

# REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY FORUM 2008

~ PROCEEDINGS ~



## **Towards Sustainable Food Security for All**

### *People's Response To The Food Crisis In Asia*

SHAH ALAM, MALAYSIA • 28-29 JULY 2008



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**[SEACON]**

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## Message from THE CHAIRPERSON

Countries across Asia are taking renewed actions to curb the rising cost of rice and making supplies available to the poorest and the vulnerable groups in society. For example, “Rice-card” was introduced in the Philippines to enable families on subsistence income to buy rice at half the current market value; in Malaysia, subsidies have been extended to boost production in order to make rice remain affordable; Vietnam imposed stricter regulations in dealing with speculators involving food suppliers and commodity trading.

During the era of crisis, it is obvious that the biggest losers are the poor, particularly those who live in the cities of developing countries who have to face higher prices for imported food based on their low income capacities.

Global leaders are now forced to acknowledge of the growing food emergency and crisis that bring about threats of widespread hunger and political instability. The catastrophe affecting billions of people around the globe cannot be resolved within the confined system based on private profit and the nation state.

It is important to realize that in order to design comprehensive and long term solutions to this global problem, not only do we need to assess our situation individually, but we need also to sit together and gauge how our proposed solutions could complement each other at the community, national, regional and global level. Therefore, understanding the uniqueness of cultures and lifestyles of each communities, and the different roles that each of us play in contributing to solve the crisis is critically significant.

Finally, I would like to thank all our sponsors and donors who have generously contributed to this noble cause and shared concerns and priorities on food security issues.

I wish the participants of the Forum a very productive deliberation.

**DATUK MARIMUTHU NADASON**

Chairperson

Southeast Asian Council for

Food Security & Fair Trade (SEACON)

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*Papers and materials presented in this proceedings may have been edited, modified and or condensed from their original forms in order to fit the purpose of this publication.*



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## FOREWORDS

Almost ten years ago, in 1999, SEACON organized the Conference On the Peoples' Response to the Food Security Crisis in Southeast Asia, which was prompted by one the major economic crisis (1997-1998) in history.

Today, we are still experiencing another extraordinary tumultuous food insecurity that affects the whole world. Despite much progress, finance and technological interventions that have been channelled for food and agriculture, food insecurity still invades millions of people.

This proceedings volume summarizes the presentations made by the 16 speakers and synthesizes the discussions held throughout the two-day event. Note that these presentations and discussions have been transcribed and edited. All speakers were invited to submit written summary notes for distribution during the Conference, and are available from SEACON upon request. However, we encourage direct consultation with the speaker for more information. The event was also covered by local media and special press conference with the representative from the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, Malaysia.

We express our sincere appreciation to SEACON's colleagues and associates, in ERA-Consumer (Malaysia) and Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (FOMCA) for their untiring support and assistance in coordinating and managing the Forum.

By every measure, the Forum was a tremendous success. It brought forward various concerns and actions of affected stakeholders, building up useful information, ideas, and perspectives to mitigate recurrence of similar crisis and insecurity. emerging developments and on priority actions required to assure sustainable food security, and, by attracting participation from all stakeholder groups and facilitating different perspectives to be heard, it encouraged dialogue and debate between traditional and new stakeholders.

SEACON thanks all of those who participated for their contributions and those who contributed financially to help realized the event.



**Datuk Marimuthu Nadason**  
*Chairperson, SEACON*



**Dato' Indrani Thuraisingham**  
*Executive Director, SEACON*

## PART 1

# INTRODUCTION

### PEOPLE'S RESPONSE TO THE FOOD CRISIS IN ASIA – TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

#### REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY FORUM 2008 28-29 JULY 2008

In response to the Food Crisis situation that was shockingly devastating many countries from the beginning of 2008, the Southeast Asian Council for Food Security and Fair Trade, together with concerned civil society organizations prompted this Forum in order to set forth a concerting effort to address the situation and to help preventing future recurrence. With more than eighty participants from various part of the Asia Pacific, the Forum was realized through great support and sponsorship by individuals, NGOs/CSOS, government and corporate fraternities sharing the same concern on the looming issue.

At the time of the Forum, the worldwide Food Crisis issue was mainly triggered by and attributed to complex interplay of circumstances. Contributing factors<sup>2</sup> included:

- limited supply attributed to low stocks for staple foods such as wheat, rice, and soybean;
- high fuel prices;
- poor climatic conditions in some major food producing areas (particularly in Australia, Argentina, the United States and Canada);
- over-exploited natural resources ( particularly water and soil);
- increased demand for food in emerging market (particular in China and India) ;
- more people around the world who could afford dairy products and meat;
- the diversion of food crops to agrofuels to supplement oil consumption particularly in rich countries;
- increased farm inputs (fertilizer) prices;
- and the alarming activities of speculation on commodity markets.

The price of staple food such as rice, grain, oil and sugar witnessed an increase by 50% within the last year.<sup>3</sup> In Southeast Asia, the global shortage of rice was particularly felt with an alarming increase in price, denying millions of people to access the staple food.<sup>4</sup> Some countries experience different level of extremities resulting from this food crisis. Unfortunately, there are around 850 million people suffer from hunger worldwide.<sup>5</sup> The situation was becoming more widespread and was aggravated by the price crisis and the lack of basic agricultural food products.

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<sup>3</sup> BBC News. Special Reports: The Cost of Food: Facts and Figures. Retrieved from [www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7284196.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7284196.stm)

<sup>4</sup> Chong, Y. (2008). *Of rice and price*. Malaysian Business. July 16.

<sup>5</sup> van Aúken, B. (2008). *Amid mounting food crisis, governments fear revolution of the hungry*. Global Research.



The forum was used as a platform to bring peoples' concerns onto a central attention by exposing the various uncertainties, policies, results, and methods in dealing with food crisis and food security. Eventually the forum hoped to harness a more realistic response towards formulating a comprehensive policy and plan towards addressing and ensuring food security.

Understandably, this step would demand an action plan that involved governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and civil society in general. A dynamic plan with a view to the future provided by expert speakers would path some strategies to tackle these challenges in order to correctly respond to this situation and others like it in the future.

This forum recognized the need to:

- Address scientific, political and technical reasons intertwined in food security issues,
- Ensure the livelihoods of producers, farming communities and household food security consumers
- Ensure sustainable use of natural resources and conserve the environment
- Integrate national policies into regional and global programs
- Monitor the effectiveness of fiscal policies in ensuring food security
- Create public awareness on food security issues

The Forum engaged to inform general public of the various impacts and consequences of the current food crisis. Additionally, various mitigating efforts that could be adopted by civil society organizations and common citizens, food producers and consumers will also be presented. At the end of this forum, stakeholders would have a holistic perspective of the global food crisis and the necessary actions required to be implemented at the national and regional levels. Through this forum, participants would be equipped with effective possibilities that could be adopted into their respective national food security policies.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the forum were;

- To create an interactive platform for food security and food sovereignty scholars, experts, donors, NGOs, civil society, the private sector, international and regional promoters, researchers, managers and citizens concerned with food security to share and exchange knowledge, experiences, expertise and new perspectives in creating a sustainable food security for all in Asia.
- To discuss the increased vulnerability to food insecurity
- To discuss strategies to protect our food supply
- To improve linkages between food security analysis, policy-making and implementation
- To strengthen the position, view and suggestion of civil society organizations, food producers, general public and consumers in policy-making process.
- To forward a regionally synthesized position and conclusion of the forum to the relevant ministries, national governments and regional bodies.
- To convene a working group of CSOs to pursue the implement able action points that will be agreed on at the forum.

## **The Forum**

The 2-day Forum was divided in Six Sessions with relevant themes that captured the interests of various groups of participants. The themes of the Sessions were:

- Global Overview on Food Security and the Food Crisis Issues.
- National Policies and Responses to ensure food security.
- Workshop- to engage and capture participants interest and focus on the food crisis issues
- Socio-economic implications of food insecurity
- Regional Initiatives towards ensuring food security
- Community Initiatives towards sustainable food production and livelihood.

The Forum also received great pleasure in having the Deputy Secretary General of the Malaysian Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industries to officiate the event, which was covered by the media.



## PART 2

# WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

### DATUK MARIMUTHU NADASON

*Chairperson (2000-2008)  
Southeast Asian Council for  
Food Security & Fair Trade  
(SEACON)*



Welcome to the Regional Food Security Forum 2008 entitled: “PEOPLE’S RESPONSE TO THE FOOD CRISIS IN ASIA: Towards Sustainable Food Security for All”

It is indeed a great pleasure and honour to have this overwhelming response and commitments from distinguished organizations and individuals, shown through your participation here this morning, where we gathered together to address the grievous impact of the current food crisis in the region way of limited supply of food and high prices.

Economists are citing many reasons for the upsurge in grain prices, including increased demand in developing countries, especially India and China, as well as poor harvest due to adverse weather conditions in some places. We know this is not the only reason.

For many Asian countries, we have become complacent in ensuring our own security. We have become highly dependent and trusting on capitalist trade systems, that many think importing food is more economically viable than producing our food in our own backyard.

Whatever the reason may be, The Current Food Crisis is a wake-up call for Asian Agriculture, particularly for food production that spells out food security and sovereignty of our Asian heritage.

There is a need for urgent international action to fulfil the Right to Adequate Food of the most vulnerable populations directly affected by the crisis. This urgent action should include policy measures that guarantee immediate protection against factors that are clearly aggravating the crisis.

What or Who can we blame for the crisis? The oil price? The speculators? Or, Our agricultural policies that have neglected food production, lack of emphasis on food security and sovereignty, due to greater focus on trade liberalization that led to vulnerability of food market, due to dependency on food imports.

This crisis demonstrates that the all-pervasive global market will not guarantee food security or the right to food. Social movements and civil society organizations have been calling for a food production system based on the principles of Food Sovereignty and human rights, with special attention to the right to adequate food and to participation and access to productive resources, such as land, water and seeds, among others.

Mega development projects that lead to massive eviction of traditional populations and peasants, without adequate reparation measures; the increased demand for the production of agrofuels, especially based on the proposed quotas established by the EU and the US; and the speculation on the commodities “futures” market; have all been put under scrutiny by Civil Society Organizations as contributing factors to food insecurity in the region.

Since 1980s, international financial institutions have attempted to eliminate the mechanisms whereby governments can control food supplies. In their absence, national and international private companies have stepped in and have been dictating national food policies in the interests of their profit margins. In times of stress, the mechanisms whereby governments could rely on to protect their citizens from the impacts of fluctuating prices often no longer exist.

The industrialization of agriculture through monocropping and over-reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides has effectively created economies of scale such that it is almost impossible for small farmers to succeed. Genetic modification of seeds adds yet another layer to that industrialization, ensuring that large agribusiness companies continue to post record profits. Should the liberalization of our food market be blamed?

In the past, we knew that taxes on agriculture, mainly on exports, had helped finance a shift in development strategies in the 1980s toward industry and services, building modern economies on the shoulders of poor farmers.

According to the World Bank, today, most agricultural taxes have been dropped. Thailand ended its agriculture export taxes in 1986, and other South-East Asian countries have eventually followed. China abolished all direct taxation on agriculture in 2006 and provided 5.6 billion dollars to subsidize farmers in 2007. Other governments, such as Thailand's, have begun subsidizing their farmers through price-support schemes, notably for the country's rice industry, a highly competitive business that has won the kingdom the position as the world's leading rice exporter since the mid-1960s.

While subsidies are one of the means of assisting Asian agriculture, economists argued that they are not necessarily the best. During the Food Crisis, our governments have developed several measures to help alleviate the burden on their populations:

In the Philippines, the world's largest rice importer, the government this year allocated nearly 1 US billion dollars to boost rice and food production by subsidizing fertilizers, rehabilitating irrigation systems and post-harvest facilities, and introducing new high-yielding rice varieties.

In Malaysia, the government has agreed to channel RM4 billion ringgits (more than US\$ 1 billion) to ensure Food Security. Last year, Malaysia spent RM43.4 billion ringgits on subsidies for petrol, rice, cooking oil and other products considered essential. Currently, Malaysia produces 70 per cent of its own rice requirements.

Indonesia has released its rice stockpile to dampen prices and to ensure the poor are able to buy rice. It has also lifted a monthly quota of subsidized rice for poor households. Similarly, Indonesia provides subsidized cooking oil to the poor – and has increased export tax on palm oil. Total Indonesian food subsidies are expected to rise from a budgeted 7.2 trillion rupiah to 19.8 billion rupiah in 2008. Additionally, Indonesia is spending around 130 trillion rupiah to subsidies fuel prices (around 12 per cent of the Central Government's budget in 2007).



Some countries in Asia have already begun to de-liberalize their agricultural sectors. So far this has mostly been done in a knee-jerk and unplanned way, which is understandable given the circumstances.

So India has banned the export of certain crops, while eliminating some export tariffs; China has introduced some price controls and increased its tariffs on some grains to discourage exports. More than 25 countries and the European Union, which had temporarily suspended import duties, have taken similar measures. These measures are necessary, but they are not solutions.

They may lessen the impact of soaring food prices, but they will do nothing to reverse the trend.

Real solutions could involve the remaking and “de-globalizing” of the global agriculture market. Some steps may include the following:

- **Food sovereignty is food security.** Countries that are serious about food security should take measures to increase their production for domestic purposes. In cases where it is not feasible or desirable to be 100% self-sufficient in staple crops, trading deals should be negotiated within the region. If more trade were regional, it would not only cut down on transportation costs, it would help promote regional growth and development.
- **Undo trade agreements.** Food sovereignty will not be possible unless all talk about agriculture agreements at the World Trade Organization or through bi-lateral trade agreements is suspended. Such trade deals are designed in the context of a global agricultural market, where one country should fine tune its agricultural sector based on comparative advantage and market need.

Such a strategy makes no sense when people in countries all over the world are demanding better and cheaper access to staple foods. What can the region do to ensure food security?

This Forum hopefully will address the various options and strategies that countries and communities in Asia have come up with to help alleviate the impact of the food crisis on the populations. Significantly, we hope to address— How the benefits and livelihood security be fairly transferred to the small scale farmers of food producers?

For example, there are to approximately 73 million people living in the entire Mekong River Basin. The Lower Mekong River Basin (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam) presently holds 84 percent of this basin-wide population, who contributes massively towards the rice and other food production in the region, but still stricken with poverty.

The Mekong River Commission (MRC) have to come up a conducive policy and institutional reform at the level of individual countries in order to eradicate or reduce poverty, and contribute to food security in the Lower Mekong Basin. Expanding agriculture seems to be a viable response to the expected population increase. For this a vast amount of data and information must be generated and understood.

We must understand the fundamental issues that lie at the heart of food insecurity. Economic growth has been equated to benefiting the better off. In that case, we must ensure that “economic growth” to also mean the poor and vulnerable should also get benefit.

We should ask, has the purchasing power of the poor actually increase with economic growth? We know in general that the poor have a high marginal propensity to spend on food. Therefore we need to strengthen the connection between agricultural growth and food security. Civil society organizations can help manage and coordinate resources to ensure food security in local communities.

However, we need to enhance the role of women and acknowledge their roles in ensuring food security, at household and national level. There are, obviously, so many areas that we can contribute in to help our individual self, community, government and country to come out of the current crisis. It is the ultimate goal of this Forum, that we hope to clearly identify our roles and recognize the potential solutions that best applicable to our situations.

Bringing the experts from all the relevant fields are not easy, but we are grateful that the distinguished panels and experts of speakers and moderators we have here for the next two days have graciously made themselves available and accessible to us.

For this, I hope all participants will take the opportunity to dialogue and provide inputs towards finding possible solutions and recommendations in ensuring a sustainable food security for all.

I wish all of you, successful and fruitful discussion at the Forum.

**DATO' INDRANI THURASINGHAM**

*Executive Director  
Southeast Asian Council for  
Food Security & Fair Trade  
(SEACON)*



The current food crisis demonstrates that the all-pervasive global market will not guarantee food security or the right to food. Social movements and civil society organizations have been calling for a food production system based on the principles of Food Sovereignty and human rights, with special attention to the right to adequate food and to participation and access to productive resources, such as land, water and seeds, among others.

Mega development projects that lead to massive eviction, the increased demand for the production of agrofuels, and the speculation on the commodities “futures” market; have all been put under scrutiny by Civil Society Organizations as contributing factors to food insecurity in the region.

What can the region do to ensure food security? What can national governments do to ensure food security of its nation and alleviate the impact of food crisis.

There are, obviously, so many areas that we can contribute in to help our individual self, community, government and country to come out of the current crisis.



**DATO' IBRAHIM BIN MUHAMAD**

*The Deputy Secretary General  
Ministry of Agriculture and  
Agro-Based Industry,  
Malaysia*



Yang Bahagia, Datuk Marimuthu Nadason, the Chairperson of SEACON and the President of FOMCA.

Yang Berusaha, Dato' Indrani Thuraisingham, Executive Director of SEACON and the Head of Consumers International Kuala Lumpur office for the Asia Pacific and Middle East

Dr. Somsak Pippopinyo of ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta

Ms Nancy Morgan of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Bangkok Regional Office for the Asia and the Pacific,

**Distinguished Representatives from the various Asian Embassies, Datuk-datuk, Datin-datin, Ladies and gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to thank and congratulate the Southeast Asian Council For Food Security and Fair Trade (SEACON), a regional civil society organisation based in Malaysia for taking a pro active initiative to organize this Regional Forum that distinctly positions voices of the people in Asia to be heard collectively on an issue currently affecting us in this region. This forum on food security significantly brings together different stakeholders of varied background in the food value chain, right from intergovernmental organisations to policy makers as well as academicians, researchers, industrial and corporate players, media, food producers, farmers, and not forgetting the consumers.

As we are all well aware, the current Food Crisis is of a global concern that has led to more people across regions not being able to access adequate food at affordable prices. In fact the number of people going hungry has increased tremendously in the last recent months.

I am pleased to note that participants from China, India, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Nepal, Brunei, Korea, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and even Australia have come here today to express genuine concerns over the devastating impact of the current food crisis, and to deliberate for possible solutions and alternatives that can ensure the food security of a nation, particularly in Asia.

High food and energy prices have put people at all levels, whether businesses or households at grave risks. Top leaders, market players, and analysts are beginning to understand the factors that contribute to the current food crisis which includes market speculations on food commodities, climate change, biofuels and the energy crisis. This forum is an opportunity for rural farming communities and consumers in the food chain to also discuss and deliberate on these concerns as



they are directly affected by the food crisis in terms of livelihood and accessibility to affordable food.

