



## REPORT

### *Asia Participation in GAFSP*

Period covered: April 1 – December 30, 2016

## Introduction and Background

In June 2010, The GAFSP Steering Committee decided to establish three seats to represent Civil Society Organizations. The role of the CSO representatives is to inform/consult with their constituents on GAFSP, and represent and advocate their views on their behalf to improve the working of GAFSP. The Asia representative is Mr. Shimpei Murakami, Chairperson, AFA and Vice Chairperson of Ainokai, a farmer organization in Japan. The alternate representative is Mr. Raul Socrates Banzuela, National Coordinator of Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (National Confederation of Peasant Movements), a national farmers organization in the Philippines.

The Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), was tapped, as a support organization, to provide technical, administrative and logistical support to the CSO representative to facilitate (1) consultation among Asian CSOs; (2) dissemination of information to Asian CSOs; and, (3) dialogue between the Asian CSO representative and other members of the Steering Committee.

GFAR played an important role in securing and disbursing the funds that supported AFA's representation in GAFSP governance and intervention in GAFSP projects implementation during this period. It also assisted AFA in the preparation of the proposal for GAFSP for FY 2016-2017, submitted last September 29, 2016.

## Actual Activities During the Period

### **A. Asia Producers' Organization Meetings**

**1. Knowledge Exchange Forum on Farmers Organizations (FOs) Engagement in Public Investment Programs, August 1-2, Hanoi, Vietnam.** The forum was co-organized by AFA, Vietnam Farmers Union (VNFU), Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA) and Collectif Strategies Alimentaires (CSA). Financial support came from Agricord, EU, IFAD, GAFSP, Forest and Farm Facility, and SDC.

The forum aimed at bringing together leaders of various Farmers' Organizations (FOs) in Asia and Africa to share and discuss their experiences and learnings in engaging various public investment programs especially with the GAFSP, IFAD, and other national government programs. The event is part of the continuing effort of AgriCord in concretizing its global commitment to promote a more effective development financing with greater participation of the Farmers' Organizations.

A total of 18 National FOs from Southeast Asia, South Asia, East Asia, and Central Asia were present in Hanoi, Vietnam from August 1 – 4, 2016. Some Agri-agencies that are operating in the region particularly AsiaDHRRA, CSA, Agriterra, WE EFFECT, and WRF and two invited



government officials from the Philippines and Laos were likewise present to participate in the dialogue. There were also some other partners who attended like the DHRR members in Vietnam and Indonesia and the Netherlands Water Partnership. Over-all, a total of 74 individuals (37 Males, 30 Females, and 7 Youth) had participated. FO representatives from GASP recipient countries Nepal, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyztan were present.

The Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Development (AFA) managed the event and provided for the secretariat work with the support of the Viet Nam Farmers' Union (VNFU). A total of four (4) sessions with twelve (12) presentations; and two (2) workshops were all conducted in two days.

Session 1 which is about the sharing of FOs' experiences and learnings in engaging the GAFSP, IFAD, and big national level public programs was allotted with substantial amount of time, with presentations from eight FOs.

Session 2 was also about the sharing of FOs' Experiences from other regions or continents. Here, Mr. Mamadou Cissokho who is the president of CNCR and ROPPA in Senegal, Africa talked about their organization's experience, learning, and recommendations in engaging the government.

Session 3 presented some opportunities for FO engagement with the GAFSP – Missing Middle Initiative (MMI) Program. The overview of this funding window was explained by Esther Penunia, Secretary General of AFA.

Session 4 on views and sharing from development partners and implementing national government had two presentations that were given by invited guests from the national governments of the Philippines and of Laos. Each one of them shared about the possible public programs where the FOs can engage in their respective countries. Mr. Ed Dela Torre who is a member of the board of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) explained the "Program Framework toward Inclusive Growth" while Dr. Ketkeo from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Lao PDR explained the "Lao Agriculture Development Strategy".

The 2 days forum and 1 day field visit to learn and reflect on the various mode and level of engagements of the Farmers' Organizations to the different public investment programs in Asia and Africa are indeed full of substance and hard work. The objectives set for the event by the organizers were satisfactorily achieved.

This claim is validated by the "take-a ways" expressed by the participants and partners. Many recognize the need to strengthen more their capacities as FOs. But despite of this, they also realize that there are still many things that must be done not only with GAFSP and IFAD but equally important also with their own national governments because governments are implementing mandated programs for their citizens.

*please see Annex 1 for a draft proceedings of the Knowledge Exchange Forum*

*please see Annex 2 for updated GAFSP presentation shared during the above mentioned Knowledge Exchange Forum*

*please see Annexes 3-4 for draft case studies of NAMAC in Mongolia and LFN in Laos on*



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*their involvement in GAFSP processes*

**2. Post ACBF Planning Workshop : Asian Farmers Priorities, Strategies, Actions for Strengthening Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia, December 1-2, 2016, Manila, Philippines.** The Post-ACBF workshop was a follow up to the 6th ASEAN Cooperative Business Forum (ACBF) held on November 29-30, 2016 in Novotel, Quezon City, Philippines, where government, CSO, farmer and cooperative representatives pledged to support the development and strengthening of agri coops in the region as vehicles for inclusive development. The meeting was co-organized by AFA, PAKISAMA, AsiaDHRRA, WE EFFECT, and CSA. The workshop was supported by Oxfam, and IFAD, SDC and EU through the MTCP2-AFOSP project. AFA and PAKISAMA served as secretariat of the event, and was in charge of all logistics and administrative preparations.

