



## Mobilization for Access to Seeds Index in Southeast Asia (ASI-SEA)

### Regional Consultation on Seeds in South and South East Asia

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Hanoi, Vietnam

#### I. Background

1. The Access to Seeds Index (ASI) aims at creating transparency among seed companies and identifying and promoting best practices in the industry. ASI, as a benchmarking tool, is a relative assessment, scoring, and, ranking system of the efforts of seed companies to improve smallholder farmers' access to quality seeds. The ASI also aims to serve as incentive mechanism for companies to improving their performance.
2. The ASI is part of the "Access to Seeds Initiative" launched by the Access to Seeds Index Foundation with support from DGIS and B&M Gates Foundation. The ASI is published per region, every two years, after a series of regional stakeholder consultations.
3. Currently, AgriCord and AsiaDHRRA have committed to support the ASI process by providing support for greater participation and representation of farmers' organizations (FOs), especially in South East and South Asia processes.
4. In this context, a regional consultation on seeds will be conducted. In 2014, AsiaDHRRA, as part of its technical assistance to Medium Term Cooperation Program Phase II (MTCP 2), organized a regional learning-exchange forum on seeds<sup>1</sup>. The forum, which aimed to increase knowledge and awareness of farmers from Asia and the Pacific on best practices in seeds production, conservation, distribution, and, marketing, gathered at least 50 FO representatives from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and, Pacific Islands. After the forum, the participants were able to (1) formulate common regional policy agenda, and, (2) present their sub-regional plans to the group which basically covered four major areas of concern, viz: (a) policy agenda, (b) capacity building, (c) networking and linkages and (d) research and development.
5. This regional consultation will build on the results of the said learning-exchange and will set agenda for the regional processes that will be convened by ASI Foundation.

#### Box 1. Workshop Output of Asia sub-gorup

- 1) Policy Advocacy
  - Lobby for policies against GMOs
  - Lobby on the establishment of SAARC Bank, stop bio-piracy, etc
  - Drafting of Policy Papers
  - Lobbying on local seed improvement
  - National Seed Summit
- 2) Capacity Building
  - Formation of seed banks
  - Feasibility study of Seed Cooperative
  - Learning visits
    - establishment & management of seed bank
  - Training on
    - improving local/traditional seed
    - conservation, processing, packaging
    - marketing
- 3) Networking and Linkages
  - Asian Farmers Seed Summit
  - Formation of a regional seed association
  - ITPGRFA + Int'l Convention on Peasant Right

#### II. Objectives

The general objective of this regional consultation is to provide avenue for discussing smallholders' access to seeds in South and Southeast Asia. Specifically, this aims to:

- Identify opportunities and challenges in seeds supply chain, social infrastructure, financing, and, enabling mechanisms at the South and Southeast Asian countries; and,
- Define regional policy agenda on seeds and inputs to ASI in SEA.

<sup>1</sup> <http://asiadhrra.org/wordpress/2015/01/05/asiadhrra-organize-mtcp-2s-learning-exchange-forum-on-seeds/>

### III. Expected Outputs

At the end of this 1-day consultation, the following are expected:

1. List of opportunities and challenges on smallholders access to seeds in South and Southeast Asia as inputs to AFA's and AsiaDHRRA's capacity building and policy agenda
2. List of policy agenda as inputs to ASI processes.

### IV. Methodologies

#### Sessions 1 and 2 – Guide for Sharing of FOs

- Brief FO profile
- Brief overview of the FO
- Describe the farmers' and/or FOs' experiences on formal and/or informal seeds conservation, production, distribution, and, marketing.
- Do you have existing relationship/partnership with seeds company? Describe the relationship/partnership.
- Do you receive government support related to seeds? Please describe.
- What were the challenges encountered in seeds conservation, production, distribution, and, marketing?
- Key lessons learned from the experience
- Outlook / vision

### Workshop Guide

Participants will be grouped. Workshop facilitators will be assigned to each group. Each group has to identify a reporter and documenter among the participants.

Guide questions:

	Conservation	Production	Distribution	Marketing
Key role played by farmers and FOs?				
Other Key Players and their role vis-à-vis access of farmers and FO to seeds				

	Availability	Affordability	Suitability	Capability	Profitability	Autonomy	Transparency and Accountability
What are the challenges encountered by small farmers and FOs in terms of ...?							
What role should the farmers/FOs play to address challenges?							
What role the other key players (as identified in the first table) should play to help the farmers/FOs address the challenges? What kind of partnerships with the FOs should be fostered?							

(The [ASI defines 6 access dimensions](#): availability, affordability, suitability, capability, profitability, autonomy.)