During this critical period of the food crisis, we have heard numerous proposals and solutions being put forward at the global, regional and national level in order to help minimize the impact and to prevent future occurrence of similar situations. National governments in the region are putting in place mechanisms and policies to ensure their food security and sovereignty, which could indirectly or directly affect the regional or multilateral relationships in the region. Each country has also begun to re-examine various policies related to food production and distribution in relation to their trade obligations. During the rice crisis, we heard of Thailand proposing to form a rice cartel called OREC in SEAN which is a similar cartel to the oil exporters of OPEC. There was also a proposal towards forming a new international organization to replace the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). There were even claims that the current free-trade regime has led to an increased food import dependency.

The decision of the United Nations' Secretary General to launch a Food Security Task Force in June this year calls for our collective and full support to promote a unified response to the global food price challenge which has prompted reform process within the FAO towards more coherent, effective and up to date means to act against food insecurity.

The Malaysian government's view is that we must combat the structural causes of food crises, in order to create long-term food and agricultural security for Asia. Reforming and encouraging sustainable agriculture and rural development in developing a long-term strategy for increasing food production and enhancing food security while conserving and managing natural resources is the way of future policies. We must meet the obligations to meet the needs of both present and future generations by promoting development that does not degrade the environment, using appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable technologies in food production, ensuring safety and confidence among consumers. Regional organizations such as ASEAN and the Asian Development Bank and Intergovernmental organizations such as the FAO and WTO must assist member states in providing their citizens with adequate, affordable and safe food.

At the Rome World Food Security Summit in June this year, World Bank Group President Robert B. Zoellick statement that "Global food production needs to double over the next 30 years" has directly pushed developing countries to boost agricultural production and productivity. This means there needs to be more investments all across the value chain: the land use; water and irrigation; infrastructure and logistics; cutting wastage; sustainable working capital; and linking small scale farmers in developing countries with retail outlets and global markets.

Therefore, factors linked to food security such as trade obligations, environmental degradation, climate change, the biofuel and energy policies of nations are being reviewed and analyzed thoroughly by national governments to ensure that food security of the nation is priority.

I also note that this regional Forum also highlights the significant role of women in ensuring food security. As we are aware, 80 percent of subsistent farmers in the region are women, playing the role as mothers, as producers and as food providers for their families. Since many women are involved in agriculture, there is a need for more equity in empowering women in the decision-making process, particularly in moving agriculture and food production towards more market-oriented activities.

In Malaysia, in order to ensure food security for the people, the Government in April 2008, approved the Food Security Policy 2008 - 2010. The strategies under this Policy are translated into seven programs as follows:

- i. Increasing rice production through:
  - a. productivity enhancement;
  - b. maintenance and upgrading drainage infrastructure;
  - c. optimizing field management through land leveling;
  - d. controlling pests;
  - e. optimum utilization of fertilizers and inputs like lime effectively; and
  - f. farm mechanization.
- ii. Creating a stockpile for rice to last for a period of 3 months by increasing the current volume of 92,000 m.t. to 550,000 m.t. This includes the purchasing of rice and payment of subsidies.
- iii. Increasing production and productivity of crops (fruits and vegetables), livestock and fisheries through concentrated production area management involving programs like:
  - a. Permanent Food Production Parks;
  - b. Aquaculture Industrial Zones;
  - c. Hatcheries for prawn/fish farming; and
  - d. procuring quality breeders for the bovine and ovine industry.
- iv. Providing production incentives to farmers to help them lighten the burden of increasing production costs.
- v. Strengthening Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority to ensure efficiency in marketing and distribution agricultural products through the development of more distribution and collection centres and increasing the numbers of farmer's market. Presently, there are 230 farmer's markets through out the country.
- vi. Encouraging people to cultivate vegetables, rear chickens and fishes for their own consumption through the Greening the Earth Program or "Bumi Hijau" country-wide. To kick start the program, the Government supplies the seeds, fertilizers and the know-how.
- vii. Optimizing the utilization of idle lands for the cultivation of food by encouraging the private sector to join venture with the individual land owners who's on a profit sharing basis to produce vegetables which can be harvested in a short time.

A total of RM 2,906.2 million has been allocated in 2008 for the implementation of these strategies which will help to boost supply, manage affordable prices and bring back the purchasing parity of the people.

In conclusion, I would like to appreciate the efforts of civil society and non-government organizations like SEACON for playing a hand-in-hand role with farmers and governments in understanding the needs of the people during the devastating situation of the food crisis by providing an avenue for different stakeholders to collectively develop solutions in addressing this crisis. Finally, I wish you participants the best deliberation in this forum and hope that you will return to your respective countries with recommendations and solutions that you will be able to share with your policy makers and constituents in ensuring a sustainable food security environment in your countries. The Malaysian government would also be interested to hear your suggestions as well and together I am sure we will be able to weather this food crisis.



## Part 3

# OVERVIEW ON WORLD FOOD CRISIS

Day One of the Forum started with the opening speech by Datuk Marimuthu Nadason, the Chairperson of SEACON. In his speech, he was particularly touched by the overwhelming response and turn-out of the Forum since the Forum was organized in a very short notice. He reiterated that this strongly indicated that the people needed to be heard, and needed to understand and receive the correct information on the situation. He ultimately hoped that the Forum would serve its purpose in providing this information, and presenting some alternatives that would be useful to the different societies. In his final note, he thanked his staff from FOMCA, ERA and SEACON for successfully putting together the event through fund-raising effort with a short period of time of one-month.

Following his welcoming speech, the Forum proceeded with Session One.

The Forum was honored to have the Representative from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO-Bangkok), Ms. Nancy Morgan, Dr. Qiu Huanguang from the Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy and Ms. Joy Chavez from Focus on the Global South-Philippines to present the situation in the exciting opening session chaired by Dr. Mahani Zainal Abidin from Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)-Malaysia.

Dr. Mahani of ISIS-Malaysia opened the Session by welcoming participants and congratulating SEACON for organizing the timely relevant Forum. In her opening remarks, she set forth that the food crisis problem had been compounded by various factors. The issue of food crisis started long ago, with long fundamental underlying circumstances. The problem of food security in terms of supply and prices. The current situation was not confined in one country, in fact most countries around the world were affected by the problem compounded by hike in oil prices linked to other bigger economic issues such as the US economy and the US dollars.

In her presentation, Ms. Morgan from the FAO based in Bangkok, was particularly delighted with the objectives of the Forum. In her opening remark, she mentioned that while Food security is a burning issue, it also should be remembered and highlighted that the reason for WTO and the reason for the previous food crisis was due to the declining prices of agricultural products over the last 20 years, which consequently resulted in low investment in agriculture in developing countries. Thus, the current food crisis issues had brought in the opportunities for agricultural development in Asia because of higher prices.

Ms. Morgan believed in the importance of ensuring returns to producers, at the same time developing the agribusiness sector would expand the opportunities to gain in the agricultural sector.

However, at the end of the day, it is the national government that are responsible for ensuring food security in each nation. In dealing with food crisis, national governments need to identify priorities, provide responses in terms of food assistance, or input assistance.

The following paper was presented by Dr. Qiu reiterated specific concern over the increase attention on bio-fuel development in the last 2-3 years particularly taking place in China, which he believed had contributed indirectly to the agricultural and food prices issues in developing economies.

In one of his concluding remarks, he also highlighted the eminent application of GM technology in the production of ethanol and feedstock. The focus on the impact of bio-fuel production on the environment (GHG emission, diversity) needed to be intensified. Unfortunately, Dr. Qiu mentioned that consumers and people, in general, have to live with higher food prices, and governments have to provide supports to help the poor to cope for high food prices issues. Nevertheless, he has observed that the rural communities in China tend to gain from the bio-fuel production, and the urban poor were the ones badly affected by the food crisis. In conclusion, biofuel pursuits has undeniably brought significant impact on food security.

The paper presented by Ms. Chavez of Focus on the Global South was in agreement with observed upward spiral in global food crisis affecting everyone, especially the poor and vulnerable groups. She offered a humble perspective: Free trade and choices available in confronting the issues of food crisis. Ms. Chavez focused her paper on 5 issues surrounding food crisis issues and the contributing impact by free trade agreements and trade liberalization.

At the end of the Session, Dr. Mahani questioned the theory behind trade liberalization which equates the increase economic growth to an increase economic well-being. In relation to agriculture, whether the theory still applies, relatively, for example, if EU reduces its subsidies, does this mean the world prices for milk and dairy products will be promptly increase.



# FOOD CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT IN ASIA

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Rising sharply since late 2006, agricultural commodity prices continued to edge upward through the first three-four months of 2008. Some recent easing of prices, however, is reported for specific commodities, such as rice, wheat and palm oil. Since early 2007, wheat prices, maize, and palm oil remain between 67-98% higher than previous levels. In the case of rice, a very narrowly traded commodity but one that has considerable importance for food security in Asia, prices rose 232%. As indicated, FAO's trade weighted index of food prices stabilized over the February –July 2008 period at 216 points; however, prices are still, in aggregate, 52% percent higher than levels in early 2007.

As FAO articulates in its paper "Soaring Food Prices: Facts, Perspective, Impacts and Actions required" there are a confluence of different forces influencing price developments over the past two seasons. Supply issues relate to: 1) weather-related production shortfalls, declining cereal stock levels due to policies and economic factors, and increasing fuel prices. Demand factors include strong income gains in developing countries, particularly in Asia which has resulted in cereal demand since 2000 exceeding production in many years. In addition, biofuel developments are influencing demand for cereal and other inputs. Clearly influenced by national policies, the economics of biofuel production, in particular, higher input costs (such as maize, rapeseed oil, sugar, etc), will have implications for the politics of the food-fuel debate with possible future adjusts in policy.

Other relevant factors include operations in financial markets and speculative interest in agricultural commodity futures markets. One other key factor influencing price developments in the highly volatile rice market, due to being thinly traded (7% of production exported), is panic buying. Clearly a review of trends in rice versus wheat prices shows that speculative/panic buying has contributed to rice prices to be disconnected with wheat price movements.

With the value of agricultural imports estimated at US\$165 billion in 2005 (out of nearly US\$700 billion global totals), Asia continues to be vulnerable to high and volatile international prices, in particular those low income food deficit countries (25 in Asia). FAO estimates that the cost of food imports for LIFDCs (globally) will exceed \$160 billion in 2008, with cereal imports by Asian countries increasing from \$13 to \$19 billion. The individual impact on countries will depend on movements of individual exchange rates and country's net cereal trading position with vulnerability highest



for countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Pacific Islands. In addition, the role of regional and country specific policies influence how prices are transmitted not only into local markets but back down the chain to producers. Of critical concern, of course, is the influence of policies on rice, a commodity which accounts for 30-40% of the incomes of households below the poverty line. IRRI estimates that a 25% increase in the price of rice leads to a 7-10% decline in real incomes. In addition, pricing for dairy products has implications for the long term availability/investment in that sector which has large livelihoods/employment opportunities for smallholders in Asia where 80% of milk is supplied by producers with 2-5 cows.

While the 2008 crop outlook is positive, the ability of governments to stimulate cereal production through good policies and input supplies has yet to be tested. Key questions for both the short and medium term outlook for Asia include oil price developments and demand and supply responses to higher prices. It is clear that it can't be "business as usual" anymore. The international community, donors, developed countries, banks, NGOs, and international organizations such as FAO have mobilized support countries around the world to respond to consumers' short term food security concerns and provide inputs to enhance food supplies. However, at the end of the day, it is the role of national governments to coordinate responses that respond to the challenge, both on the consumption and production side. It is particularly through the creation of enabling environments which allow market participants to take advantages of the opportunities posed by higher price that sustainable agricultural development can occur.



**“While the 2008 crop outlook is positive, the ability of governments to stimulate cereal production through good policies and input supplies has yet to be tested.”**

# BIOFUEL DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON ITS AGRICULTURAL MARKET

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*(Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy,  
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## Executive Summary

The rapid development of bioethanol at global level as well as in China is drawing serious concerns and undergoing huge debates. The paper analyzed the impacts of global bioethanol development on China's agricultural prices in 2006 and 2007, and examined China's bioethanol production in the next decade under different scenarios on domestic agricultural prices, national and regional agricultural productions and farm value added. The results show that the increase in demand for feedstock to produce bioethanol will lead to a very large increase in the prices of agricultural products and farmers' income.

The increases in price trigger a significant rise in production of feedstock in the cost of lower rice and wheat productions. The study also reveals that the impacts of bioethanol vary largely among regions. Given that the expansion of bioethanol will still continue in the future and the limited land resources in China, the paper suggests that bioethanol production in China should be more relying on the second generation of bioethanol technologies (i.e. using celluloses to produce bioethanol), and increase the research investment in this field.

In his summary, Dr. Qiu mentioned that

- The expansion of biofuel had and will have big impacts on world food prices
- Given the low targets of China's biofuel production, it will not have much effects on world food price, as the major players will still be the US and EU
- Biofuel development, however, is helpful to reduce the income gap between urban and rural areas.
- Welfare effects of biofuel development are very different among regions and people groups.



# FREE TRADE AND FOOD INSECURITY: COUNTING THE COST

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## Executive Summary

The arguments made by Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins to debunk myths about world hunger 20 years ago are as resonant now as they have ever been. The world is so much different now — integrated markets, advances in technology, sophisticated infrastructure, and global rules facilitate a seamless chain of food production, processing, packaging and shipment from all corners of the globe. But issues of supply and abundance, justice and freedom, nature and the environment, and concerns related to access, distribution and mutual benefit remain the key dilemmas confronting the world of food and hunger.

That policies introduced over the years ostensibly to enhance food production, ensure global supply and distribution, and promote overall consumer welfare by making available various choices at cheap prices fail to arrest crises, such as that we experience now, should prompt us to rethink the way we look at food and trade. Such rethinking necessarily involves a reexamination of the role food production, esp. in the staple crops sector, plays in the socio-economic and cultural life not just of farmers but of nations, and what place the food sector has in overall development strategy. The energy and climate crisis also requires that we critically look at the cost of moving food across the world.

## Q & A

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**Q: Dr. Tahlm Sudaryanto (CASEPS, Indonesia)**

In the past, before experiencing the soaring prices, the response to declining of some agriculture commodities prices, the standard policy recommendation from policy advisors, including FAO, was the diversification to high-priority crops.

With the reversing trend in commodity prices (higher), what kind of policy advice is recommended and how to respond to the situation with relation to staple food products?

**A: Ms. Morgan (FAO):**

*In the past, in the context of crisis, FAO looked at certain countries and its contexts and portfolios. Countries that were dependent on rice, should diversify, and look at other alternatives. Diversification is still relevant, while looking at the commodity portfolio; how a government should diversify risks of farmers.*

*For example, on a Pacific Island, where a consumption habit had inculcated dependency on imported products, was advised to develop its conventional products such as cassava which had been neglected. Ms. Morgan also highlighted the scenario of Korea in the suggestion to protect its rice market, planning for self-sufficiency in rice. In order to do this, Korea had to look at the number of farmers involved in the rice production. In Pakistan and Indonesia, for instance, can they can afford to the diversification policy emphasizing on self-sufficiency in rice. Also, critically how FAO and WB advise governments to deal with their situations.*

**Q: Ms. Aurora Regalado (MODE, Philippines)**

Food crisis is not just the question of food production, but more on the issue of the rich and the poor, between developed and developing countries.

What is the panel's view on how to address the problem?

(To Dr. Qiu) How to reduce the income disparities between the urban and the rural communities?

**A: Ms. Chavez:**

Disparities, in the context of food crisis, the best way to deal with the problem, is to make food prices cheap. So that consumers can access and buy food. But the question, of course, how long can cheap food be sustained? So, the other part of the equation is to have higher income, as the issue was what causing the difficulty to access food, was due to low income.

**A. Dr. Qiu:**

In the case of agro-fuel and food crisis, the livestock farmers seemed to lose out due to high prices of animal feed, led to the increase prices of meat, hence low consumption. In general, agro-fuel productions seemed to benefit farmers (depending on what they are producing). Those farmers who produced feedstock for the agrofuel production, and for animal feeds tend to gain, unlike livestock farmers. But, livestock farmers have the choice to go into other agricultural products, to ensure their food security. Ultimately, the impact of food crisis is linked to the income levels. Particularly, the urban poor have no other



mean to access food, apart from using their secured income. In addition, food prices should be allowed to increase accordingly. China had controlled prices through high export tax and reduced VAT to keep prices low. But, this was only a temporary measure, not a solution.

**Part 4:****NATIONAL POLICY AND RESPONSES TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY**

Following the general overview in first session which highlighted various factors and circumstances surrounding the current food crisis situation, the second session appropriately looked the national or domestic reactions and strategies to overcome the situation. Moderated by Prof. Dr. Fatimah, Session Two looked at government interventions at the national level and the role of consumers and general public towards ensuring food security.

National Food Security of Indonesia was highlighted in this Forum due to Indonesian outstanding performance to address its self-sufficiency issue. This year, Indonesia has performed well as it overcome hurdles that has put the country as the net rice importing country in the previous years, and this year has managed to reverse the situation.

Dr. Tahlim from Indonesian Center for Agriculture, Socio Economic and Policy Studies provided extensive accounts of Indonesian Agricultural Policy, including National Food Security performance and rice production development in Indonesia & self-sufficiency of other food crops Policy has been importantly regulated by government that led to 1.1 million tons increased stock of rice in 2008. Other major policy, such as price (procurement price), increase import tariff for rice, and subsidy (price subsidy /seed) are continued by government to encourage production. At the same time, Policy which include the application of advanced technology to increase production is also practiced, as well as increase land area for rice and maize. Agricultural Programs also include increase subsidy, hybrid seeds and machinery, as well as promoting investment in rice farming and empowerment of farmers.

Prof. Dr. Fatimah added that similar situation is also seen in Malaysia, thus at the National level, diversification has been promoted to cover other food crops, and not just rice.

Mr. Deshpande of MGP India brought the attention of the participants from the macro level to the reality at the micro level, a consumerism concept brought by sheer initiatives and dedication of men and women, not only to ensure Food Security but *sustainable* Food Security, *sustainable* consumption and *sustainable* lifestyle.



# ENSURING SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND FOOD SECURITY: INDONESIA FOOD SECURITY POLICY

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## Executive Summary

Since mid 2007, the trend of international commodity prices has reversed from the previous long term trend. During that period the price of food, mineral, and energy has soar sharply. This phenomenon has convinced government in many parts of the world on the need to build our own country's capacity to produce food at the right quantity and prices. Indonesia has long history in pursuing this strategic policy, with the primary goal to achieve self-sufficiency, particularly on rice, maize, soybean, sugar, and beef cattle.

During the era of soaring food prices, this strategic policy is not only ensuring food security for our population, but also an opportunity for our farmer to increase their income. Major food security policies currently implemented by all stakeholders are (1) to guarantee the food availability; (2) to reorganize of land use and regional planning; (3) to stabilize food prices; (4) to improve an efficient food distribution; (5) to increase food accesibility for household; (6) to improve food diversification; (7) to prevent scarcity of food and nutrition dan (8) macro and trade policies that related with food. To ensure food security at national level, action programs to accelerate production of five major food commodities namely rice, maize, soybean, sugar and beef catle have been formulated.