A total of 77 participants from 14 Asian countries and 4 European countries joined the event, with FO representatives from GAFSP recipient countries Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Participants gathered lessons learned from the experiences of successful agricultural cooperatives in Asia like Ja Zenchu in Japan and NACF in South Korea, NCC in Sri Lanka, as well as IFFCO in India and FPSDC and SIDC in the Philippines. They also reflected on the role of agri coops in achieving SDGs through a presentation from ICA and envisioned possible models and structures for agri coops with input from a draft discussion paper by AFA's agri coop program officer. They looked at possibilities for cooperation at the regional level through a presentation from Fair Trade Asia Pacific and AFOSP-MTCP2. Lastly, participants developed 2016-2020 strategic action plans per sub-region (Southeast, South Asia, Central Asia) .

*please see Annex 5 for draft proceedings of the Post ACBF workshop.*

**3. AFA Execom Meeting, December 3-4, 2016, Quezon City Philippines.** Dovetailed to the Post ACBF workshop was an Executive Committee meeting of AFA , participated by representatives of 17 national FOs from 14 countries. During this meeting, AFA's involvement in GAFSP processes, particularly MMI , as well as on other international work such as GACSA CFS and Grow Asia were discussed. An important result of the meeting was the approval of the AFA strategic and operations plan framework 2016-2020 , which are very much aligned with the SDGs. This plan will be AFA's guide in its international advocacy work as well as on-ground implementation of projects.

*please see Annex 6 for powerpoint presentation of AFA strategic plan and operations plan on cooperative development.*

## **B. Participation in Fora Organized by Partners**

**1. Food Security Forum: Safe, Nutritious and Affordable Food for All , organized by Asian Development Bank, June 22-24, Manila, Philippines.** AFA Secretary General Esther Penunia, PAKISAMA Advocacy Officer Jonjon Sarmiento and PAKISAMA National Coordinator and CSO Asia alternate representative to the GAFSP Steering Committee Raul Socrates Banzuela represented AFA in this meeting. AFA facilitated/moderated a panel session called Farmers Roundtable : Voices from the Field with panelists from 3 FOs, 1 from agricultural financing sector and one agri-based entrepreneur. The AFA Secretary General was herself a panelist in the Leaders' Roundtable. During this Forum, a short dinner get-



together was conducted with AFA representatives and GAFSP CU representatives (Nichola Dyer, Iftikhar Mostafa) and some partners from AsiaDHRRRA (Marlene Ramirez) and IFAD (Benoit Thierry).

2. AFA sent Ms. Violeta Coral, consultant of PAKISAMA to represent AFA and present a paper on "Engagement of Farmers Organizations (FOs) in Public Programs for Agricultural Development" during the conference International Agricultural Workshop, organized by Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations, held Sept 15-16, 2016 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

*please see Annex 7 for a copy of the paper .*

### **C. Participation in GAFSP SC Meetings and Activities**

1. **Missing Middle Initiative (MMI).** The GAFSP Steering Committee, during its meeting held last January 25, 2016 in Rwanda, approved the allocation of \$16million for pilot projects on the "missing middle initiative (MMI)". The Missing Middle Initiative (MMI) will be proposed by Supervising Entities (SEs) of the GAFSP, but ideas should come from FOs. The first step was to submit concept notes. Each project proposal will have a budget ceiling of \$3M.

During the period January-April, AFA linked the SEs to appropriate FOs in the country, oriented the FOs about the Missing Middle Initiative, gave feedback to draft concept notes from FOs and from the SEs. AFA liaised with KKM through Action Aid Bangladesh and FAO in Bangladesh, AFFM and ADB in Myanmar, with Lao Farmer Network with IFAD and FAO in Laos and FNN with FAO and IFAD in Cambodia. AFA hired a consultant to help the FOs develop the concept notes based on GAFSP CU MMI concept note format. After a meeting of the SEs last May 2016 (which AFA Secretary General joined), 11 out of 19 concept notes were accepted to be developed into full-blown proposals. This list included the 4 Asia proposals.

AFA then provided advise to the FOs who were developing the full blown proposal with their partner SEs from the period April – August 2016.

**E. Online Activities.** AFA regularly uploaded news, articles and reports related to GAFSP in the AFA website <https://gafspasiancsos.wordpress.com>. AFA FB page AsianFarmers AFA also contains news, photos about GAFSP-related activities, among others.

### **Plans January-June 2017**

A Develop and implement a simple , farmer –friendly system for monitoring, reporting and feedback –giving: from grassroots organizations to national GAFSP working groups to CSO Asia representative), including taking of pictures, video footages, story harvesting and conduct of local meetings by FOs, cross – country exchanges and regional learning workshops especially on linking farmers to markets, and sustainable, resilient agriculture. AFA will facilitate the involvement of national agriculture research institutes as well as regional fora on agriculture research and development (APAARI and CACAARI) in these knowledge learning and sharing, particularly on agri innovations in sustainable and resilient



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agriculture, water management, food security and nutrition esp involving women farmers, increasing the power of small scale family farmers over their markets.

B. Conduct country missions cum country knowledge fairs in Cambodia, Laos, Timor Leste, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyztan.

C. Conduct cross country learning exchanges on two themes : (1) water management and (2) women, food security and nutrition.

D. follow through the development of the MMI project with Bangladesh FOs and SEs.

E. Finalize documents, lay-out and publish the case studies produced during the workshops last August and December 2016.

*submitted Feb 1, 2017*