

Preparatory Workshop for the 2nd AMAF Private Sector Dialogue on Food Security
Plaza Athenee Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
September 6-7, 2012

Summary of Issues on the 3 themes from the CSO Representatives Workshop

On Agricultural Productivity

The CSO representatives arrived at a consensus that agricultural productivity is a complex challenge because it is not limited to yields but includes people, productive resources, markets, policies and the environment. The current challenge is now even greater with the declining resources (e.g. land, water) and the changing rainfall and climate patterns.

CSO Initiatives on Agricultural Productivity	Support needed from ASEAN and its Member States	Possible cooperation with the business sector
Ensuring access of farmers/ producers to productive resources (land, water/ irrigation, genetic resources, forests, energy, etc.)	Regulation to protect farmlands/ especially those devoted to the cultivation of food crops through the adoption of land use policies/ legislations	Deal with governments' compliance to the voluntary guidelines on agricultural land investments and advocacy for the enactment of national land use law that protects agricultural lands.
Sustainable agricultural productivity to reduce small farmers/ producers vulnerability and enhanced resiliency to food shortages, food price hikes, economic shocks and calamities	ASEAN learning exchanges among small farmers/ producers within its Member States on sustainable agricultural policies, programs, experiences and technologies.	Agribusinesses Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support to learning exchanges and technology transfers.
Organizing, formation and strengthening of small farmers/ producers organizations and cooperatives.	Enabling law and legal framework for organizing farmers/ producers organizations and cooperatives	Agribusiness CSR support to organizing and strengthening of small farmers/ producers associations and cooperatives.
Access to markets support for small farmers/ producers	Marketing facilitation between farmers and buyers, improving value chain governance and regulating contracts between farmers/ producers and agri-business firms.	Pilot cooperation between organized farmers associations/ cooperatives and agri-business companies, e.g. Lao PDR small coffee producers, exporters and traders.
Advocacy for supportive agricultural policies	Adoption by ASEAN of good aquaculture standards (similar to GAP and others); Creation of an ASEAN Small Farmers/Producers Council	Exploratory workshop between CSO, US-ASEAN Business Council, ASEAN Business Council on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

On Agricultural Credit

Access to agricultural credit by small farmers and small producers in some ASEAN countries is constrained by legal restrictions of banks. There is a need for a legal stature that would govern credit support to small farmers. There are available funds from both public and banks but these banks are not able to extend credit to small farmers because of the absence of responsive policies.

The loan collateral system is "loan barrier" for most small farmers and producers. This system perpetuates an environment that promotes the loss of productive assets of small farmers and producers especially in agriculture where risks are very high. There is a need to find innovative collateral system for agricultural credit.

There is a need to minimize risks (climate change) by increasing opportunities for agricultural insurance (to include insurance for fish cages and other fishing gears, animals which are not covered by mainstream crop insurance), credit subsidies and rebates, including incentives for food production.

Minimizing risks and enhancing higher rate of success of agricultural credit would also mean government providing infrastructure, effective training and extension services and post-harvest facilities.

Farmers organization can help banks (private and public) process and administer agricultural credit and ensure that loans are utilized for farmers investments in agricultural production. Viet Nam Farmers Union provide banks assistance by certifying farmer-members the compliance of appropriate requirements, e.g. undergone training, formulated plan, and utilizing low risk in agricultural production technologies qualifies for a loan. VNFU submits this certified endorsement and proposal to the Bank so loans can be processed and approved.

In many cases, government loan/financing packages include items that are not needed or appropriate for small farmers. The small farmers are forced to accept these packages if one needed money to finance production. There is a need to find innovative and farmer-driven loan packages, where farmers will have a choice. ASEAN can provide a sharing-learning opportunities on innovative credit modalities where farmers will have a choice.

On Agricultural Credit

CSO Initiatives	Support from ASEAN and Member States	Possible Cooperation with Private Agribusiness Sector
<p>1. Policies on Agricultural Lending/Credit</p> <p>Partnership with private/public banks with farmers organizations (certification of compliance, endorsements)</p> <p>Farmers organizations' representation and participation in policy decisions of public banks' farmer-lending programs.</p> <p>Provision of micro-lending services for agriculture</p>	<p>Better policies to lower interest rates and make agricultural credit more accessible to small farmers (e.g., Guarantee Fund, production insurance for farmers/fishers, etc. and preventing high incidence of loss of farmers/fishers productive resources, Grand Framework for Indonesia Rural Development)</p>	<p>Joint initiatives or partnerships in providing production loans to support production of specific commodities and ensure compliance to product quality specifications.</p>
<p>2. Capacity Building and Monitoring</p> <p>CSOs/Farmers organizations give training to members on savings mobilization and maximizing investment/ credit.</p> <p>Need Monitoring System of Policy Implementation</p>	<p>Support for building and strengthening farmers organizations to absorb and use of investment, good governance, transparency, accountability, practice sound management practices.</p>	

<p>3. Knowledge Sharing of Working Models</p> <p>Implementing pilot/model innovative micro-lending programs to support agricultural production. (micro-lending avoids agricultural production in general)</p>	<p>Document successful and innovative experiences in micro-finance/micro-credit in agricultural production.</p> <p>Initiate learning exchanges on innovative micro-financing on agriculture.</p>	
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On the Role of Women in Agriculture

The original concept of agribusiness has a specific nuance/connotation because agribusiness is a concept which perpetuates the marginalized role of women. In the discussion, however, it is appreciated in the context of women empowerment. It is also not simply about mainstreaming gender, but putting women at the center of economic activities in agriculture.

According to a FAO study (FAO at Work, Women Key to Food Security) if women are given the same access to productive resources as men, they would produce 20-30 percent more food and their families would enjoy better health, nutrition and education. If women are given equal access to agricultural resources and services, food security would be greatly improved. If men and women had equal access to productive resources in agriculture, food output in developing countries would increase by between 2.5 and four percent – enough to pull 100-150 million people out of hunger and help achieve the Millennium Development Goal number 1 on hunger and poverty reduction.

CSO Initiatives	Support from ASEAN and Member States	Possible Cooperation with Private Agribusiness Sector
<p>Policy advocacy and lobby for gender equity legislations and policies (e.g. recognition of the important role of women in broader agriculture context, translation of policies into meaningful participation of women in decision making, recognition of the right of women over land, credit, agri facilities, etc.); Implementation of greater social protection programs for women</p>	<p>Setting indicators on women empowerment and gender equality</p> <p>Monitoring on how ASEAN Members States recognize and place greater importance of role of women in agriculture and documentation and sharing of various initiative of AMS governments to enhanced the role of women –e.g. programs, policies, budget allocation for women</p> <p>Implementation of greater social protection policies and programs for women</p>	<p>Institutionalization of gender equity policies and practices in doing business with farmers and small producers.</p>
<p>Gender sensitivity training workshops and seminars</p>	<p>Providing greater capacity-building opportunities for women</p>	<p>Joint capacity-building projects for women</p>
<p>Organizing and formation of women organizations</p>	<p>Recognition of women’s organization and representation of women leaders from these organizations into the decision-making processes of governments and ASEAN.</p>	