*Keywords: Food Security, Food Policies, Self Sufficiency, Productivity*

## INTRODUCTION

National food security means an ability of a country to secure all community members access to adequate, proper quality and safety food base on optimal utilization of local resources and local wisdom. The Food Security Act No. 7/1996 defines food security as “A condition that all households can meet their food needs reflected by sufficient food supply, in terms of quantity, quality, safety, equality and affordability”. The definition of the food security covers both macro and micro aspects. The macro aspect is adequacy of food supply condition and micro aspect is a condition that all households can meet their food needs for a healthy and active life.

Based on the above meaning, ideally, a nation should be able to supply food from domestic production. Food import is only an alternative way to minimize a gap between domestic production and consumption. The import also has to be managed properly so that it does not hurt the farmers, particularly small-scale farmers, and also to protect consumer's needs, especially the poor household (Article 3 (4), Government Regulation No. 68/2002).

As an open economy, Indonesian food security system is highly influenced by up and down in the international economic condition. Since the mid 2007, price of food, energy, and mineral has soar sharply, which affect food security condition in many developing countries. The current trend of commodity prices has reversed the long term declining prices trend observed in the last century. This situation has convinced the government to promote a sustainable and competitive domestic food production system. Indonesia has long history in developing food production system with the ultimate goal to achieve self-sufficiency on the production of staple food, namely rice, maize, soybean, sugar, and beef cattle.

**Table 1. Rice production and productivity in selected ASEAN countries, 2006**

Country	Harvested Area (000 ha)	Production (000 metric tons)	Yield/Productivity (kg/ha)
Indonesia	11,786.43	54,454.94	4,620
Philippines	4,159.93	15,326.71	3,684
Thailand	9,524.85	30,945.77	3,249
Malaysia	658.2	2,202	3,254
Vietnam	NA	35,917.9	4,981

Source: FAO Statistics, 2008

**Table 2. Corn production and productivity in selected ASEAN countries, 2006**

Country	Harvested Area (000 ha)	Production (000 metric tons)	Yield/Productivity (kg/ha)
Indonesia	3,345.81	11,609.46	3,470
Philippines	2,570.67	6,082.11	2,366
Thailand	951.97	4,057.70	3,913
Malaysia	10.0	39.8	3,980
Vietnam	NA	3,819.4	3,700

Source: FAO Statistics, 2008



**Table 3. Soybean production and productivity in selected ASEAN countries, 2006**

Country	Harvested Area (000 ha)	Production (000 metric tons)	Yield/Productivity (kg/ha)
Indonesia	580.53	747.61	1,288
Philippines	0.775	1.033	1,333
Thailand	147.74	217.32	1,471
Vietnam	NA	258.2	1,390

Source: FAO Statistics, 2008

## Food Availability Problems

The growth rate of demand for some food commodities are faster than those of their production growth rate. Limited accessibility of the farmers to sources of capital, technology and production inputs make them face some difficulties in increasing efficiency and productivity without any government facilitation. The improvement of farmer's institutional capacity and the improvement of the agricultural extension are the challenges of the future food security programs.

The low capacity of national food production is caused by:

- (i) land conversion from agriculture to non-agricultural purposes;
- (ii) the declining land fertility caused by environment degradation (overuse of fertilizer and pesticide);
- (iii) the limited and uncertainty of water resources due to land degradation in the up stream areas;
- (iv) around 30 percent of the irrigation infrastructure needs rehabilitation;
- (v) the competition among water users;
- (vi) unpredictable supply and price of natural gas for fertilizer's factory;
- (vii) weakness in the implementation of ceiling price of subsidized fertilizer;
- (viii) limited access to financial sources in rural areas;
- (ix) the slow technology adoption due to low economic incentive for farmers to apply new technology;
- (x) weakness in the management of food stock; (xi) continuous slaughtering of productive female livestock in major producing beef cattle areas;
- (xi) high incidence of pest and disease outbreaks on food crops and livestock;
- (xii) most of sugar cane farmers use *ratoon crop*, and there are some limitations in planting new plant;
- (xiii) the existence of climate anomaly and decreasing environmental quality.

## Food Distribution

Diversed food production across regions and seasons are challenges in assuring timely food distribution to all consumer at all time. Problems in food distribution system include: limited connecting points and infra-structures to reach all regions, mainly for remote and isolated areas,

limited market infra-structure and institution, large amount of official and unofficial charges and levies, higher transportation cost, security problems and improper policy and regulation.

## **Food Consumption**

Food consumption with adequate and balance nutrition is one of the important factors on human health and intellectual status. The problems and challenges, which need to be anticipated and overcome in achieving diversified and nutrition-balanced in food consumption pattern are: (i) large number of poor and unemployed people, who have low food accessibility; (ii) community's low level of knowledge and awareness on food and nutrition diversification; (iii) dominant consumption of rice-carbohydrate energy source; (iv) low household awareness and practices on sanitation and hygienic system; and (v) low community's awareness on food safety.

## **FOOD SECURITY POLICY AND STRATEGY**

The achievement of food self-reliance is reflected by both micro-indicator and macro-indicator. The micro-indicator is in term of affordable food need directly by the community and household whereas macro-indicator is the availability, well-distributed food supply, with good and balance nutritional consumption at regional and national level.

Some related food security policies as guidance for the government, private bodies and the community to work together in achieving food security at household, regional and national levels are as the follows:

- (1) to assure food supply,
- (2) to manage and administer national land use and regional planning,
- (3) to maintain stable food prices,
- (4) to develop efficient food distribution,
- (5) to improve household's access to food,
- (6) to promote food diversification,
- (7) to prevent and manage food and nutrition insecurity, and (8) provide conducive and sound food-related macro and trade policies.

## **ACTION PROGRAM ON FOOD SECURITY**

### **Increase Production of Staple Food**

In line with one of the food and agricultural business development directions in the Revitalization of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry (RPPK) and by taking existing owned resources and constraints into account in the five strategic food commodity development, then the following are the development directions of the five strategic food commodities' targets in the period of 2005-2009.

### **Acceleration of Food Diversification**

This activity is an effort to achieve food consumption diversification with balance nutrition and safe at household/individual level. The strategy aims:



- (a) to carry out a national movement on local food-based consumption diversification;
- (b) to extend award to community members, who consume non-rice food;
- (c) to introduce non-rice local food to early age children; and
- (d) to develop food technology to improve social and food values of non-rice local food.

#### Action Program of Food and Nutrition Insecurity Management

- a. Development of Food Self-Reliant Village
- b. Coping with the Food and Nutrition Insecurity Regions
- c. Rural Agribusiness Development Program (RADP/PUAP)

## Conclusion

National food security is one pillar of good quality human resource and generation, who are badly required in developing the nation in the globalization era. In terms of developing human quality, the food accessibility is more important than the supply of food. Therefore, the problem of food self-reliant at household level needs more attention in the future, because it is a pillar and a base of food self-reliant at regional and national levels.

From regional autonomy point of view, the tasks of the central and regional governments are to provide facilitation and intervention roles in accordance to the authority to enable a well-functioning, optimal, and fair food security system for all agents; while the agents related to production, distribution, consumption and nutrition improvement needs to conduct their respective tasks efficiently and in responsible manner to keep the food security system sustainable.

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# ENSURING FOOD SECURITY AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL:

## THE MGP MODEL OF BULK PURCHASING (INDIAN CASE STUDY)

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### Executive Summary

The Paper presents a unique Bulk Purchasing model being successfully practised by a voluntary consumer organization- Mumbai Grahak Panchayat (MGP) - at household level for last more than 33 years in India.

Started way back in 1975, this model is an offshoot of the situation where food security of consumers was seriously jeopardized with sky-rocketing spiraling prices and acute shortages of essential food items in India. The model is based on eliminating the middleman in the food supply chain and procuring the food items directly from producers/distributors and supplying the same to the consumers on 'no profit, no loss' basis. Today, this model caters to more than 22,000 families in and around Mumbai.

This model, being propelled pre-dominantly by house-wives, takes care of not only price factor but also nutrition, health, sustainability and environment. The model also makes its own modest contribution in reducing Global Warming, which is highlighted in this Paper. As a good example of co-operative spirit, this model also promotes sustainability of consumer organization and consumer movement. No wonder, this model is now being applauded at global level and efforts are on to see how this model can be replicated/adapted in other countries.

The paper deals with aspects of how such model operates in India and factors contributing to its steady growth over last 33 years. The paper also discusses, at some length, how this model contributes to food security and sustainability.

The author is optimistic that this unique Bulk Purchasing model can be replicated/adapted in developing and under-developed countries and gives his own prescription for this.



**ORIGIN:** Started way back in 1975, the MGP model is an offshoot of the situation where food security of consumers was seriously jeopardized with sky-rocketing prices and acute shortages of essential food items in India. Hoarding and black-marketing was very common. With skyrocketing prices and rampant cheating in weights, measures and quality, consumers were being ruthlessly exploited. MGP model aimed to eliminate the middlemen in the supply-chain and also to remove the malpractice's of traders. The profit margins of traders could be passed on to the consumers thereby making available the food basket of essential commodities to the consumers at affordable prices.

The guiding philosophy pronounced by Founders of the MGP way back in 1975 was:

**“Growth in Production,  
Equity in Distribution,  
Restrain on Consumption”**

#### **HOW THE MODEL OPERATES? :**

- Every member in the Group is given a printed Indent (list of items) for the next month, which also indicates the date on which payment is to be made and the date/time of the delivery.
- Every individual member completes his indent by indicating his/her monthly requirement and hands it over to the Buying Group leader.
- The Group Leader arranges to send them to the Head Office.
- Every month about 90 items of grains, pulses, edible oils, soaps/detergent, spices, dry fruits, jams, cosmetics, stationery, hosiery etc. appear on the Indent.
- All such indents from various Buying Groups get consolidated at the Head Office.
- Once the demands from various Buying Groups are consolidated, the Purchase Committee members visit manufacturers/producers or wholesalers, select the products, negotiate the rates and place orders as per the consolidated demands. Since the purchases are strictly as per demands, there are no stocks left or no inventories maintained.
- Once the rates are negotiated, the final prices are determined by adding the mark up ( on an average 7 to 7.5 % of purchase cost) and every member's total bill amount is communicated to the Buying Group leaders. These leaders, in turn, collect the bill amounts from the individual members in advance and arrange to remit the same at Head Office.
- In the meantime, the goods ordered by Purchase Committee start coming to warehouses from the producers/manufacturers or whole sellers. They get un-packed and re-packed in small packs.
- On the scheduled days of delivery, the goods are loaded in Tempos or Delivery Vans and delivered at the door-step of each Buying Group. The Group Leader of the Buying Group receives the goods as per the indents for the members of his Buying Group.
- Members of the Buying Group, who are told in advance about the arrival day and time of the goods, come and collect the goods under the supervision of the Buying Group leader as per their indent.
- The members receive the indent for the next month along with these goods. They also receive a copy of MGP's in-house magazine free of cost.

## **BENEFITS TO MEMBERS:**

- Products cheaper in price, better in quality and accurate in weights & measures.
- Saving of 15 to 20 % in their monthly grocery bills.
- Delivery of goods at Buying Group's door-step
- Saving of members' Time & Money on Transportation
- Quality purchases made by experienced Purchase Committee leaves no scope for getting cheated or wrong selection of products.
- Focus on Health and Nutrition while selecting products by purchase committee of experienced house-wives.

## **HOW IT PROVIDES FOOD SECURITY TO THE MEMBERS?**

- Model ensures adequate availability of food basket to the members
- Model ensures affordability of food basket (prices of the products are less by 15 to 20 % compared to market prices).
- Model ensures accessibility of safe and nutritious food
- Special efforts are made to develop habits and influence consumption pattern of members in favor of such products which are chemical-free, nutritionally rich and socially desirable.

## **HOW IT PROMOTES SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION?**

- Discourages Impulsive Buying and hyper consumerism, thereby promoting sustainable lifestyle
- Helps restrain unnecessary or extravagant Consumption
- Wheat, rice and sugar being supplied in re-usable cloth bags thereby doing away with use of nearly 75,000 plastic bags every month or 900,000 plastic bags per year. It thus eliminates use of 2100 kgs of plastic per month or 25,200 kgs of plastic per year.
- Contributes to substantial savings in fuel consumption on account of collective delivery at door-step of each Buying Group and thereby encouraging sustainable use of fossil fuel.
- Reduced transportation due to collective deliveries at door-step of each Buying Group minimizes emission of Greenhouse Gases. This reduction in Green House gas emissions minimizes the air pollution and directly reduces Global Warming although in some small measure.
- Discourages wasteful fancy packing/wrapping of products
- Promotes Local Products and bans "Imported Products" thereby reducing the huge "carbon cost"
- Preference for chemical-free food products
- Provides energy-efficient CFL bulbs, Gas Geysers and other gadgets thereby promoting energy-saving
- Aggressive promotion of energy saving tips through buying group network.



## **HOW IT PROMOTES SUSTAINABLE CONSUMER MOVEMENT?:**

The Group Purchasing and Distribution of grocery automatically gives sustenance to MGP. Grocery is a regular and recurring need of every household. Good quality of products at cheaper prices at door-step ensures high satisfaction level of members. This model caters to the needs of its members month after month and year after year. Hence annual renewal of membership remains just a formality. With retention of old members and regular addition of new members, MGP can today boast of being the largest voluntary consumer organization in India.

### **KEY ELEMENTS OF THIS MODEL:**

- Operates largely on voluntary efforts
- Based on members' faith and trust
- Driven by collective leadership
- Guided by social philosophy
- Ensures Food Security
- Special emphasis on Health & Nutrition while selecting the products
- Promotes Sustainable Consumption
- Establishes Consumer Sovereignty
- Products can be tailor-made and packed in environment-friendly packing material
- Direct purchases from producers/wholesalers
- Operates on 'No profit, No Loss' basis
- 15 to 20 % Savings in grocery budget
- Service-oriented and not commercially-oriented activity
- No stocks, No inventories, No wastages
- Discourages MNC products
- Largest participation of women volunteers
- High Satisfaction level
- Encourages leadership at grass-root level through Buying Group leadership
- Model being used to spread consumer awareness, consumer education
- Provides market for upcoming entrepreneurs

### **HOW CAN THIS MODEL BE REPLICATED?**

This model of MGP has a tremendous potential of making :

- **Physically healthy consumer,**
- **Economically stronger consumer,**
- **Socially responsible & sensitive consumer,**
- **Morally ethical and culturally enriched consumer.**

## WHAT IS NEEDED TO START BUYING GROUPS?

- Service-oriented approach
- Availability of dedicated voluntary activists coming from local areas
- Involvement of house-wives with their natural sense of care and concern
- Inspiring and trustworthy Leadership
- Small team of ladies good at tasting and selecting household products
- Sense of social responsibility
- Sensitivity for healthy environment

## Q & A

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**Q: Dr. Qiu**

To have SSL depend on economic advantages of Indonesia in the various food crops such as rice, maize and soybean. Is that suitable policy? Particularly, in increasing rice production, resulting in opening more land?

**A: Dr Tahlim:**

1. Sufficiency target land down by the government is difficult to attain for the discussed crops. But, for rice extensive historical and investment on infrastructural development data is available for Indonesia and continued infrastructural development may able to maintain sufficiency.
2. Maize is the commodity that provide cash incomes for farmer (demands for feed, and biofuel (not yet in Indonesia). So the possibility for sufficiency is great with future possibility to export.
3. Soybean - try to reduce import- this will be an achievement, as to gain self- sufficiency is a challenge.
4. Sugar – not so easy to maintain SSL sustainability but has gained significant improvement.
5. Rice import policy- Indonesia faced a hard time to justify to WTO when it was first implemented. It was only intended as temporary measure, but has continued till today. So, may be this will be revised accordingly. .

**Q: Dr. Prakash**

Indonesian rice producers seemed to be getting 40% higher price compared to international market. What are the measures to be considered with regards to domestic & international prices?

**A: Dr Tahlim:**

Up till Feb 2007, domestic price for rice increased by 50% than the world price, Indonesian farmer received protection. Then in March 2007, there was an increased in international prices, but government was unable to take the risk to increase domestic prices further, so control measure was taken to buy rice at lower price.



**Q: Mr. Frankovits**

More rice farms are being opened particularly in Irian Jaya, resulting in conflict to enlarge farms and on rights of the indigenous people, in the expense of smallholders. How they reconcile the issue?

**A: Dr Tahlim:**

Land issue in Papua is very complex. Almost all land in Papua is controlled by traditional tribes, so there is always a potential conflict with private companies developing the land. Generally, the strategy is to get the local people involve in rice farming, setting up partnership, but there is no guarantee that all issues will be resolved.

**Q: Dr. Prakash**

For consumers in Mumbai, they seemed to be getting good pricing and good quality products. For producers, are they also benefitting from the program? Is there any mechanism for production control?

**A: Mr. Deshpande:**

On production control of MGP products. We cannot control all the products obtained, but it is possible to maintain certain standards, depend on the nature of products, also depending on their specifications, grain are subject to grading, direct from farm or wholesaler.

**Q: Mr. Frankovits**

How can you stop people eating chocolate in Mumbai?

**A: Mr. Deshpande:**

*Changing the lifestyle, provide alternatives to consumers, for example dates, promoting sustainable consumption and healthy substitution. Also, active campaigning to promote local food.*

**Q: Ms. Aurora Regalado**

How do you handle middlemen?

How can you stop people eating chocolate in Mumbai?

**A: Mr. Deshpande:**

We faced initial resistance by middlemen, but as people come together, they have managed to overcome this challenge

**Q: Mr. Saravanan (DHRRA-Malaysia)**

What tools/ methods do you use to change the mindsets of consumers?

**A: Mr. Deshpande:**

Our movement and mission to promote healthy habits, putting together consumer case law, highlighting new products through interactions, frequent meeting and systematic program for members.

## Part 5:

# SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF FOOD INSECURITY

The profound implications of the current food crisis circumstances stressed that “Business as Usual” is no longer an option. The future of “business” has to be centered around the type of future agricultural approach that will be adopted. A comprehensive report of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) agreed at an Intergovernmental Plenary Session in Johannesburg, South Africa in April, 2008 under the co-sponsorship of the FAO, GEF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, the World Bank and WHO, best summarized the urgency for the revision of agricultural approaches. The report expressed that the current approach of agricultural practice is no longer sustainable. The intervention using sustainable agricultural approach is much needed in response to the setting-in of climate change responses. It was presented that the earlier or the current approach in agriculture has been very much centered on high yield and high-energy inputs in the expense of the environment and other natural productive resources.

