. Seo Jung Eui, Chairperson of AFA, gave the opening message while Esther Penunia, secretary general of AFA, guided the participants on the objectives and schedule of activities for the forum.

To start the session, a video presentation featuring the campaign launch by AsiaDHRRA and AFA on the WTO in Hongkong was shown.

This was followed by presentations from two resource persons. The first resource person was Lim Li Ching from the Third World Network (TWN). She presented the current positions of civil society on the on-going WTO negotiations. (see annex L: post HK Agri.). She pointed out that the current WTO agreements on agriculture are lopsided in favor of developed country producers. Agriculture subsidies in developed countries keep farm production levels artificially high, with producers disposing or “dumping” their surplus in world markets often at less than production cost.

This results in lost export opportunities for third world countries and lost livelihood for their farmers.

Lim Li Ching also pointed out other threats to developing country farmers, including the Bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs), an example of which is the US-Malaysia FTA by which the Malaysian government is required to reduce all tariffs to zero. Another is the cultivation of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) which pose environmental, health, and socio-economic risks.

She also talked about the status of negotiations at the WTO and the various groupings, e.g., the G33, which can be maximized.
The second resource person was Maitet Diokno-Pascual, consultant of APNFS. She discussed the US-FTA in Asia. (see annex M: US-FTA). She said that there are at least two dozens of such US-Free trade agreements. She cited an Action Aid study which found that the agrifood chain is becoming industrialized, globalized and concentrated. A small number of transnational corporations (TNCs) have come to dominate global and national agrifood markets, and their influence is transforming agriculture in many developing countries. She explained that these bilateral free trade agreements serve to advance the trade-related interests of specific sectors and corporations (e.g., biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, finance, telecommunications, garments and textiles, etc.) and thereby strengthen the global position of US TNCs. The other motivation is to support non-trade strategic concerns (e.g., “Coalition of the Willing”, Securing energy/oil resources) and to expand the trade agenda beyond WTO agreements (e.g. TRIPS plus).

To achieve their purposes, the Pro-US Agribusiness FTA provisions promote the further opening of markets of US bilateral partner, strengthen the market position of US TNCs and safeguard investments of US agribusiness corporations. In short, comprehensive protection of US corporate interests in agribusiness.

A brief open forum followed the two presentation. Action points were also identified towards the end of the forum. One of the action points identified was to send a letter to G33 members (see annex N: G33 letter) to support their pro-agriculture stance in WTO negotiations. It was also agreed to popularize materials on WTO. Efforts shall likewise be pursued to demand greater transparency in the WTO negotiations and to call for greater participation by small farmers in negotiations both for the WTO and the FTAs.

A press conference immediately follow the forum. A dramatization of the negative impact of the WTO and the FTA was portrayed by AFA leaders and the DHRRAs for local press people to communicate the sentiments of the farmer sectors. A panel composed of AFA and AsiaDHRRRA leaders met with the local press people.

The press conference ended at around 12:30 in the afternoon.

After lunch, an ExeCom meeting was held for both AFA and AsiaDHRRRA, while the other participants went on a city tour.
1. Strengthen the skills of the DHRRAs and PO partners in enterprise development
   • Develop the marketing/enterprise work of the DHRRAs and their PO partners, particularly with regard to safe / organic products;
   • Promote local products by DHRRA partners at all levels organized by AsiaDHRRA and AFA;

2. Assist in expanding the membership base of the DHRRAs and partner POs
   • Support the expansion of the membership base of both the DHRRAs and partner POs;

3. Enhance the capacity of second liners
   • Build the capacity of second-liners both at the DHRRAs and PO partners;

4. Facilitate information exchanges and dialogue on agriculture and rural development
   • Provide valid and relevant information on agriculture in Asia and on the situation in agrarian countries;
   • Provide supplements and reading materials focusing on global trends and socio economic issues;
   • Provide special free information on good practice /experiences by DHRRA-AFA partners;
   • Conduct exchanges /exposure programs on community development;
   • Continue to do case studies on NGO-PO partnerships while ensuring that the choice of case studies reflects other models (-NGO-PO;-GO-PO;-INGO-PO;-I/PO-PO;-religious O-PO;-multi partnerships);
   • Continue the rich exchange / dialogue among the DHRRAs, their strategic partners and other partners on the issue of People’s Autonomy (particularly in the aspect of decision making; -agenda setting; -financial control (and enabling conditions) and accountability;