The IAASTD focus on sustainable agriculture, including agro-ecology and organic farming

- Sustainable agriculture is productive
- Sustainable agriculture is economically viable
- Sustainable agriculture provides global environmental services
- Sustainable agricultural practices can mitigate climate change
- Sustainable agriculture is resilient and will allow adaptation to climate change

Thus, the recommendation of IAASTD included a radical overhaul in agricultural practices that address

- 1) **Sustainability issue-** to include agro-ecology and organic farming; this would also mean working towards refuting the notion that organic farming is not productive. More funding and research must be channeled into “sustainability” factors.
- 2) **Farmer-centered approach** – development and expansion of knowledge-based strategy that includes active participation and inputs from farmers themselves; this also includes capacity building for farmers to updates their knowledge on new related issues.
- 3) **Policy space-** for developing countries to ensure local productivity.
- 4) **Reduced subsidies (developed countries)** - support program in agriculture that has direct impact on producers in developing countries.
- 5) **Strengthen SPs and SSM** - the G33’s active pursuits in the WTO
- 6) **Review and revise bank policies** - not barriers to food security and development.

Further implications of food insecurity form Human Rights (HR) perspectives were reiterated in great length by Mr. Andre’ Frankovitz. It is obvious that international HR is an enshrined international law, along other such as WTO, Treaties, HR law, but they seldom touch each other.



HR issues are related to trade and agricultural policies, thus the appropriate use of international law to promote HR to food.

Participation and transparency of trade negotiation is still an issue, as civil society is often not present to provide input on trade negotiation. Worst still, suicides and malnutrition among children is still rampant, where CRC should protect. Internal processes define specific of rights. General Comments have been used to convey legal jargons and what international laws mean. In particular General Comment No.12 specifically explained “adequate food”, to include sufficiency and nutritionally adequate. And this applies not only to national government but to all governments (including both sides of negotiating parties).

**RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD General Comment 12: Every state is obliged to ensure for everyone under its jurisdiction access to the minimum essential food which is sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe, to ensure freedom from hunger**

Some strategies to realize human rights include:

- 1) Periodic reports to the UN Committee – asking government to provide periodic reports on the status of HR in their country; where right-to-food (RTF) has been undermined,
- 2) through a “naming and shaming” process - Exposing violations to international human rights NGOs
- 3) Enlightening trade bureaucrats about their own governments’ human rights commitments - government representative may be ignorant of international law related)
- 4) Approach some other governments that are supportive of HR principles
- 5) Coalitions of NGO’s - Coordinating pressure with human rights NGOs in developed countries

# THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF FOOD INSECURITY

**Lim Li Ching,**  
*Third World Network*



## Executive Summary

The current global crisis of high food prices, and of food shortages in some countries, has given prominence once again to food security concerns. While the actual crisis may have been triggered by some recent developments, such as the rise in oil prices, the push for biofuels, speculation in the commodities futures markets and climate change, its roots actually go deeper.

There are also structural causes, the most important of which has been the general neglect of agriculture, particularly in developing countries. The policy of agricultural liberalization, which many countries undertook on the advice and as part of the loan conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, and later as part of their obligations under the World Trade Organization, has led to import surges and cheap subsidized commodities flooding domestic markets, to the detriment of farmers' livelihoods.

This unprecedented food crisis should force a rethink and reconsideration of the development paradigm that has shaped agricultural policy in recent years. If this is not addressed now, the political and economic implications of food insecurity will be tremendous. The crisis is a wake-up call: the long-term answer for developing countries is to revert to a policy of ensuring food security, in terms of increasing local food production.

This would entail investing more resources in sustainable agriculture and addressing the unbalanced economic and trade policies that currently prevail. Sustainable agriculture also has climate mitigation and adaptation potential, which is increasingly important as climate change has been a key factor in triggering the current food crisis, and agriculture worldwide will have to cope with an ever-changing climate.



# AGRICULTURAL TRADE POLICY AND THE HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD

**André Frankovits**

*International Project Director of  
Human Rights Council Australia*



## Executive Summary

The majority of people in Asia are dependent on agriculture for work and as a means to feed themselves and their families. Yet there are tremendous pressures both international and domestic that are interfering with the ability of people living in rural areas to earn an adequate amount to support themselves and that are driving increasing numbers off the land and into urban centres or even outside their own countries. These pressures are generated both externally through the WTO and its Agreement on Agriculture, and through Free Trade Agreements imposed by more powerful industrialized countries, and domestically by policies that are forced upon governments by a variety of players including multinational corporations. The latter have succeeded in inserting into trade rules a range of regulations that have the effect of promoting the welfare of themselves at the expense of rural workers and their families who face persistent poverty and food insecurity.

Yet the human right to food is a right recognized in international law in such treaties as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Conventions on Women and Children. These outline the obligations of governments to *respect* human rights by limiting state power, the obligations to *protect* that regulates the conduct of non-state actors, and the obligations to *fulfil* that -according to the FAO - requires positive action by the state to identify vulnerable groups and to design, implement and monitor policies that will facilitate their access to food-producing resources or an income. There is no doubt that some of the policies imposed by trade regulations and the power of multinationals on governments in the Asian region interfere with governments' ability to meet their obligations.

International human rights law can be a useful tool to combat the forces that undermine food security. Firstly through naming and shaming governments and corporations whose policies lead to the violation of the right to food. Then by working with our own governments to resist the negative policies imposed on them and by forging alliances with like-minded institutions and organizations. Finally, by taking advantage of emerging debates around corporate social responsibility and environmental activism.

# FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: PROTECTING FOOD UNDER FREE TRADE RULES

**Henry Saragih**

*Indonesian Peasant Union  
(SPI/Serikat Petani Indonesia)  
La Via Campesina*



## Executive Summary

The food crisis is happening all over the world because the control over food is no longer in the hand of the people (in this case the peasant as the primary food producers) but rather in the hands of transnational agro industry.

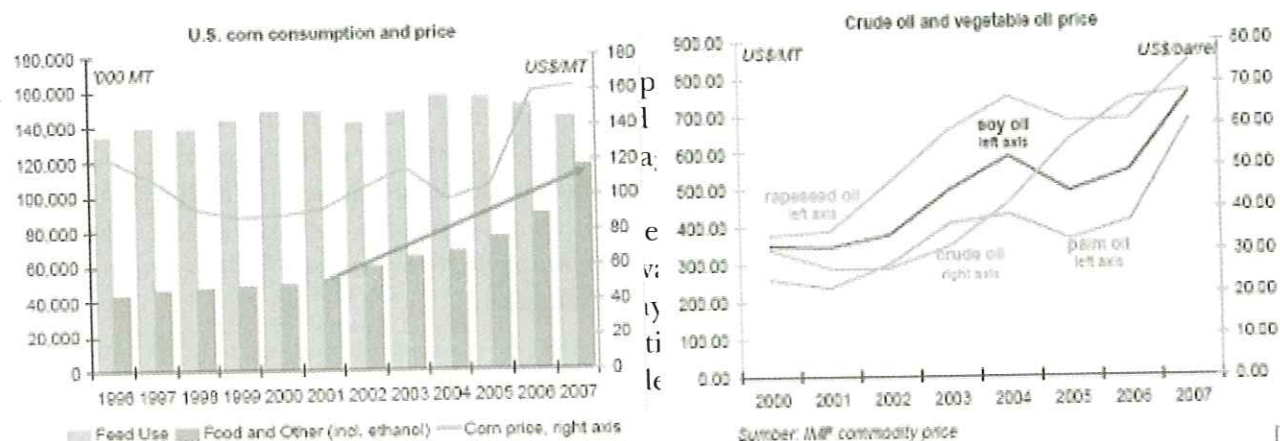
The dependency of food could mean losing the sovereignty of a nation. Food is not just a commodity but the basic need for life, therefore we can not leave the control over food to the market. Peasant should be the one who hold the control of agriculture resources, and food sovereignty is the key points to eradicate hunger and poverty in the world.

## Food Sovereignty: Protecting Food under Free Trade Rules

During this past year many countries including Indonesia suffer from devastating food price crisis. The prices of basic needs have increased rapidly leaving million of poor people without any access to food. In countries like Pakistan, Russia, Mexico, even Italy riots are happening due to the increase price of basic needs. In Indonesia the price of food price are increasing variously from 50 until 200 percent, leaving million of poor people suffering from hunger and malnutrition. The world has witnessed ordinary people who have to queue in line under the sun with coupons in their hand, waiting for food aid. In some places these queues have turned into food riots.

On the other side, we can see many Transnational Agro industry Corporations gain huge benefit from the raising price of the food commodities. Monsanto's profit is increasing up to 45 percent, General Mills' profit was increasing up to 61 percent, and DuPont's profit was increasing up to 86 percent.



**Picture 1. The trend of increasing global price for maize, canola, crude oil, CPO and soy-bean**

Under WTO agreements, countries have also been forced to “liberalize” their agricultural markets: reduce import duties (which are an important income loss for the importing governments) and accept imports for at least 5% of their internal consumption even if they did not need it. At the same time TNCs have kept on dumping surpluses into their markets, using all forms of direct and indirect export subsidies.. At the same time, national governments have failed to stabilize their markets and protect farmers and consumers against sudden price fluctuations. Neo-liberal policies have destroyed the capacities of countries to feed themselves.

After 14 years of NAFTA (North America Free Trade Agreements) Mexico went through a major crisis often dubbed as the “tortilla crisis”. Nowadays, while increased amounts of US maize have suddenly been diverted to agro-fuels production, quantities available for the Mexican markets have dropped, provoking price surges.

In 1992, Indonesian farmers produced enough soya to supply the domestic market. Soya-based tofu and ‘tempeh’ are an important part of the daily diet throughout the archipelago. Following the neo-liberal doctrine, the country opened its borders to food imports, allowing cheap US soy to flood the market. This destroyed national production. Today, 60% of the soy consumed in Indonesia is imported. Record prices for US soy last January led to a national crisis when the price of ‘tempe’ and tofu (the « meat of the poor ») doubled in a few weeks. The following table shows how the value and volume of food import in Indonesia is always negative for the past few years.

Instability on the international food markets is one of the characteristics of agricultural markets: as production is seasonal and variable, and a increase of production cannot be realized very quickly as crops need time to grow. The volatility in the food markets is mainly due to deregulation, the lack of control on the big players and the lack of necessary state intervention at the international and the national level to stabilize markets. De-regulated markets are key part of the problem!

### More free trade will not solve the crisis

Institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF as well as some governments are now advocating more investment in agriculture, increased food aid for the low income food importing countries and further liberalization of markets so that countries can improve their income through export. Many argue that we need more intensive production patterns, which means for them more industrial high input agriculture. This includes the introduction of GMOs and the use of more fossil energy!

Various forms of investments and financial “help” are offered to importing countries, creating corporate-led food production system and continue to impose the same recipe of deregulation and privatization.

In Indonesia this kind of regulation give private sectors very strong control over agricultural resources, an example of private sector that controlling 67 per cent of palm oil plantation land in Indonesia is a clear fact of this situation. The companies often violated peasant rights that lead to agrarian conflict like happened to SPI members and other peasants, for example in North Sumatra where the peasants struggle against Bakrie Sumatra Plantation, or in Sulawesi where huge conflict occur between the peasants with London Sumatra Plantation.

### **It is Time for Food Sovereignty**

Food Sovereignty is a concept of fulfilling food necessity through local production. Food sovereignty means the fulfillment of the right to nutritious food that is culturally appropriate, produced through a sustainable agriculture manner and environmentally friendly. Hence, food sovereignty is highly appreciate the principle of food diversification based on local culture. Food sovereignty is also believe in the rights of people to determine their own food and agricultural system with the focus on family based sustainable agriculture, based on the principle of solidarity rather than agro industrial base agriculture, that merely based on profit.

To achieve a strong food sovereignty, it must start with agrarian reform, the changes of the current polarization of the control over agrarian (productive) resources. Rural development is expected to bring prosperity for everyone. Rural development must be based on strong agricultural sector to strengthen local food condition, and later it become the foundation of non agrarian sector that still have a strong foundation on agriculture with the management of independent and sustainable rural economy based on people's socio-economic needs.

We are convinced that peasants and small farmers can feed the world. They, therefore, have to be considered as the key part of the solution. With sufficient political will and the implementation of adequate policies more peasants and small farmers will easily produce sufficient food to feed everyone at a reasonable price. The current situation shows that changes are needed!



# FOOD CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN

**Tess Vistro,**  
*Co-convenor,  
Task Force Rural and Indigenous Women,  
Asia Pacific Forum on Women,  
Law and Development (APWLD)*



The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) is an independent, non-government, non-profit organization. It is a network of individuals and organizations from 23 countries in the region. It has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. Its goal is to empower women in the region to use law as an instrument of social change for equality, justice, peace and development and enabling women to use law and legal institutions to promote the basic concept of human rights and other human rights instruments.

## The Situation of Women in the Asia Pacific

The Asia Pacific region accounts for 40% of the world's territory, and has 61% of the world's population. The region has also almost two-thirds of the world's poor, living on less than a single US dollar a day.

Women from the Asian region account approximately 50% of the regional food production both for consumption and for sale. In South and Southeast Asia, women play a major role in rice production, generally providing the unpaid family or wage labor needed for sowing, transplanting, harvesting and processing. Throughout the Pacific and other coastal areas in the region, women play prominent roles in food marketing and in fisheries.

The women of Asia, fulfill this vital role as they face daily multilayered life threatening situations such as food insecurity, hunger and poverty and vastly depleting natural resources. Patriarchy, the use of cultural and traditional norms and beliefs is a further hindrance to women in their struggle to assert their rights of access to opportunities and resources. As they struggle to survive, they are also confronted with the forces of globalization, fundamentalism and heightening militarization that reinforces discrimination, oppression and inequalities.

The women in the region are denied their basic rights to basic needs food, sources of livelihood and other productive resources including paid employment, housing and basic health care services. Every year more than half a million worldwide die in pregnancy and childbirth, a situation largely

related to the lack of nutritious food that women need during pregnancy. In the Philippines, 10 women die daily in pregnancy and childbirth.

All the above factors have marginalized rural and indigenous women from their livelihoods and governments have failed to effectively address these situations for the reason that same governments have vested interests in the multinational corporations rather than in the welfare of rural communities.

### **Root Causes of the food crisis**

This crisis is rooted fundamentally to the monopoly of the basic resources for production such as land, water and production inputs in the hands of big landowners and TNCs in the different countries. This situation leaves the majority of food producers poor: the farmers, fisherfolks and indigenous peoples, rural women. As the landlords and the TNCs control the lands and the capital needed for production, they likewise dictate the kinds of crops that can be planted in their lands, get the lion's share in the produce of the land, with the poor tillers and food producers left with only meager a share of his or her produce, most often not even sufficient for the needs of her or his family.

### **Exacerbated by neoliberal globalization**

The food crisis aggravated with the adoption of the neoliberal globalization policies and path for agriculture in the different countries. The recent escalation in food prices had hit the poor in every developing country, and most badly on the poor women and children.

In April of this year, The Jessica Soho Report, a prime time television production ran a disturbing segment called *rice prostitution*, which showed interviews of rural women offering their bodies, in exchange for a kilo of rice, in Central Luzon, a major rice producing region in the Philippines. In Indonesia and Sri Lanka, oil prices have soared unprecedentedly, triggering increases in food prices and other basic commodities. In Indonesia, women take most of their time waiting in a long queue just to get 5 litres of kerosene to prepare food for their families.

Removal of subsidies and support services under the AoA likewise spelled disaster to the food producers. In Pakistan, the World Bank and IMF have been forcing the government to take away all subsidies on oil, wheat and fertilizer "to improve the economic health of the country." It appears that similar action has already been taken in Indonesia and "Sri Lanka, and the IMF is urging Pakistan to also "swallow the bitter pill".

Another major reason for the significant drop in the production of food is the unabated and massive crop conversions and conversion of agricultural lands into housing, golf course and other tourism related project. As the focus of the government is the export market, it encouraged the production of so called high value crops for export, including agrofuels production, resulting to the shrinking of lands devoted to the production of grains and other food crops.



## Other factors

- **Militarization**- resulting vast tracts of lands laid idle and unproductive for long periods of time, and also impoverishment of peasants and indigenous peoples.
- **Extractive Mining**- Foreign owned and operated mining operations that destroy the land and livelihood of the people is a big threat to indigenous women's livelihood. Malnourishment of villagers in areas surrounding mining areas is rampant because the villagers find that they have no access to land to grow food as lands have been ruined by pollution.
- **Climate Change**- Crop failures create a ripple effect to other rural women in the communities as farm labor is supplied mainly by women

## What do Women Want and what is being done about it?

APWLD's "*Don't Globalize Hunger! Assert Women's Right to Food Sovereignty*" campaign, was launched in 2004 to raise awareness on the issue, nationally, regionally and internationally. Through the campaign, a Food Sovereignty Advocacy Tool simplifies the terminologies to educate the grassroots communities on the interlinkages of issues surrounding food and how it affects them. The kit has been translated into Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, Tamil in India, Urdu in Pakistan, Bahasa in Indonesia, Thai in Thailand, Ilocano in the Philippines. On going are translations in Russian and Kyrgyz in the central Asia region, and also in Korea and Cambodia.

## Women as Vital Players in the addressing the Food Crisis, advance the following demands!

- Include women in decision making processes, providing access and control of real food producers, most especially women, to basic productive resources
- Moratorium in the conversion of agricultural lands for use in the production of export crops, as sites of special economic zones, for tourism purposes and real estate development.
- Remove the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) in the WTO; food and food security of peoples should never be subjected to trading rules in the international market.
- Protection of Seeds as the peoples' heritage.
- Regulate agrochemical TNCs in Asian countries and make them responsible for the crimes they have committed including human poisoning, destruction of the environment and exploitation of workers.
- A commitment to provide support and resources for the attainment of food self sufficiency through investments in production facilities such as irrigation, post-harvest facilities
- Control the prices of food commodities to levels that can be afforded by the poor in the different countries
- Direct actions and demands of moratorium on GMOs
- Integral land reform
- Rejection of agro-fuels and the privatization of water, land, sea and other natural resources.
- Recover natural resources monopolized by corporations
- Create tribunals and observatories of TNCs and the effect of neoliberal policies on food.

## Part 6

# REGIONAL INITIATIVES TOWARDS ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

- ASEAN concerns on food relief in response to devastated natural disasters and soaring food prices in 2007/2008
- Likelihoods of food prices to remain high for the next few years and impacts to the region
- ASEAN - a net exporter of food commodities and has sufficient amount of food for its people
- ASEAN cooperation - one of the possible mechanism to address the issues
- ASEAN Integrated Food Security Policy as a pragmatic approach
- Focus on “rice” and be implemented under Plus 3 Framework
- Components
  - Two core components - Food Emergency/ Shortage Relief, and Sustainable Food Trade Development
  - Two supplementary components - Integrated Food Security Information System, and Strategic Agricultural Innovation

Food security is a critical concern in developing countries' pursuit of developmental objectives. SPs and SSM are of paramount importance in ensuring food security, especially to G33 members which account for the bulk of the world's population and resource poor farmers.

Food security as a criteria for SP selection is already enshrined in July 2004 framework and the HK Declaration. Mandates also reaffirm the right of developing countries to both volume-based and price-based SSM. Mandates recognized the significance of SPs and SSM as special and differential treatment for the protection and development of the agricultural sector. SPs and SSM are not meant to disrupt normal trade flows.

The need for such developing flexibilities became more glaring with the deepening global food crisis. For a successful pro-development outcome, the Doha negotiations should lead to substantial reductions in trade distorting support and ensure that flexibilities like SPs and SSM are provided to the agriculture sector for their food security needs.



# ASEAN RESPONSE TO THE FOOD CRISIS

## **Somsak Pipoppinyo, PhD**

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## **Executive Summary**

Ensuring food security has always been the fundamental goal of ASEAN. All Member States are working together under a signed agreement—the “ASEAN Food Security Reserve (AFSR)”, for sharing of rice stocks at times of shortage, particularly through the trigger of a collective operation of the committed “ASEAN Emergency Rice Reserve (AERR)”. To improve and further support the operation of the AERR, a Pilot Project of East Asia Emergency Rice Reserve (EAERR) is being implemented.

The EAERR Pilot Project is basically an ASEAN+3 initiative to expand ASEAN food security cooperation activities with the Plus Three Countries, i.e. China, Japan and Korea. Besides AFSR and EAERR, the “ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS)” has also been developed under an AMAF+3 initiative to expand the ASEAN food security cooperation activities with the Plus Three Countries. The objectives and activities of AFSIS are to establish an information network on food security among the countries and to conduct training’s in data collection and management.

As a pragmatic approach to addressing issues of rising food prices, an ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Policy is proposed for consideration at the coming Special Senior Officials Meeting of the 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (Special SOM-29<sup>th</sup> AMAF), to be held on 5-7 August 2008 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

The AIFS is formulated in response to drastic speed of soaring food prices, accessibility to staple food particularly among the poor, high cost of agricultural inputs/ production, and competing objectives between food and bio-energy. The main objective of AIFS is to ensure food security through sustainable food production, post-harvest, marketing and trade. At the initial stage, AIFS will focus on rice as the main food commodity considering its importance to the region and on-going efforts on this commodity.

## Addressing the Soaring Food Prices: Broadening Scope of ASEAN Co-operation in Food Security

### I. ASEAN Cooperation on Food Security

1. Sharp increase in international food prices in 2007/2008 has brought serious concern on socio-economic impacts of ASEAN Member States. There are a number of factors attribute to the state of the markets for food and agricultural commodities. ASEAN cooperation has been expected as an instrument to address the problems, especially by strengthening ASEAN initiative/ measures already existed.
2. Ensuring food security has always been the fundamental goal of ASEAN. All Member States are working together under a signed agreement—the “ASEAN Food Security Reserve (AFSR)”, for sharing of rice stocks at times of shortage, particularly through the trigger of a collective operation of the committed “ASEAN Emergency Rice Reserve (AERR)”. Since the establishment of AERR in 1979, ASEAN has never really experienced a serious shortage of rice, hence, the AERR has never been activated.
3. To improve and further support the operation of the AERR, a Pilot Project of East Asia Emergency Rice Reserve (EAERR) is being implemented. The EAERR Pilot Project is basically an ASEAN+3 initiative to expand ASEAN food security cooperation activities with the Plus Three Countries, i.e. China, Japan and Korea.
4. Besides AFSR and EAERR, the “ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS)” Project has also been developed under an AMAF+3 initiative to expand the ASEAN food security cooperation activities with the Plus Three Countries. The objectives and activities of AFSIS are to establish an information network on food security among the countries and to conduct trainings in data collection and management.
5. The current design of the AERR and EAERR is mainly aiming at the direct benefits for humanitarian purposes in time of “emergency” or “crisis”, e.g. earth quake, typhoon, floods, when the food-shortage situation is often come about after those disastrous events. Guidelines for different Tiers for release of stocks with specific purposes and condition appear as **Annex 1**.

### II. Strategic Paper for Policy Recommendation being in Progress

In anticipation of uncertainty of raising food prices especially rice, the scope of cooperation under the AERR/ EAERR can and should be expanded to cover the stabilization of food prices.

It is apparent that the rice stock reserve under the AERR/EAERR arrangement can also be effectively “managed” in term of “rice pool” for East Asian region, therefore alleviating the psychological and physical competition and high cost for rice stocks reserve by individual countries. There are also indirect benefits from exchange of information and improvement in rice reserve management strategy as a whole.



A concept note on “ASEAN Integrated Food Security Policy (AIFS)” has been prepared for consideration at the coming Special Senior Officials Meeting of the 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (Special SOM-29<sup>th</sup> AMAF), to be held on 5-7 August 2008 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. At the initial stage, AIFS will focus on rice as the main food commodity considering its importance to the region and on-going efforts on this commodity. The AIFS is proposed to be implemented under AMAF+3 framework with technical/ financial support from international organizations i.e. FAO, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), World Bank, ADB, and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). It is anticipated that the results of the deliberation will be recommended for endorsement by the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF), AMAF+3 and possibly approval by Summit.

One of the key recommendations under the AIFS is the consideration for approval of transforming the EAERR from a project into an ASEAN+3 permanent mechanism. With the setting up of the EAERR as a permanent scheme, it is obvious that besides helping disaster relief, it also provides an opportunity to regularly share the concern and better understanding of the conditions in individual countries, especially to discuss common interests from a balanced perspective. This can lead to more room for improvement in several aspects ranging from accurate estimation of rice production, maintain proper levels for rice stocks and promote reasonable and stabilized market prices for both producers and consumers.

In addition, an idea for “Sustainable Food Trade Development” will be elaborated. This aims at developing a buffer mechanism to support fair/balanced food trade within the acceptable levels of food prices. The component helps ensuring that due consideration is given to balancing domestic accessibility to food, intra and extra regional food trade. Agreed criteria and conditions and trigger mechanism to release rice reserve shall be further developed. The experience drawn from the implementation of EAERR project, particularly the application of TIER 1 and TIER 2 could be considered as a basis to develop such a buffer mechanism.

### **III. Conclusion**

It should be emphasized that one of the major goals of ASEAN has been to ensure that there are no hungers of the people, and at the same time helping the mostly poor farmers—the food producers and majority of the people in the region—to be able to sustain their livelihoods including selling their agro-produces at a good price.

It is important to note that regardless of the policy options taken, there are winners and losers from state intervention in the market, either to be more effective at achieving their objectives of protecting consumers or assisting agricultural producers to benefit from rising prices.

It is therefore necessary to strike a balance between short-term and long-term interests including possible consequences. Moreover, it should also be understood that high food prices is, to a large extent, resulted from higher demand of food and high fuel oil prices as well as other production inputs (e.g. seeds, fertilizers, chemicals, etc.) due to the growing population worldwide, which contribute eventually to increased cost of production and logistic.

A broader policy to address this complex situation needs greater attention and has to be laid down for concerted implementation. It is also acknowledged that there is a need for strong political will, large investment and long term effort in addressing the issues more effectively and efficiently.

# Annex 1:

## Summary Guidelines for the Release of Stocks under EAERR (4<sup>th</sup> PSC EAERR, Chiang Mai, March 2005)

	Earmark supply		Physical stock
	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Purpose	To accommodate the requirement under unusual market requirement.	to supplement the TIER 1 release, in the case of temporary and large scale food shortage.	To supply rice for sudden emergency  Food aid for undernourished.
Basis for the release of stock	Supply demand matching process between surplus and deficit MCs to meet emergency demand for rice under commercial trade  (Forward contract)  (Consistent with WTO Agreement as it is a market transaction)	Long term loan agreement or grant of rice between surplus and deficit MCs  (Not a full commercial contract; grant of rice)  Can be considered as an export subsidy which comes under Article 9 of the AOA on Export Subsidy Commitment.	Two types of trigger system to meet acute and urgent emergency demand as first emergency food-aid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request trigger system</li> <li>• MCs will notify MT EAERR the degree of severity and the cause of disaster</li> <li>• Automatic trigger system – released based on a pre set criteria of eligibility such as magnitude calamity agreed by PSC.</li> </ul> (MOU or MoA)
Condition	The contract specifies agreed price, type, quantity, quality, terms of payment and delivery.	The contract will have a longer term of payment and/or lower interest.  Donor and recipients MCs may negotiate to determine the price, terms of payment, quantity, grade, transport arrangement and operational cost..	The reserve will be released based on a grant basis.  The requesting MC provide transport cost and other operating costs in distributing the rice in disaster areas. If not, the MT EAERR will help seek donor to cover such cost with approval from PSC
Trigger system	An appeal from MC and or international organization such as WFP	An appeal from MC and or international organization such as WFP	An appeal from MC and or international organization such as WFP  Based on emergency guidelines (acute emergency and for food aid based on the condition to be determined through prior consultations with donor country)
Implementation	TIER 1 between Viet Nam and Philippines has been carried out.  Constraints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political sensitivity of rice</li> <li>- Bureaucratic structure and facilitation for negotiation</li> </ul> <i>(releasing of rice for emergency purpose to foreign country is required a decision of Cabinet)</i>  TIER 1 between Thailand and Philippines is being initiated.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty alleviation in Lao PDR (2 projects) → 20 tons and 20-30 tons</li> <li>• Emergency rice needs in Philippines → 952.46 tons</li> <li>• Emergency rice needs in Indonesia → 100 tons</li> </ul>



# G33 POSITIONS ON SPS AND SSM: TOWARDS ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

**Lupiño J. Lazaro Jr.**

*Policy & Planning,  
Department of Agriculture, Philippines*



Food security is a critical concern to many developing countries in their pursuit of developmental objectives. Special Products (SPs) and Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) are of paramount importance in ensuring food security, especially for the G33 members, which altogether account for the bulk of the world's population and resource poor farmers.

The G33's efforts to negotiate SPs and SSM benefited from previous proposals raised by WTO Members relating to food security, which also contributed to the formation of the G33. There has been a proposed "food security mechanism" that would be automatically applicable to a country's primary staple of a country, and to other commodities following certain criteria. There were also proposals that seek flexibilities for developing countries under a "development box" or "food security box".

In July 2003, an Alliance of developing countries issued a Statement and Declaration that no agriculture modalities text will be viable without the two elements of SPs and SSM. The Alliance was transformed into the G33 in September 2003 during the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun. Coordinated by Indonesia, the group's membership has now expanded to 46 countries.

The G33 put forth a proposal in November 2005 for the designation of at least 20% of agricultural tariff lines as SPs, guided by indicators, and a three-tiered approach for treatment. Several illustrative indicators listed to guide SP selection pertain to food security. In the spirit of moving the negotiations forward, the G33 has submitted in December 2007, a revised proposal on SPs which introduced a hybrid approach in selecting a maximum 20% of tariff lines as SPs, through self-designation of [x] tariff lines and designating [y] tariff lines guided by indicators. The treatment was also modified.

Import surges are of serious concern in view of their potential impact on food security. G33 members perceive that the existing trade remedy measures for import surges are either unavailable or are difficult to operationalize for most developing countries.

The limitations and weaknesses of the existing Special Safeguards (SSG) has led many developing countries to advocate for a more useful and responsive trade remedy to import surges. In a proposal tabled in March 2006, the G33 put forth concrete drafting suggestions in “improving” the existing SSG provision, which would make the SSM easier to invoke and utilize.

It is already enshrined in the July 2004 framework and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration that food security will be one of the criteria in the selection of SPs. The mandate for both volume-based and price-based SSM is also reaffirmed. These recognized the significance of these instruments to the protection of the agricultural sector, particularly the subsistence and resource-poor farmers, of developing countries. Such instruments are also not meant to disrupt trade.

The need for developing country flexibilities became more glaring, with the deepening global food crisis. To address this situation the Doha negotiations should lead to very substantial reductions in trade distorting support measures, and that the instruments of SPs and SSM are provided, especially to poor farmers, for their food security needs.

## **Special Products and Food Security**

### **A. Rationale**

Food security is one of the cornerstones in the G33’s advocacy for Special Products, in addition to livelihood security and rural development concerns. Several G33 countries have high percentages of undernourished people and food security is clearly a major issue to many of them. Moreover, it is widely known that many developing countries only have tariffs as a means of border protection for their agriculture sector.

The definition of food security is continuously evolving, and a useful working definition is put forth by the FAO, as follows:

“**Food security** exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Household food security is the application of this concept to the family level, with individuals within households as the focus of concern.”

### **B. G33 Proposal on SPs**

The G33 put forth a proposal in November 2005 for the designation of at least 20% of agricultural tariff lines as SP, guided by indicators. For treatment, a three-tiered approach was proposed, generally outlined as follows:

- (i) 50% of SP tariff lines will not be subject to tariff reduction;
- (ii) 25% of SP lines to be reduced by 5%; and
- (iii) 25% of SP lines to be reduced by 10%

In the spirit of moving the negotiations forward, the G33 has submitted in December 2007, a revised proposal on SP which introduced a hybrid approach in selecting a maximum 20% of tariff



lines as SPs, through self-designation of [x] tariff lines and designating [y] tariff lines guided by indicators. The treatment was also modified, as follows:

- (i) 40% of SP lines with zero cut
- (ii) 30% of SP lines with 8% cut; and
- (iii) 30% of SP lines with 12% cut.

The revised proposal significantly represents new movements and positions on SPs by the G33, despite the absence of new and significant movements from other (WTO) Members.

## **Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) and Food Security**

### **A. Rationale**

Import surges are of serious concern in view of their potential impact on food security. While trade in food products is vital for enhancing food security, sudden increases in import volumes may hinder domestic production in terms of undermining otherwise viable and efficient domestic market system. Surges in food imports tend to disrupt local markets including, including the transmission of depressed world prices to domestic markets, with negative effects on local production in many cases. G33 members perceive that the existing trade remedy measures for import surges are either unavailable or are difficult to operationalize for most developing countries.

Only 39 out of the 153 members (to date) of the WTO have the right to recourse to Special Safeguards (SSG) under Article 5 of the Agreement on Agriculture, for tariffied products designated in their respective Uruguay Round schedule of commitments. There are around 22 countries that have such SSG entitlements, 8 of which are G33 members (Barbados, Botswana, Indonesia, Korea, Nicaragua, Panama, the Philippines, and Venezuela). For the period 1995 to 2003, only twelve countries have invoked the SSG, two of which are developing countries (Philippines and Costa Rica).

Some other reasons cited for the limited use of the SSG are the following :

- (i) many developing countries failed to promptly enact the necessary domestic legislation and regulations to implement their domestic SSG measures due to the novelty and sophistication of the SSG provisions;
- (ii) in the absence of firm statistical bases for using the SSG measures, some countries opted to waive their SSG privileges instead of risking disputes and retaliatory action from their trading partners; and
- (iii) the SSG modality itself was perceived to be biased against developing countries. The complicated formulas specially for computing price-based SSG duties probably discouraged many government officials from developing countries from pursuing opportunities for invoking the SSG.

### **B. G33 Proposal on SSM**

The limitations and weaknesses of the SSG has led many developing countries, particularly the G33, to advocate for a more useful and responsive trade remedy to import surges. In its latest proposal on SSM tabled in March 2006, the G33 put forth concrete drafting suggestions in

“improving” the existing SSG provision, which would make the SSM easier to invoke and operationalize. The key features of the proposal include the following:

- (i) on product coverage, there would be no *a priori* exclusion of agricultural products and there should be no limitation in the invocation of SSM;
- (ii) the volume triggers shall be calculated based on the imports of the most recent three-year period, and the remedies are outlined in a three-tier approach of increased import levels and maximum additional tariffs.
- (iii) the price trigger is the average monthly price for the most recent three-year period preceding the year of importation for which data are available. The additional duty shall not exceed the difference between the import price and the trigger price.
- (iv) the additional duties shall be applied up to a maximum of 12 months from invocation, and could go beyond the bound tariffs.

### **Brief State of Play of Negotiations on SP and SSM**

To date, there is still no convergence on the key issues in the negotiations, including SP and SSM. At this stage of the negotiations, it appears that the most crucial issue to be resolved for SPs is the zero-cut for some products, while for SSM, it's the breaching of the remedies beyond the pre-Doha bound rates. The G33 wants an assurance of zero cut treatment for their most sensitive SPs, while other Members such as the US, Canada, and Thailand asserts that all SPs should take a tariff cut. On the SSM, while the G33 pushes for the remedies to breach the pre-Doha bound rates, other Members such as Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay (APU) insists that the remedies should be capped.

The proposed restriction also effectively renders the SSM useless and defies the very purpose for which safeguard duties have been conceived and incorporated in the WTO's agricultural reform program.

## **Q & A**

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### **Q: Ms. Morgan (FAO-Bangkok)**

Impact of import surges, example, increase in Africa. It is difficult to trace, from analytical capacities to monitor import surges to ensure food security, self-sufficiency and food sovereignty. Also, reduced tariff is not because of WTO or FTA but due to boundaries increased for domestic protection. Ghana, for example, wanted to increase tariffs, WB and IMF, however, disallowed.

### **Could country actually implement SSM if they were endorsed by WTO?**

Solution may be for a country to look at the applied tariff (higher); why not just remove or increased their applied tariffs under WTO.



**How do you balance the issue of Food Security and Self-sufficiency?**

**A: Mr Lazarro:**

FAO has seen applied tariffs as remedy, where members have the rights to raise. G33 push for SSM remedy beyond the bound tariffs, concern for member countries who do not have tariff “overhangs” (the difference between bound and applied range). SSM is seen as the improvement of SSG, allowing the developing countries to determine what priority products should be covered by SSM, not just those that have been tariffed under the Uruguay Round. And, meant as a temporary measure.

**Q: Dr. Prakash (India)**

G33 insisting for reduction in tariffs in other countries but increased domestic tariffs, which will lead to increased prices. What is the rationale behind this, for the developing countries who are net importers to increase tariffs?

**A: Mr Lazarro:**

Tariff is the only means of protection for developing and least developed countries. Developing countries stand very small chance to be competitive in the world market for export products. Developing countries’ active participation in WTO (through G33 or G20) present an advantage at the multilateral level. At bilateral level (for example with US or EU), developing country would not have much negotiation leverage, pushing for reductions of subsidies by developed countries.

**Q: Mr. Deshpande (MGP, India)**

Is WTO not the real culprit for the present crisis? Due to WTO-Agreement on Agriculture, we are facing the present crisis. Who is the real culprit?