5. Mobilize human and financial resources
   • Introduce the DHRRAs and POs to donor agencies;
   • Mobilize resource persons and pool of experts;
   • Mobilize technical and financial support;

6. Strengthen networking and advocacy work guided by the varying context of each sub-region
   • Ensure that advocacy actions take into account conditions under central government control (e.g., in Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar);
   • Provide networking support;

7. Strengthen organizational development support to AFA towards autonomous operations
   • AsiaDHRRA to assist in systems development and installation within AFA;
   • AsiaDHRRA members to respond to effective translation needs of AFA members;
   • AFA to promote PO participation/leadership in advocacy at the national and regional levels;
   • AFA to produce and host the PAKISAMA website and make use of other internet technologies
   • Promote leadership formation in AFA;
   • Additional indicator for AFA autonomy: at least 85 per cent of AFA’s membership should come from partner-farmers’ groups of AsiaDHRRA members.
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

AsiaDHRRRA

TaiwanDHRRRA
Dr. Bosco Lee, President
Dr. Wenchi Huang, DHRRRA Member

CNAC Cambodia
Mr. Sil Vineth, President
Mr. Rin Po, Staff

DHRRRA Network Malaysia
Mr. Marimuthu Nadasan, DHRRRA Malaysia President
Mr. Ismail Aziz, DHRRRA Malaysia Coordinator
Mr. Saravanan Sinnapan, Program Manager
Mr. Ahmad Nayan, Farmer leader

IndHRRA
Mr. Soetrisno Kusumohadi, IndHRRA Board Member and AsiaDHRRRA Chairperson
Mr. Goffar Rhaman, IndHRRA Board
Ms. Ika Krishnayanti, IndHRRA staff

JaDHRRRA
Dr. Yoshikuni Yatani, President

KoDHRRRA
Dr. Sung Lee, President
Mr. Sang Jun Yoon, Board Member

PhilDHRRRA
Ms. Annie Corpin, Chairperson
Mr. Jesus Vicente Garganera, National Coordinator

ThaiDHRRRA
Dr. Napasri Maneewong, President and AsiaDHRRRA Execom
Ms. Bunjong Siri, Project Coordinator
Ms. Poonchala Pradabpong, Board member
Wanpen Singprapan, Member
Khuea Saengwichit, Member
Somsak Amornrattanakul, Member
Sanit Singrapan, Member

VietDHRRRA
Dr. Bui Quang Toan, Chairperson
Le thi Nghe, Board Member

SAAM
Rev. Kya Mu, Member

AFA

KAFF
Seo, Eung Jui, Chairperson and AFA Chairperson
Kim Gi Cheol, External Vice-Chairperson
Fredy, Technical Staff
Hyosun Chung, Translator

SORKORPOR
Chaiwat Suravichai, Secretary General
Pa Phomkham, Board member

PAKISAMA
Severino Q. Umandal, Council Member

TWADA
Chin Hsiung Hsieh, Board member

API
Mr. Sambito, Chairperson
Nuruddin, Secretary General

PARTNERS

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Dennis Uba, Regional Coordinator
Corinna Lopa, Deputy Coordinator

OSI
Dr. Rie Nakamura, OSI-SEA Initiative Coordinator

WRF
Ms. Miren Larrea, Asia-Desk Cooperation Officer

AGRITERRA
Mr. Rik Delnoye, Liaison Officer
Mr. Weraphan Promontre, CTA / PO Advisor
Mr. Anil Epur, CTA / PO Advisor

CEDAC
Long Dimanche, Program Officer

Resource persons
Ms. Rachel Polestico, SEARSOLIN Deputy Director
Ms. Maria Teresa Pascual, APNFS consultant
Ms. Lim Li Ching, TWN
Ms. Indrani Tuhuraisingham, SEACON

DHRRRA NETWORK MALAYSIA SUPPORT STAFF
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Ms. Nanthini Ramalo, Staff
Ms. Theresa, Staff
Ms. Chitra, Staff
Ms. K. Nirmala, Staff
Ms. Christina, Volunteer Staff

AsiaDHRRRA SECRETARIAT
Ms. Marlene D. Ramirez, Secretary General
Ms. Lorna David, Program Officer
Ms. Esther Penunia, Program Officer
Ms. Lany Rebagay, Program Officer
Mr. Jet Hermida, MIS