**A: Mr Lazarro:**

WTO is partly the culprit. Currently we are commissioning a study on the WTO, post-UR impact. To a certain extent trade liberalization and conditionality (imposed on developing countries). Also, UR was not as strong as the current negotiation leverage for developing countries. Market forces are also the reason for the crisis, and developing countries continue pushing for flexibilities and hoping WTO can do something.

**Q: Ms. Supawadee (Thailand)**

The people of Southeast Asia have very little knowledge about ASEAN policies.. The coming ASEAN People’s Forum (in December), for people-to-people approach, is regarded to be important for the people where one of the issue to be discussed is Food Crisis, addressing long term food security.

**How can People Organization have certain discussion with ASEAN organization?**

**A: Dr. Somsak (ASEAN Secretariat, Indonesia)**

Regarding participation and involvement of people in ASEAN mechanism, ASEAN is a government club or intergovernmental association similar to EU at a smaller scale. There

have not been people's interest, or to invite organization with similar interests. In the past, yes, to accommodate but this has to go through procedure and mechanism to address specific issues.

Currently, there is a Working Group in encouragement of the ASEAN Summit, to get the involvement of industrial players as well as NGOs but with specific ASEAN agenda. ASEAN Charter provides details, also there are ASEAN accredited CSO's list on the website. .

**Q: Dr Prakash (GP, India)**

Is there attempt by ASEAN to expand food security to entire Asia? To include extremely vulnerable country such as Bangladesh?

**A: Dr. Somsak (ASEAN Secretariat, Indonesia)**

Expansion of ASEAN. For the time being, concentration is on the ASEAN Agenda. There is another Forum, East Asia Summit, which covers ASEAN+3, which also cover India, New Zealand and Australia (involving 16 countries), but this is a Forum.

There is also signed MOU on collaborations beyond Southeast Asia, including Agriculture and Food Security at government level.



## Part 7:

# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND LIVELIHOOD

## FAIR TRADE: TOWARDS ENSURING EQUITTABLE BENEFITS

### Vitoon Panyakul

*Director of Organic Agriculture Program,  
Green Net / Earth Net Foundation*



### Executive Summary

According to IFAT (International Fair Trade Association) and FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International), “Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade Organizations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade”.

Fair trade is also applicable to local/domestic trade and fair partnerships need to be established along the supply chain so to ensure benefits are distributed to producers and their organization. Core principles of Fair Trade

- market access for marginalised producers with long-term relationship
- sustainable and equitable relationships (fair price and fair transactions)
- capacity building and empowerment of producer organizations
- consumer awareness raising and advocacy for reform of international trading rules and to promote fair trade

- fair trade as a “social contract” (buyers, including final consumers, agree to do more than is expected by the conventional market and producers use the benefits of Fair Trade to improve their social and economic conditions)

Agriculture has been neglected for decades. Insufficient public investments were made to improve farm productivity, especially among small-scale grain producers. Grains are among the least developed sector in agriculture and thus most of grain production remains rain-fed system. This means that grain productions, especially in the South, are more vulnerable to climate conditions. With the climate variability and weather extreme, as an initial result of climate change, local and national food supplies are subjected to high supply fluctuation. Coupled with raising energy costs and the raising demand for grains as human consumption, feed and possible bio-fuel, grain prices are on the upward trends. The situation is amplified by the possibility to national and international speculation, a temporary shortage can be translated into a temporary skyrocketed rise in prices.

In case of food, fair trade would need to be combined with organic agriculture. Beside having the potential to emit less greenhouse gas and improving farm resilience, thus reducing farm instability, organic farming contributes to the conservation of local natural resources and biodiversity so that they can continue to provide environmental services for all local flora and fauna.

With (environmentally) fair production system like organic farming, at least a fair benefit-sharing between producers and their local agro-ecological systems can then be assured. Then, it is possible to ensure equitable benefits between producers, fair-trade trading agents and consumers.

Green Net's organic and fair-trade rice model comprises of the following key components:

- participatory discovery learning as a core in farmer extension programme
- built-in quality assurance scheme from farm to customers
- price premium set with participation from producers and taking into consideration production costs and market prices
- vertical integration planning of the organic fair-trade rice supply chain



# FARMER EDUCATION IN FIELD SCHOOLS AS A WAY TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION

**Nugroho Wienarto**

*Executive Director,  
FIELD Indonesia*



## Executive Summary

Farmer Field School is a popular term in training and extension of Integrated Pest Management started in the 1990s. In particular, this relates to experience in Indonesia and several other countries in the Asia Region that have embarked upon Integrated Pest Management programs based upon the Farmer Field School approach.

Hence this case begins with rice farmers trying to make a living through rice cultivation; as these programs progress beyond 'bugs' into ecological agriculture ('living soils', nutrient management, water resource management, plant/seed development, local action research) and beyond training and education toward the development of local institutions; fundamental changes in roles and activity structures occur. The concept of the Farmer Field School grew from the roots of conformal, participatory education and action research.

Scientists involved postulated that since all agricultural knowledge originates from the field, that a return to the field to 'discover' the principles of ecological management was demanded. The basic framework of the educational approach from which all methods and techniques were derived is based upon the taxonomy of learning put forward by sociologist Jurgen Habermas. The presentation also provides some examples of FIELD's current programs to address issues of household food security and nutrition, participatory plant breedings and sustainable livelihoods of rural citizens in relation with environment services.

# SYSTEM OF RICE INTENSIFICATION (SRI) PROJECT IN CAMBODIA

## **Prak Sereyvath**

*Executive Director*

*The Cambodian Center for Study  
and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC)*



## **SRI background**

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) is a set of innovative rice cultivation techniques or practices that can help rice plant to achieve its natural potentials in its growth and yield.

SRI was initially developed by a French Priest Fr. Henri de Laulanie in Madagascar in the 1980s based on observation of farmer experiences. This innovation was then developed and disseminated by a NGO, Tefy Saina (to develop the mind). With the supports of the Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture and Development (CIIFAD), particularly the support of Prof. Norman Uphoff, SRI spreads to other countries in 1999.

In Cambodia, the innovative idea of SRI was firstly introduced by CEDAC in 1999. In 2000, there were only twenty-eight farmers from 18 villages who volunteered to test the idea. In 2007, more than 82,000 farmer families applying SRI in the 24 provinces/municipalities of the country.

In January 2005, a national SRI Secretariat was set up within the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), under the coordination of Department of Agronomy and Agricultural Land Improvement (DAALI) in cooperation with CEDAC. The Secretariat has the following main tasks and responsibilities:

- Coordinate the SRI working group activities;
- Manage SRI related knowledge and techniques; and
- Conducting of SRI training of trainer to concerned institutions so that they can further develop and promote SRI within their working areas

In the early of 2006, SRI was included in the MAFF's National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and policy frameworks for 2006-2010 to improve rice production and contribute to poverty reduction of farmers in Cambodia. So far there are around 71 organisations / institutions in Cambodia disseminate SRI. Moreover, Oxfam Great Britain (OGB), Oxfam America (OA) and GTZ play an



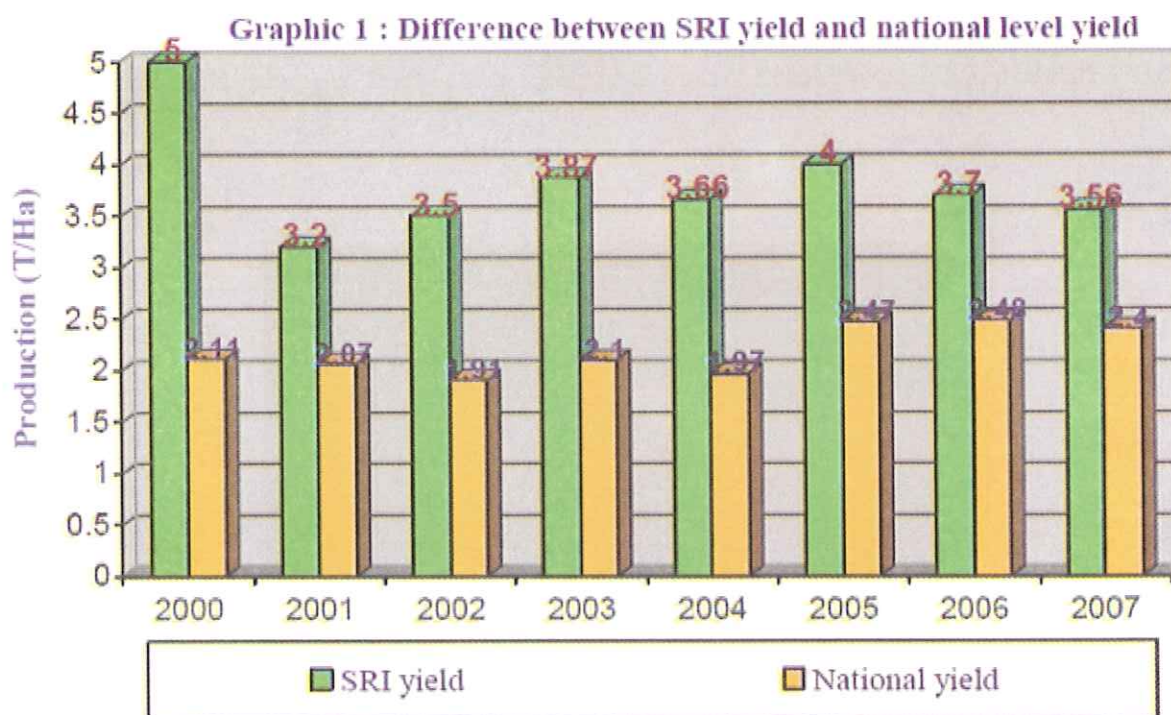
essential role in supporting local NGOs to promote SRI in Cambodia. With cooperation and support from national and international organizations, especially SRI Secretariat and other government institutions, number of farmers adopting SRI is increasing rapidly from year to year, especially in 2007.

### Result of SRI in Cambodia

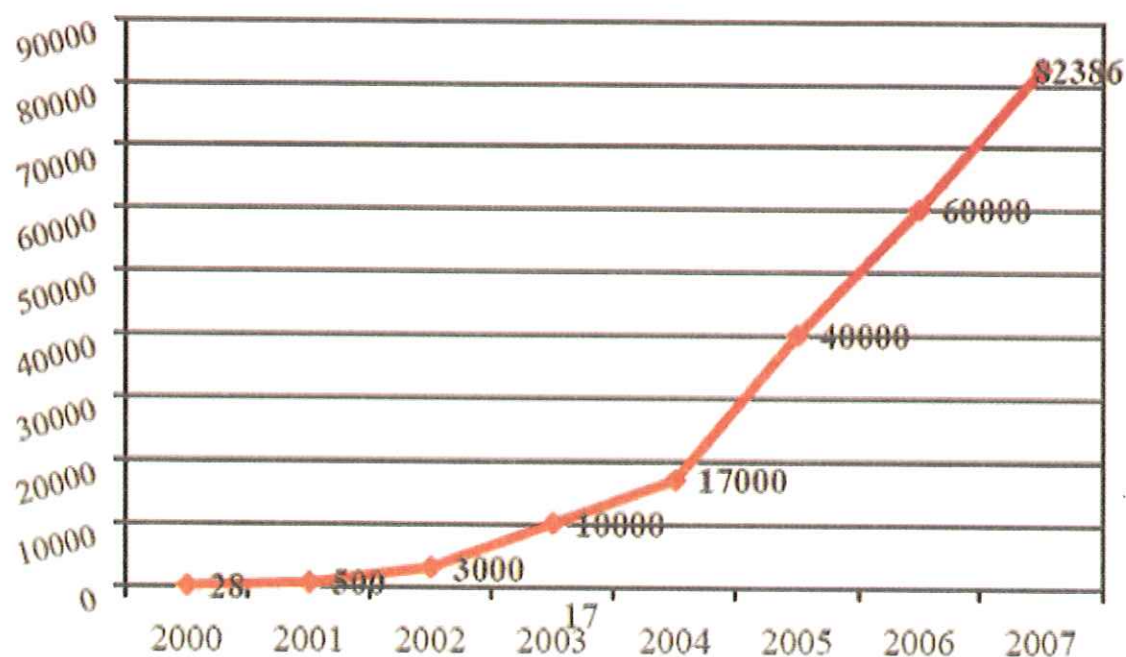
The last seven-year experiences has shown that even a cultivating place located in the low raining area and lack of irrigation system, but SRI practice produced higher economical benefit than traditional practice; for instance, rice production has increased from 1.5 to 1.8 tones per hectare to 2.5 to 4 tones per hectare (increasing rate from 50% to 150%); seed utilization is decreased from 70% to 80%; chemical fertilizer utilization is decreased up to 50% (from 150 kg per hectare to 75 kg per hectare); and majority of farmers stop using pesticides for their rice plant. According to regular yearly data collection from 120 farmers households by CEDAC since 2003, the results shown that by applying SRI, farmers could increase income from USD 58 to USD 172 per hectare.

An average SRI yield for 2006 was 3.7 tons per hectare while yield of ordinary practice was 2.48<sup>2</sup> tons per hectare. In 2007, an average SRI yield was 3.56<sup>1</sup> tons per hectare while yield of ordinary practice was 2.40 tons per hectare, thus SRI production yield increased 137% compared with of average national production rice production yield. In SRI practice, besides receiving higher output farmers also gained profit through minimizing expenses for rice production, such as seed, chemical fertilizer, hiring labor force, etc. If we observe the seed utilization for ordinary practice in average is 90 kg per hectare, but this figure decreased to 35.79 kg per hectare for SRI practice.

**Graphic 1: Difference between SRI yield and national-level yield**



Graphic 2: Annual Growth of Farmers using SRI



	Total in Cambodia	SRI application found within the target			
		2007		2006	
		Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Number of Provinces	24	24	100	24	100
Number of Districts	183	130	71.04	129	70.49
Number of Communes	1,609	683	42.45	637	39.59
Number of Villeges	13,406	3,020	22.53	2,685	20.03
Number of households	2,188,663	82,386	3.76	6,000	2.72
Total rice land (Ha)	2,241,020	47,039	2.09	16,386	0.74

Source: General Population Census of Cambodia 1998, Result of collection rice in 2007 (update until 30 Jan, 2007)





# LOW EXTERNAL INPUT AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE (LEISA)

## EFFORTS OF KUDUMBAM — LEISA NETWORK IN FACILITATING SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION

**K. Suresh Kanna**

*Deputy Director for Information Systems,  
Kudumbam – LEISA network*



### Introduction:

Kudumbam is a rural development organization established in 1982 by a small group of young and committed people. Kudumbam as an organization and as the facilitator of the state level network of Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA) has been involved in materializing the concept in 10 districts of Tamil Nadu. This is a network of resource poor farmers and NGOs in 82 pockets of Tamil Nadu. They are mostly rain fed where the landless and the small and marginal farmers get the employment for about 90 days a year.

### Context:

During the prolonged periods of drought, it decreases to 30 – 40 days a year. The income of the farmers has decreased to 25% during the last 20 years due to the decline in cattle population. Mechanization and mono cropping have further reduced the employment opportunities in the rural areas increasing the migration to 70%.

The major difficulties for agriculture field are increased threats on Global warming, increasing practice of contract farming, larger dependency on GM seeds, increased mechanization, plans to establish special economic zones in the country that will largely destroy the cultivable land, and finally decreasing interests among the youngsters to take up the agricultural activity.

### Aims and Objectives:

- To promote ecological agriculture
- To enable resource poor farmers to shape themselves and a society on the firm pillars of justice and equality.
- To empower people to have control over local natural resources.
- To evolve a network of NGOs and resource poor farmers (RPFs) and to promote LEISA.

## **Kudumbam's interventions:**

### **Establishment of Ecological farm:**

Kolunji is an ecological farm, established on the principles of dry land agriculture so as to serve the training and motivational needs of the dry land farmers of Pudukottai District and the LEISA farmers all over the world.

### **Strategies adopted to strengthen SA activities at the villages:**

Facilitating a process of PTD and organizing Training of Trainers and Farmers Field Schools are the important strategies adopted in Kudumbam - LEISA network.

### **Community based interventions in promoting LEISA:**

Establishment of community seed banks, seed saver networks, community grain banks, fodder banks, farmer to farmer seed exchanges, building nature clubs in schools, community bio input production centers, community village nurseries, community wasteland and watershed development, internal control system for organically cultivated crops and facilitating LEISA safe foods are the community based interventions with farmers in promoting LEISA.

### **Gender empowerment processes through LEISA.**

KUDUMBAM – LEISA network conducted training on gender sensitization, increasing the number of women members in Sangams and training them for leadership qualities. This also included training for capacity building and decision making. The knowledge empowerment process has made them to influence their family members in decision making on what crop to cultivate and how to cultivate.

## **Conclusion:**

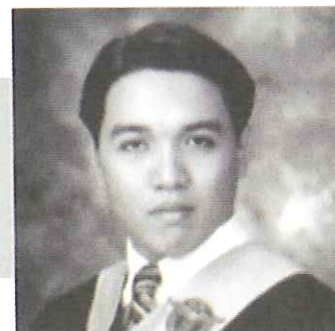
In its vision, LEISA Network envisages a bio-village with sustainable solutions for life. Two clear directions that emerge are:

- Firstly a pesticide free environment where RPF learn to live in harmony with nature in full bloom (biodiversity conservation). For, example, pesticide use by RPF groups has reduced 70 to 100% - up to a point of achieving pesticide-free villages.
- Second, where resource-abuse is the least and consequent multi layered pollution is the least.
- Ecologically sound solutions being developed by the network will greatly reduce the fossil-fuel dependence of modern agriculture and render examples that such agriculture does not contribute to green-house-gases (GHG).
- For a sustainable world it is important that such examples be developed, tested and shown to be viable. It is clear that various components of this vision is being achieved – although achieving the final vision is still some distance away.



# COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY IN FOOD SECURITY

**Chrisgel Ryan Ang Cruz**  
*Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives  
for Community Empowerment (SEARICE)*



## Executive Summary

SEARICE and its partners in the region, particularly those in the Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation – Biodiversity Use and Conservation in Asia Programme (CBDC-BUCAP) have been working with farmers and farming communities for the past eleven (11) years in empowering and strengthening their capacities to manage local agricultural biodiversity through conservation, development and use.

The CBDC-BUCAP partners in Bhutan, Lao PDR, Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam recognize the important role of agricultural biodiversity not only as sources of food and nutrition, livelihood, and medicine, also as wellsprings of culture and community adaptation. They have moreover affirmed and recognized the inherent capacities and rights of farmers to manage these resources – as a dynamic and experiential source of farmers' rights and an essential and significant component for food sovereignty.

These farmer-centered and community-based experiences and initiatives (e.g. in-situ conservation, farmer field schools [FFS], participatory plant breeding [PPB], participatory varietal selection [PVS]) has aimed to strengthen farmers' rights to agricultural biodiversity conservation, development and use, highlighting the traditional and dynamic roles of farmers as seed and food producers, keepers of diversity and agricultural knowledge systems and plant breeders, towards achieving farmer empowerment for sustainable agriculture and livelihood systems.

## Part 8

# WORKSHOPS & GROUP DISCUSSIONS

## Discussions



## Questions

- 1) How to address the issues on corruption? Isn't it a form of the violation of human rights? The issue of corruption in the government and even the issues of farmers and fisheries also involved in the corruption of subsidies.  
For example: Malaysia in the 9<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan RM 240 billion has been allocated and to talk about 10% to allocate to the people in the only RM 4 billion has been allocated.
- 2) Why is food crisis more common involve so heavily in the women policy on Developing country?
- 3) Do you think the issue biofuel should be addressed in the agricultural policy?
- 4) What is the difference between Food Sovereignty and Food security?
- 5) It is not the failure of WTO or the Doha Round? Why should we diminish the existence of the platform of global institution for example like WTO when they create a platform of discussion?

## Answers

- 1) Corruption is a difficult answer. There are movements in India and Latin America amongst the civil society to create a dialogue with the government to ask the government to be transparent by document their local government authority budget.  
Economic social and cultural rights have not been recognized but it is progressively being recognized. The international law is so soft that there are no rooms for trial except for exposure of the country
- 2) In developing country food is not fairly for the women in the household. Men and children has been prioritized instead of women and it is in the traditional patriarchy concept. Another



issue is when a man die, the women do not inherit the land but instead it goes to the brother. The wages is always lower for the women compared to men. But right now we see that both in Indonesia and Philippines, women are earning increasing more when they leave the country to work as housemaids.

- 3) Biofuels is not the actual climate friendliness because there are subsidies in the US government therefore it is heavily pushed.
- 4) The point of food sovereignty is to start to re-look at sustainable agriculture.
- 5) In the WTO, IMF and WB it will be good to have every meeting with the representative of HR UN Rapporteur so that they can be involved in every decision making and periodic reports in the meeting. We cannot look at every aspects of HR it then voice down to which is the priority.

## Other Questions



1. The question for the field school, if farmers cannot ecological agriculture when they use pesticides what do you think of it?
2. On the techniques of SRI only a few farms are successful for other countries it might not be applicable because of the labor intensive cost.
3. What are alternatives to promote fair trade in this global situation?
4. Rice production is based on the income of the farmers. The income coming from rice needs to be re- evaluate.
5. SRI is still a limited techniques because it might not necessarily work for all countries
6. If you include all other cost and invisible cost is it possible to feed the on organic agriculture or mainstream the whole organic production.
7. Concern of SRI but we find SRI is not easy t replicate with current techniques. What are the Cambodian subsidies on SRI?
8. How to work with other agency to disseminate on successful ways to the government?
9. On issues of GM contamination how far have we protected the GM in organic agriculture? Coexistence is not acceptable. The price of organic agriculture seems to be high which only cater on niche market.
10. Ultimately with all these questions and recommendations to whom are we making the recommendations to? Government, civil society level or public.

## Workshops



### Workshop I:

**Flagging the issues at National level, regional level and international level.**

#### **National Level**

- 1) Subsidy
- 2) Sustainable production and consumption
- 3) Overlapping region issues (geography, economic social and environment)
- 4) Moving to urban
- 5) Climate change
- 6) Hybrid varieties
- 7) Contract farming system
- 8) Self sufficiency and food security
- 9) Policy obstacles
- 10) Biofuel
- 11) Over use of agriculture land
- 12) Traditional crops
- 13) Increase landlessness
- 14) Land conversion to urban agriculture
- 15) Land conversion and land degradation
- 16) Development of aggression
- 17) Lack of political will to genuine agrarian reform
- 18) Globalization and WTO
- 19) Distribution system of food both inter and intra
- 20) Usage of technology ( new technology)
- 21) Government focus on investment farming
- 22) Natural calamities
- 23) Increase investment rate
- 24) Water



## **Regional Food System**

- 1.) Food producing countries
- 2) Food reserve system

## **International**

- 1) Not to impose export ban
- 2) No access to seeds lands
- 3) Violations of lands
- 4) Seed certification problem

## **Workshop II**

The second workshop was developed based on issues that were highlighted or flagged in Workshop I. Participants were divided into three groups and were given specific areas for discussion:

Each group was asked to design an ideal food security policy taking into accounts the interests of the various stakeholders (government, business and investment corporations, farmers, producers, manufacturers, men and women, regional and international integration and cooperation, consumers, etc). A representative of the group presented the group's position, comments and suggestions.

## **GROUP 1 PRESENTATION**

**Food Security Policy on: Climate change, biofuel and commercial agriculture.**

### **ISSUES:**

- Illegal logging
- Large plantation : Large scale oil palm, Acacia, Jatophra
- Biodiversity production
- Urbanization : Construction, outsider investment and development
- Degradation on the soil nutrition

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- Respect and recognized the IPRs' rights over their NCR ( Native Customary Land ) / small scale farmers.
- Government control over issuing the licensee on plantation and logging.
- Equal access for the opportunity for everybody / access and benefit sharing.
- Sustain the natural resources to retain biodiversity / concern for environmental impact.

- Reasonable and affordable prices for crop production in market.
- Allocating / secure land for food production.
- Participation: Human resources.
- Government with other stakeholders must be hand in hand to solve this problem.
- Bio-fuel should not be produced from food crops.
- Natural resources should be protected to balance production of food, feed, fuel.
- Back to basic ( enhance organic farming )
- Enhance / promote the traditional knowledge related to the climate change and agriculture.
- Create the public awareness on the environmental issues.
- Strengthen enforcement of environmental laws.

## **GROUP 2 PRESENTATION**

**Food Security Policy on : Globalization and trade policies regulating seed / land ownership and access to resources.**

### **SAFETY AND PROMOTIONAL MEASURES :**

- Ensure farmers' access to IPR-protected seed and technology through laws.
- Ensure farmers' ownership over farmers' varieties and knowledge through laws.
- Promote state-owned companies (public sector) to venture in seed production and marketing.
- Identify the success stories and gather regional experiences so as to find better mechanisms to ensure food (seed) security.
- Measures to regulate unsustainable farming practices of both national and international companies and agencies (eg.- cash crop vs. food crop.) as they affect seed availability including legislative measures to regulate the piracy of seed and related knowledge.
- Identification and documentation of land ownership initiatives undertaken in the region and sharing of experiences.

## **GROUP 3 PRESENTATION**

**Food Security Policy on : Climate change, biofuel and commercial agriculture.**

### **STRATEGY IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL:**

- Develop sustainable agriculture system- alternative agriculture, no GM, no hybrid, no industrial agriculture, only organic farming.
- Increase investment in agriculture- small irrigation.
- Strengthen government role in food stock management to protect people and peasants: food agency to fulfill public service obligations.
- Use ideal and fertile land to grow food.
- Building corporations between countries in food exchange based on solidarity-ASEAN cooperation or other new institutions.



- Prioritize local consumers first.
- Review WTO trade agreement on agriculture.
- Food production should be in peasants / farmers hand and not in agribusiness.
- Ensuring the peasants to get access for the production means-land reform and agrarian reform (water, seed, technology and market access).
- Promote direct-selling marketing (producer-consumer-people and not towards big corporations).

## Concluding remarks

Dato' Indrani, the Executive Director of SEACON acknowledged that the participants had been extremely productive and cooperatively engaged in the 2-day Forum. However, in order to meet the ultimate objectives of the Forum, drafting potential solutions to food crisis, would require further planning and engagement from the participants and civil society organizations. A working group on food security for the region will be convened following substantial commitment of individuals and CSO's interested to work on the issues.

Nonetheless, it was hopeful, that participants would take, with them, the strong message of concerns posted in the Forum to the attention of the relevant policy-makers in their own countries. Further, participants were encouraged to integrate the information, findings and suggestions from the panels and speakers of the Forum into their own agendas and activities.

Most importantly, it was agreed that a higher priority on effort to ensure sustainable food security for all have to acknowledged. It was also agreed that the current food crisis had largely been contributed by the ineffective and unsustainable agricultural and economic policies that has unjustly created bigger gaps among people to have access to food. At the same time, these policies had led to the higher potential harm and assaults on the environment and climate that contributed to crop failures, hence food shortage.

## PART 9

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1

# PRESENTERS & MODERATORS



**Ms. Nancy Ruth Morgan**

**Livestock Policy Officer**

**Food & Agriculture Organization Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand**

Ms. Nancy obtained both her degree in French and Master in Agricultural and Applied Economics from University of Minnesota. She has various experiences in livestock, trade related issues where she focuses on policy and implementation. Her most recent publication is "Dairy Prices, Policies and Implications". Currently, she is livestock policy officer who fosters the development of competitive livestock industries in Asia and to enhance the role of policy / institutional mechanisms in maintaining smallholders in livestock systems.



**Dr. Huanguang Qiu**

**Research Fellow**

**Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy (CCAP)**

**Chinese Academy of Sciences- China**

Dr. Qiu's research fields are agricultural economics, biotechnology and biofuel policies and general equilibrium modeling. He has been intensively working on China agricultural development, international and domestic agricultural trade policy of China, and Decision Support System for China's Sustainable Agriculture Development. He has also published more than 20 papers on international and Chinese journals.



**Ms. Jenina Joy Chavez**

**Coordinator**

**Focus on the Global South Philippines Program,  
Philippines**

Ms. Jenina Joy is a senior associate with Focus on the Global South and is coordinator of its Philippines Program. She works with the Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) Working Group on ASEAN on the issues of the ASEAN Charter, the strengthening of the social dimension in regional integration, and the democratization of ASEAN processes to include non-state actors. Her current research interests include regional social policy and alternative regionalisms.





**Dr. Tahlim Sudaryanto**

**Director Indonesian Center for  
Agriculture Socio Economic & Policy Studies (ICASEPS),  
Ministry of Agriculture, Indonesia**

Dr. Tahlim obtained his doctoral degree in Economics from North Carolina State University, USA in 1987. He has vast experience as the Director of research center of which more than 100 articles have been published in various books and articles. His research areas focus on food security, international trade rural economy and agribusiness.



**Mr. Shirish Vasudeo Deshpande**

**Vice-Chairman  
Mumbai Grahak Panchayat, India**

Mr. Shirish is a lawyer by profession with specialization in Consumer Laws & Public Interest Litigation. He has presented papers and participated in various international conferences on Consumer Protection Legislation, Food Security and Sustainable Development. He has also authored and edited books such as "Consumer Protection Act" and "Medical Negligence & Consumer Protection Act". In addition, he is a recipient of the Indian Merchants Chamber Award and the Salute Mumbai Award in India.



**Ms. Lim Li Ching**

**Third World Network, Malaysia**

Ms. Lim has a Bachelor of Science in Ecology and a Master Philosophy in Development Studies. She works with the environment programme at Third World Network, an international NGO based in Malaysia, focusing on biodiversity, biosafety, sustainable agriculture and climate change issues. She is also a Senior Fellow of the Oakland Institute, USA. She is co-editor of the recent publication, Biosafety First, published by Tapir Academic Press.



**Mr. Andre Frankovits**

**Executive Director  
Human Rights Council of Australia, Australia**

Mr. Andre is former campaign director for Amnesty International. He is also a consultant on the Human Rights Strengthening Project (HURIST) for the UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner on behalf of which he worked in Nepal, Rwanda and Yemen. His publications have appeared in numerous books and journals including Praxis, Food Policy and the web sites of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNESCO.



**Mr. Henry Saragih**

**Chairman, Indonesian Peasant Union (SPI) &  
General Coordinator of La Via Campesina  
International Peasant Movement, Indonesia**

Mr. Henry obtained his degree in Social & Political Studies from the University of Nort Sumatra, Indonesia. He is also actively involved in the International peasant Movement and has vast experience with being the Chairman of the Indonesian Peasant Union.



**Ms. Teresita Oliveros Vistro**

**Co-convenor**

**TFRIW Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)  
Thailand**

Ms/ Teresita obtained both of her diploma in Community Development and degree in Community Nutrition from University of the Philippines. She has also completed academic units in Masteral programme in Women and Development, except thesis. She has vast experience in women empowerment and women rights advocate. She develops also programme for rural women.



**Dr. Somsak Pipoppinyo**

**Assistant Director**

**Bureau for Economic Integration (BEIF) & Head  
Natural Resource Unit, Indonesia**

He obtained his degree in Fisheries Biology from Kasetsart University, Thailand. He obtained also his Master in Fisheries and Wildlife from Oregon State University and doctoral degree in Fisheries and Allied Aquaculture from Auburn University, U.S.A.

He is experienced in fisheries management and aquaculture. Currently, he is focusing on sustainable development in ASEAN agriculture and forestry.



**Mr Lupino J. Lazaro**

**Senior Policy Analyst and WTO Desk Officer  
Department of Agriculture, Philippines**

Mr Lupino obtained his degree in Economics from Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Philippines. He has been policy analyst in agricultural for various agencies such as Philippines Department of Agriculture and Embassy of the Philippines in USA. He has also attended various local and international seminars and workshops. The recent workshop that he has attended to be a speaker is on Specialized Course on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) in 2006.



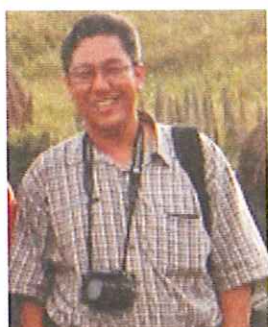


**Mr Vitoon R. Panyakul**

**Director of Organic Agriculture Programme**

**Earth Net Foundation, Thailand**

Mr Vitoon has been working with the Thailand organic movement since 1991. He founded the Earth Net Foundation which working to promote organic and fair trade development in the region in 2000 and starts working as partner consultant with Grolink, where he starts to work extensively with local groups in Asia to provide technical assistance to their organic and fair trade projects since 2002. Currently, he is the member of the Board of Director and accreditation committee of the IOAS.



**Mr Nugroho Wienarto**

**Executive Director**

**FIELD Indonesia Foundation, Indonesia**

Mr Nugroho obtained his degree in Management and Industrial Engineering from Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia. He is experienced in support rural communities in ecological farming (organic), environmental and rural democracy educational programme.



**Mr Prak Sereyvath**

**Executive Director**

**Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC), Cambodia**

Mr Prak obtained his degree in Agronomy from Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia in 1994 and Master in Tropical Agriculture Development from CNEARC (Centre National d'Études Agronomiques des Régions Chaudes), France in 2000. He is experienced on sustainable agriculture, social impact studies and agricultural economics. Currently, he is responsible to execute CEDAC development program: Field development projects implemented in 2,000 villages in 18 provinces of Cambodia and conducting of research/study, training, seminar, conference, workshop, and exchange in Institute of Local Development.

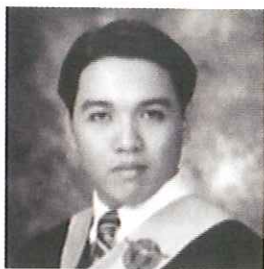


**Mr K Suresh Kanna**

**Deputy Director for Information Systems**

**Kudumbam – LEISA Network, India**

Mr Suresh completed his postgraduation in botany. He is experienced in capacity building and grassroots activities coordination. Also converts such engagements into communication products for public. He also wrote articles on farmers experiences to LEISA India and LEISA International magazines and so far 3 articles have been published.



**Mr Chrisgel Ryan Ang Cruz**  
**Policy Officer**  
**Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for**  
**Community Empowerment (SEARICE), Philippines**

Mr Chrisgel obtained both his degree in Laws and Arts in Psychology from University of Philippines, Philippines. He is admitted in the Integrated Bar of the Philippines in 2006. Currently, he is representing SEARICE in meetings and discussions related to policy lobbying and advocacy, assists the technical/community-based programs, partners and the institution on policy and legal matters and also analyzes the policy implications of programs and activities, and the implication of relevant policies to the programs and activities of the organization

## MODERATORS



**Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin**  
**Director General**  
**Institute of Strategic & International Studies, Malaysia**

Dr Mahani obtained her doctoral degree in Development Economics from University of London, UK in 1992. In 1998, she was appointed a member of the Working Group for the National Economic Action Council to formulate measures to initiate recovery from the economic and financial crisis. She was also appointed as the head of Special Consultancy Team on Globalisation of the National Economic Action Council.



**Prof Dr Fatimah Mohamed Arshad**  
**Professor**  
**Faculty of Economics and Management &**  
**Director**  
**Institute of Agricultural and Food Policy Studies**  
**Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia**

Prof Fatimah obtained her doctoral degree in Agricultural Marketing from the University of Newcastle upon-Tyne, UK. Her research topics focus on agricultural policy analysis, supply chain of agricultural produce, food and commodity marketing and trade. Currently, she is a member of the National Advisory Panel on Malaysia Agricultural Development, Ministry of Agricultural and Agrobased Industries, Malaysia and also the chairperson of FAMA-IHLs (Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority and Institution of higher Learning) Research Collaboration Committee.





**Mr Kamalesh Adhikari**

**Research Director**

**South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal**

Mr Kamalesh obtained both his degree in Economics and English Literature and master in Rural Development from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He was the lead researcher and author of the study “*WTO Membership: Public Health Policy Priorities for Nepal*” conducted for the Government of Nepal/ Ministry of Health, Kathmandu in 2006 and contributor of a chapter on Millennium Development Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development in Nepal’s *Millennium Development Goals: Progress Report 2005* commissioned by the National Planning Commission of Nepal and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The recent publication he worked on titled “Intellectual Property Rights in Agriculture: Legal Mechanisms to Protect Farmers’ Rights in Nepal”.



**Dato' Indrani Thuraisingham**

**Executive Director**

**South East Asian Council for Food Security & Fair Trade (SEACON), Malaysia &**

**Head of Consumers International Kuala Lumpur Office, in charge of Asia Pacific and Middle East Region**

Dato' Indrani obtained her degree in Laws from University of London, UK in 1994 and Master in E-marketing from Dublin Metropolitan University, Ireland in 2007. She is experienced in the development and social sector especially focusing on consumer protection and consumer rights. She was nominated to sit on the Consumer Bureau of the World Bank's International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) that concluded in April 2008. She was called in as a civil society expert to assist in the preparation for its first Regional Human Development Report on International Trade and Human Poverty in 2004 by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), regional center in Colombo. In addition, she is the outgoing Executive Director of SEACON.



**Ms Jessica Reyes-Cantos**

**Lead Convenor**

**Rice Watch and Action Network, Philippines**

Ms Jessica obtained both her degree in Economics and master in Economics (ABT) from UP School of Economics, Philippines. She is actively involved in advocacy and bridging policy addressing the roots of poverty and rural unrest. She was cited the “Uliran ng Senado” award in 1994 which is an award for exemplary performance, behavior and conduct. Among her most recent published work are “Seizing the Opportunity: Special Products and Special Safeguard Mechanism”, “The Role of the State in the Philippine Rice Sector” and “Public Sector Intervention in Vietnam’s Rice Economy”.



### **Dr Rokiah Alavi**

**Lecturer, Department of Economics  
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Malaysia**

Dr. Rokiah obtained her degree in Economics from University Malaya, Malaysia. She has also obtained her Master in Development Economics and her PhD from University of East Anglia, England. She has been the Coordinator of the IIUM Globalisation and WTO Unit since 2003. Her research interest is in the area of international trade and development economics. She had published a book entitled "Import Substitution Industrialisation Strategy: Infant Industries in Malaysia", Routledge (1996), and many articles in international and local journals.



### **Ms Aini Zakaria**

**Research Officer  
Strategic Resources Centre, MARDI, Malaysia**

Ms Aini obtained her degree in Agricultural from University Putra Malaysia and master in Microbiology from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia. She has served MARDI as a soil microbiologist since 1977. She has delivered several papers on organic farming both nationally and internationally and has conducted 2 courses on organic farming in MARDI and has also introduced organic farming to courses on vegetables (6 lectures) and herbs (8 lectures) between 2005-2007. Currently, she is member of the Certification Committee for Organic Standards Malaysia (SOM) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, member of CETDEM and the International Society of Organic Agriculture Research (ISO FAR).



# ANNEX 2

## SEACON IN THE NEWS

news without borders

### Food crisis a global concern

newsdesk@searcsd.org

**SHAH ALAM:** The current food crisis is a global concern that has led to an increasing number of people across regions not being able to access adequate food at affordable prices.

In fact, the percentage of people going hungry has increased tremendously in recent months.

Malaysia, however, is not as adversely affected as some of her close neighbours are, but prevention is better than cure, thus a two-day forum on *Regional Food Security 2008 - People's Response to Food Crisis in Asia* last week sought to come up with possible long-term solutions.

The forum, organised by the Southeast Asian Council for Food Security and Fair Trade (Seacon), gathered participants from China, India, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Nepal, Brunei, Korea, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Australia.

Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Deputy Minister Datuk Rohani Karim, who opened the forum, said high food and energy prices have put people at all levels, whether businesses or households, at grave risk.

"Top leaders, market players and analysts are beginning to understand the factors

government's method to address this crisis is on an *ad hoc* basis, but what civil society wants is to have long-term solutions," she said.

The forum also aims to ensure the viability of the agriculture sector. Indrani said this is important because most of the food production in Asia comes from small farmers.

She also said free trade may seem to be a possible solution but that does not mean that it will ensure food security.

"You must have funds to buy food. During the 1998 financial crisis, for instance, it was not possible to do that," she said.

Among the pro-active measures put forth by the forum are:

- Develop a sustainable agriculture system;
- Increase investments in agriculture;
- Strengthen the government's role in food stock management to protect the people;
- Use idle and fertile land to grow food;
- Review WTO trade agreements on agriculture;
- Ensure farmers' access to water, seeds, technology and market for food production purposes;
- Promote direct selling (producer to consumer, as opposed to big corporations, and give priority to local consumers); and

> FOOD SECURITY

### Think twice on seed banks

WE applied the efforts and priorities set by the government to strengthen and revive the agriculture sector, particularly the food farming sub-sector.

However, it is important not to be carried away by sophisticated or high-tech strategies that will be costly to maintain.

The seed banks that are run by agribusiness corporations would be a costly pursuit for the government and farmers.

Seeds, or plant genetic resources, are the fundamental element of farming, translating to the very basis of farmers' livelihoods.

Having access and the capacity to continue farming plant genetic resources is the key feature to becoming a farmer.

In pushing for corporate control on seeds and their production, it is feared that farmers will eventually lose their rights through patent claims over seeds, without properly addressing the issues of access and benefit-sharing for farming communities.

It is also feared that agri-

business corporations have the tendency to promote the propagation and cultivation of hybrid or genetically-modified seeds. This threatens the future of traditional varieties.

Moreover, the strategy of having corporate seed banks means farmers would have to buy seeds, with prices controlled by the company. The government would have to partly subsidise them through public funds (which will go to the company's profits).

This will contribute towards creating a gap in economic control between the powerful and the powerless.

As mentioned by the UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, during the Conference on World Food Security in Rome in June, "small and unorganised farmers in particular, facing large corporations as buyers of their produce are in such a weak bargaining position that they may hardly benefit from the increase of prices on the global markets".

"This only underscores the importance of supporting

smallholder farmers and their organisations, including the poorest and most remote areas, to enable them to play an effective role in meeting the rising demand for food."

We have to bear in mind that 70 to 80 per cent of food supply in developing countries is being met through small-scale farm production.

The alternative to empowering farmers or farming communities must be looked into to ensure long-term food security in this country.

Farmers must be trained and exposed to technologies to maintain and propagate their seeds.

In situ conservation and a community registry must be included into the National Food Security Policy to ensure continuation of our heritage and culture through conservation of food sovereignty.

**DATUK INDRANI THURAISINGHAM**  
Executive Director  
Southeast Asian Council for Food Security & Fair Trade  
Kuala Lumpur

THE STAR, WEDNESDAY 23 APRIL 2008 **VIEWS N47**

## Wary of food security plan

**T**HE announcement that the Government would spend RM400 to counter food shortages and increased food prices ("RM400 food security plan" - Sunday Star, April 20) presumes uncertainty.

The Federation of Malaysian Consumers Association (Fomca) is concerned that this may not adequately address food security, and would result in long-term harm to the environment and the national budget.

Fomca, together with its affiliated organisations, have long been monitoring food security in Malaysia, not only from the consumer aspect, but also from the production and environmental aspects as well.

The approach adopted by the Government

might not guarantee long-term food security, incorporating solutions that holistically aim for sustainability and achievability.

In the plan to ensure food security, the RM400 fund will be used to increase food production by fully realising rice self-sufficiency through transforming Sarawak into the new rice bowl of Malaysia, and increasing production of fruits and vegetables.

The plan also boldly includes utilisation of the fund to purchase fertilisers.

We are perturbed with this plan, which may drain a high percentage of the fund for chemical inputs and benefit only the agro-chemical companies, while leaving a small percentage for infrastructure development

such as irrigation, roads, and other forms of insurance that would encourage farming activities.

The Government should at this point adopt a more economically and environmentally sustainable approach to ensure food security, especially when prices of goods keep soaring.

To increase food production, the Government must ensure that production cost is kept reasonably low to ensure profits for producers as well as reasonable market price for consumers.

The food security plan should focus on the farming community. The policy must ensure equitable distribution of socio-economic development, and fair trade for

these products.

In carrying out its plan to make Sarawak the new rice bowl of Malaysia, the Government should also reflect on the environmental damage caused in Kalimantan when the Indonesian government planned the Mega-Rice Project to convert 1.4 million hectares of peat swamp into rice cultivation.

It ended in disaster as the peat swamp dried up due to excavated drainage and irrigation channels, leading to many environmental problems such as deforestation, rampant logging, and forest fires.

**DATUK MARIMUTHU MADASAN**  
President, Fomca



## &gt; RICE SHORTAGE

# Bernas should not blame others

IN the latest furore over the rice shortage and the growing concern over food insecurity, Bernas, the country's sole rice importer and distributor, has put the blame on private commercial millers ("Bernas: Go after private millers, too" — NST, May 8).

Bernas should look at the mandate that it was given by the country.

Having had its monopoly extended to 2012, Bernas must show it can do its job to ensure that the rice supply is there at all times for the people.

As stated on its webpage, Bernas claims responsibility to "ensure the maintenance of a sufficient supply of rice at reasonably fair and stable prices. The company's obligations under the privatisation agreement also includes the maintenance of the rice stockpile".

Don't...

## Think again

THE government should be cautious about going for 100 per cent self-sufficiency in rice production as the high prices and apparent shortage in the international market may only be temporary.

Farmers around the world will likely increase production to take advantage of the high prices and within two or three rice-growing cycles, there may be an oversupply in the market causing prices to drop.

Consequently, the government may end up having to pay out more in subsidies to support farmers.

Instead of opening up new padi land in Sarawak and elsewhere, the government should rehabilitate abandoned and under-utilised land as it can be done...

## &gt; FOOD SECURITY

# Take looming crisis seriously

1100 farming households over food should be taken seriously by policy makers in this country, particularly in respect of food production and supply.

In order to seriously address the issue of food security, the government must pay attention to underlying factors that could jeopardise our food production.

Two issues relating to this aspect of the food crisis have been highlighted. The first involves more than 5,000 farmers who are not getting the ceiling price of rice to be retained ("Livestock farmers want better chicken prices" — NST, April 14).

An order to encourage food production, a handsome and meaningful subsidy first be established, including a wider safety net to ensure income protection for farmers who cannot be expected to absorb losses or reduce profit margins.



because of high production costs which may be due to an import policy to practice in the private sector.

The state government is now looking into ways of ensuring some of this land to the farmers.

examples of agribusiness being successful structural to reduce export surplus. It is for the interest of the nation to develop a development programme. Since the government decided to maintain a high level of food security, it is necessary to ensure that the government should provide a safety net for the farmers, which may include a subsidy on the cost of food inputs.

DATUK INDIRA THIRAIANGMA for Food Security Trade Policy

# Give livestock rearing a boost as well

REFER to the report "Excess in long-term price" (NST, April 20).

The price increase, which is a result of a 100 per cent increase in the price of rice, will be used to increase the production of rice and other crops as well as to purchase fertilisers.

Since the land will also be

available for increasing rice production, the rice price will be used to increase the production of rice and other crops as well as to purchase fertilisers.

of livestock. Livestock, on the other hand, can be used to produce meat and other products. The state government is now looking into ways of ensuring some of this land to the farmers.

land till on the impact of rice, which has been a major issue in the past. The state government is now looking into ways of ensuring some of this land to the farmers.

Since the land will also be available for increasing rice production, the rice price will be used to increase the production of rice and other crops as well as to purchase fertilisers.

M. GANESAN Kuala Lumpur

# They deserve a better deal

THE report stating that a rice-farming community in Kedah had threatened to switch to oil palm should not be taken lightly.

If the government intends to increase food production and ensure food security, this kind of call must be heeded.

The request for the price of padi to be increased from 65 sen per kg to RM1 per kg is not unreasonable.

A call to a padi farmer in Selangor revealed that the farmers in Selangor had their padi priced at around RM1,130 per tonne recently.

It is only reasonable for rice farmers to get this new rate after so many years and after all, the price of fertilisers doubled last year.

Therefore, the ceiling price of 65 sen per kg is not reasonable any more.

The amount of subsidies provided by the government also can no longer withstand the impact of rising costs that farmers have to incur.

They need farming incentives or subsidies, but it is important to channel the kind of incentives that directly help them to produce and secure a good income.

Subsidies can only be meaningful if farmers have a good...



# ANNEX 3

## PARTICIPANTS & CONTACTS

### SEACON CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

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# ANNEX 4

## FOOD SECURITY FORUM

### PROGRAMME

DAY 1: Monday 28th July 2008	
09:00-09:15	<b>WELCOME SPEECH</b> <b>Datuk Marimuthu Nadason</b> Chairperson – Southeast Asian Council for Food Security & Fair Trade (SEACON) & President, Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (FOMCA), Malaysia
<b>SESSION 1</b>	<b>GLOBAL OVERVIEW ON FOOD SECURITY</b> <b>Moderator: Dr. Mahani Zainal Abidin</b> Director General – Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Malaysia
09:15-09:45	<b>FOOD CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT IN ASIA</b> <b>Ms. Nancy Morgan</b> Livestock Policy Officer – FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Thailand
09:45-10:15	<b>BIOFUEL DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON ITS AGRICULTURAL MARKET</b> <b>Dr. Qiu Huanguang</b> Economist – Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy, China
10:15-10:45	<b>ROLE OF FREE TRADE IN ENSURING FOOD SECURITY</b> <b>Ms. Joy Chavez</b> Senior Associate & Program Coordinator – Focus on The Global South-Philippine Program, Philippines
10:45-11:15	<b>Q &amp; A</b>
11:15-11:30	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
<b>SESSION 2</b>	<b>NATIONAL POLICY AND RESPONSES TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY</b> <b>Moderator: Prof. Dr Fatimah Mohamed Arshad</b> Director- The Institute of Agricultural and Food Policy Studies, Malaysia.
11:30-12:00	<b>ENSURING SELF-SUFFICIENCY AT NATIONAL LEVEL: INDONESIAN FOOD SECURITY POLICY</b> <b>Dr. Tahlim Sudaryanto</b> Director – Indonesian Center for Agro Socio-Economic and Policy Studies (ICASEPS), Indonesia
12:00-12:30	<b>ENSURING FOOD SECURITY AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL: THE MGP MODEL OF BULK PURCHASING – INDIAN CASE STUDY</b> <b>Mr. Shirish Deshpande</b> Vice Chairman – Mumbai Grahak Panchayat, India
12:30-12:50	<b>Q &amp; A</b>
12:50-14:00	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>

DAY 1: Monday 28th July 2008 Cont....	
<b>SESSION 3</b>	<b>WORKSHOP</b>
14:00 - 15:00	<b>GROUP DISCUSSION</b>
15:00 - 15:25	<b>GROUP PRESENTATIONS</b> <b>Moderators:- Mr Kamalesh Adhikari</b> Senior Program Officer – South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal <b>Dato' Indrani Thuraisingham</b> Head – Consumers International, Kuala Lumpur Executive Director – SEACON
<b>SESSION 4</b>	<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF FOOD INSECURITY</b> <i>Moderator: Ms. Jessica Cantos</i> <i>Convener – Rice Watch and Action Network (R1); Member of East Asia Rice Working Group, Philippines</i>
15:25 - 15:50	<b>THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF FOOD INSECURITY</b> <b>Ms. Lim Li Ching</b> Third World Network (TWN), Malaysia
15:50 - 16:15	<b>AGRICULTURE TRADE POLICY AND HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD</b> <b>Mr. André Frankovits</b> International Project Director of Human Rights Council Australia
16:15 - 16:30	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
16:30 - 17:10	<b>SPECIAL SESSION</b> <b>Y.B. DATUK ROHANI BT. ABDUL KARIM</b> <b>Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, Malaysia</b> (Press Conference)
17:10 - 17:35	<b>FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: PROTECTING FOOD UNDER FREE TRADE RULES</b> <b>Mr. Henry Saragih</b> Chairman, Indonesian Peasant Union
17:35 - 18:00	<b>FOOD CRISIS AND THE BURDEN ON WOMEN</b> <b>Ms. Teresita Vistro</b> Co-Convenor, Task Force Rural and Indigenous Women Asia Pacific Forum On Women, Law & Development (APWLD), Thailand.
18:00 - 18:15	<b>Q &amp; A</b>
18:15	<b>DAY 1 CLOSE</b>
19:30	<b>WELCOME DINNER</b>



<b>DAY 2: Tuesday 29th July 2008</b>	
09:00 - 09:15	RECAPITULATION OF DAY 1
<b>SESSION 5</b>	<b>REGIONAL INITIATIVES TOWARDS ENSURING FOOD SECURITY</b> Moderator: Associate Professor Dr. Rokoiah Alavi Coordinator – Globalization & WTO Research Unit, Department of Economics, Kulliyah of Economics & Management Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia
09:15 - 09:40	<b>ASEAN RESPONSE TO THE FOOD CRISIS</b> Dr. Somsak Pipoppinyo Assistant Director and Head Natural Resources Unit, Bureau for Economic Integration and Finance, ASEAN Secretariat, Indonesia
09:40 - 10:05	<b>G33 POSITIONS ON SPS AND SSM TOWARDS ENSURING FOOD SECURITY</b> Mr. Lupino Lazaro Jr. Senior Political Analyst and WTO Desk Officer Department of Agriculture, Philippines
10:05 - 10:25	Q & A
10:25 - 10:40	TEA BREAK
<b>SESSION 6</b>	<b>COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION &amp; LIVELIHOOD</b> Moderator: Puan Aini Zakaria Research Officer, Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI), Malaysia
10:40 - 11:05	<b>FAIR TRADE TOWARDS ENSURING EQUITABLE BENEFITS AND FOOD SECURITY</b> Mr. Vitoon Panyakul Chair, Green Net, Thailand
11:05 - 11:30	<b>FARMER EDUCATION IN FIELD SCHOOLS AS A WAY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION</b> Mr. Nugroho Wienarto Executive Director, FIELD, Indonesia
11:30 - 11:55	<b>SRI PROJECT IN CAMBODIA</b> Mr. Prak Sereyvath Executive Director, CEDAC, Cambodia
11:55 - 12:20	<b>LEISA AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION</b> Mr. K. Suresh Kanna Deputy Director, Kudumbam-LEISA Network, India
12:20 - 12:45	<b>COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION OF AGRO-BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD SECURITY</b> Attorney Chrisgel Ryan Cruz Policy Officer, Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment, (SEARICE) Philippines
12:45 - 13:00	Q & A
13:00 - 14:00	LUNCH

DAY 2: Tuesday 29th July 2008 Cont....	
14:00 - 15:15	WORKSHOP
15:15 - 15:30	TEA BREAK
15:30 - 16:10	REPORTING OF WORKSHOP DISCUSSION
16:10 - 16:45	OPEN FORUM
16:45 - 17:15	THE WAY FORWARD
17:15	CONCLUDING REMARKS AND CLOSE



## REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY FORUM 2008

# “TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL”

### PEOPLE'S RESPONSE TO THE FOOD CRISIS IN ASIA

As every region and nation is desperately reacting to the current food crisis, people across the world are anxious to know the outcomes and expectation of each adaptive responses or measures that are being carried out or suggested.

The forum will be used as a platform to bring peoples' concerns onto a central attention by exposing the various uncertainties, policies, results, and initiatives in dealing with food crisis.

Date:

July 28-29, 2008

Venue:

Concorde Hotel Shah Alam  
Selangor, Malaysia

Organised By:



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## About **SEACON**

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The Southeast Asian Council for Food Security and Fair Trade (SEACON) provides a coordinated approach to food security, agriculture and trade issues. We integrate local initiatives of agrarian reform and agricultural development with trade concerns at the Southeast Asian level. In each of our member countries, we support people centred national based food security councils that enable government, private sector and civil society representatives to meet and dialogue on agriculture and trade issues.

The establishment of the national food council is to ensure that whatever analysis / positions taken on at the regional level, would have the secure backing from the grassroots and vice versa.

Our role is thus to:

- Monitor and keep in check the adverse effects of free trade on peasant farmers
- Monitor the development of relevant economic and social domestic policies in the region ecologically that promote economically and sustainable production
- Offer alternative agro-trade strategies based on the principles of fair trade and food sovereignty
- Improve and lobby for policies related to food, agriculture and trade at regional and international levels

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