



Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Agricultural Research for Development

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Bangkok, Thailand

PROCEEDINGS



Organized by
Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)
Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)
Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)

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List of Acronyms/Abbreviations

ACIAR	:	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ADB	:	Asian Development Bank
ANGOC	:	Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
APAARI	:	Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutes
APARIS	:	Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information systems
APCoAB	:	Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology
ARD	:	Agricultural Research for Development
BRAC	:	Bangladesh Rural Advance Commission
CANGO	:	China Association of NGOs
CBD	:	Convention on Biodiversity
CGIAR	:	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CSO	:	Civil Society Organizations
EGFAR	:	Electronic Global Forum on Agricultural Research (Homepage of GFAR)
FAO	:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
FARA	:	Forum on Agricultural Research for Africa
GARA		
GFAR	:	Global Forum on Agricultural Research
GMOs	:	Genetically Modified Organisms
ICAP		
ICRISAT	:	International Crop Research Institute for Semi Arid Tropics
ICT	:	Information and Communication Technologies
IPR	:	Intellectual Property Rights
ITK	:	Indigenous Technical Knowledge
ITP		
MDGs	:	Millennium Development Goals
NAARAP	:	NGO Association for Agriculture Research in Asia-Pacific
NARI	:	National Agricultural Research Institute
NARS	:	National Agricultural Research Systems
NGO	:	Non Governmental Organization
NZAid	:	New Zealand's International Aid & Development Agency
PGR	:	Plant Genetic Resources
PIANGO	:	The Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
PNG	:	Papua New Guinea
RIU	:	Research in Use
SFH	:	Small Farm Holders
SPC	:	South Pacific Commission
SSANGOC	:	Sub-Saharan Africa NGO Consortium
WIPO	:	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	:	World Trade Organization

Preamble

The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), including the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), are increasingly playing an important role in providing social services and assistance in activities such as food security, land reform, environmental protection, emancipation of the poor and marginalized sectors of the society, restoration of civil rights, etc., that aim at contributing towards faster economic progress and improvements in the quality of life of the poor and marginalized.

In the agriculture domain, NGOs have largely been promoting “sustainable agriculture” to enhance food security, environmental health, economic profitability, and social equity. Over the years, the CSOs, in general, have also made significant contributions towards advocacy for sustainable agriculture.

NGOs alone, however, cannot achieve the interconnected goals of sustainable agriculture. The whole gamut of sustainable agriculture and the continuum of agricultural research for development (ARD) requires a holistic multi-sectorial, multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary approach, through partnership among various stakeholders such as the Government, the National Agricultural Research System (NARS), the academic and research institutions, the private sector, and the civil society organizations at the national, regional, and global levels.

To operationalize the holistic approach and to ensure required impact, it is imperative to build partnership through an appropriate mechanism such as neutral Forum/Consortium so that various stakeholders are able to share their experiences and find out possible solutions or develop strategies through effective interactions. Such a Forum would also allow better planning of financial, physical, and human resources; avoid duplication and foster closer working relationships among the member institutions/organizations involved.

Recognizing the need for establishment of a regional mechanism and in keeping with above mentioned objectives, a regional workshop was organized by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), in collaboration with Asia NGO coalition (ANGOC), to discuss possible ways for strengthening regional cooperation among NGO community engaged actively in Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) and to explore possibilities for the establishment of a regional consortium which can provide a neutral platform for regular interactions and to provide legitimacy for NGO representation in the national, regional and global organizations engaged in ARD. While APAARI and ANGOC facilitated the process, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) provided the required funding support.

The workshop was held at Hotel Rama Gardens in Bangkok on 16-18 April, 2008. The program of the workshop and the list of participants are given as Annexure I and Annexure II, respectively.

Inaugural Session

Dr. Raghunath D. Ghodake, Chairman, APAARI, extended hearty welcome to the Chief Guest, Dr. He Changchui, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific. He also extended a warm welcome to the other delegates. He also thanked Fr. Francis Lucas, Chairman, ANGOC and the newly appointed Executive Secretary of GFAR, Dr. Mark Holderness, for their first time participation in the APAARI program and expressed gratitude for their active support to organize the Workshop.

Dr. Ghodake mentioned that the Workshop was specifically intended to focus on the role being played by the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the field of agricultural research for development in Asia and the Pacific Region. He desired the participants to avail this opportunity to discuss both on-going ARD initiatives and future priorities. He wished the participants to have a fruitful interaction and explore the option of establishing an NGO Consortium for the region for jointly addressing the ARD agenda. He also highlighted the various on-going efforts of APAARI for ARD in the region through research networking and partnership through consortia approach. Welcome address is given as Annexure III.

Fr. Francis Lucas, Chairman, Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC), pointed out that his organization has been very actively supporting the adoption of sustainable agriculture since its establishment in 1990 and in pursuance of its mandate had embarked on a 200-Village Action Research Project in 1998. He appreciated the need to engage actively with the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR) and the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) so as to identify and address the priority research areas for joint action and to discuss the principles and modalities of NGO engagement at the regional, sub-regional, and national levels. He further stressed that agricultural research and development agenda should particularly focus on issues of poverty reduction, food security, social and gender equity. Keeping interest of various stakeholders, he highlighted five areas to be addressed as: (a) establish functional linkages among scientists – policymakers – farmers – NGOs in pursuing the common ARD agenda; (b) ensure enhanced participation and ownership of rural communities in the process; (c) strengthen research and extension linkages to benefit the rural poor; (d) develop better public awareness and (e) sensitize government and society towards importance of ARD for the small farmers. The welcome statement of Fr. Francis is given as Annexure IV.

Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI, extended a warm welcome to all the distinguished guests, invitees and delegates. He expressed APAARI's gratitude to Dr. He Changchui, FAO Assistant Director-General to be the Chief Guest and to the representatives of ANGOC, GFAR, FARA, CGIAR, and NGOs in the region for their participation in the workshop. He attributed the overwhelming response from GFAR, FAO and other participating organizations as reflection of their common interest and concern for the cause of small farmers and sustainable farming in the region. Dr Paroda expressed that the deliberations would hopefully culminate in establishing a neutral platform of NGOs for ARD in the Asia-Pacific region, and to facilitate the process of continued dialogue with other fora to address various MDGs, based on the spirit of partnership. He cautioned that there could be some reservations in the initial stage but could be overcome through collective wisdom and understanding. It was also stated that given the nature of ARD issues, especially the overarching issues of poverty, farm sustainability, environment and natural resource degradation etc., the urgency and the role of partnership among stakeholders becomes paramount. He also flagged the major objectives of this workshop. He mentioned that APAARI recently expanded its membership on the Executive Committee to provide representation to CSOs (alternatively, IFAP and ANGOC). He also reiterated that this workshop assumes special significance as it will set a stage for strengthening the existing and new partnerships among the regional NGOs and APAARI in the field of ARD, with potential benefit to small farmers and for overall rural development.

Dr. Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary, GFAR emphasized that agricultural research has a central role in shaping our future, through direct impact on the wider society and especially the poor and those who speak for the poor. He pointed out that partnership with civil society organizations

(CSOs) is crucial for the success of ARD programs. The partnership involving farmer organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and consumer organizations shapes both the subject and form of research that is undertaken. He stressed on the need to learn from the outcomes of new ways of linking science with society and quickly share our knowledge and ideas around the world. The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and its regional constituencies create the space for this to happen. He stated that the Global issues usually transcend the geographical and political boundaries. In this context, GFAR has a particular focus in supporting regional fora as they reshape themselves to broaden their constituent members from public sector research and extension institutions to become true Fora that include the perspectives of farmers, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders. Dr. Holderness expressed hope that outcome of the workshop would give shape to a true Regional Forum of NGOs working towards betterment of the poor and marginalized farmers in the Asia-Pacific region.

Dr. Sidi Sanyang, Director of Policy and Marketing, FARA stated the status of FARA, NGOs and other CSOs. In brief, he informed that since 2005, FARA has been facilitating an active involvement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) like the Farmers' Organizations, Private Organizations and NGOs particularly towards setting-up and strengthening of their respective regional platform under FARA. Following the establishment of Sub-Saharan Africa NGO Consortium (SSA-NGOC) in 2006 it carried out technical programs on (i) developing database of NGOs involvement in ARD in order to facilitate NGO research linkage and partnership; (ii) developing and concluding five case studies on past experiences and lessons learnt in technology dissemination and improving linkages between CSOs and researchers and (iii) articulation of communication strategy. Through its experiences, the consortium currently recognized the need for synergy and collaboration in carrying out advocacy work.

Dr. He Changchui, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, expressed his happiness for organizing this workshop jointly by APAARI and ANGOC. In his Inaugural address, Dr He informed that FAO gives special emphasis on strengthening agricultural research with an aim to achieve food security, poverty alleviation, and rural development, and such other ARD areas that help to achieve agricultural growth. FAO and its partners recognize the importance of involvement of NGOs in agricultural research for development especially for facilitating and translating research results into direct benefits for farmers. In this context, he cited the example of "International Alliance Against Hunger", an initiative launched by FAO with active involvement of other international organizations, governments, research institutions, NGOs, CSOs, private sector, and professional experts to work as partners in achieving the objectives of MDGs. Dr. Changchui was also appreciative of the wide ranging activities of APAARI covering the field of agricultural biotechnology, agricultural research information systems, and training in ICT practice, knowledge dissemination and sharing ARD information through publications. He also considered APAARI as a shining example and further mentioned that in the same way FAO Regional Office is enjoying a very close cooperation with ANGOC. While applauding the financial contribution of the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR), he assured that FAO would remain committed to work with APAARI, ANGOC, and related CSOs in addressing the ARD agenda. With a bright view in the long run, Dr. Changchui believed that cooperation among APAARI-ANGOC-GFAR is likely to facilitate small farmers towards demand driven participatory agricultural R & D. Dr. Changchui also released an APAARI publication entitled "Micropropagation for Quality Seed Production in Sugarcane in Asia and the Pacific" jointly published by FAO-APCoAB-APAARI. While concluding Dr. Changchui assured of his full support

for the proposed new NGO Consortium for Asia-Pacific. The Inaugural address is given as Annexure V.

Mr. P. K. Saha, Liaison Officer, APAARI, delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of APAARI to all the participants and especially Dr. Changchui, Dr. Ghodake, Fr. Francis, Dr. Mark Holderness and Dr. Raj. Paroda.

Session I: Agriculture Research for Development in Asia Pacific: Challenges, Opportunities and Priorities

Technical Session I was chaired by Dr. Mark Holderness and co-chaired by Dr. Suman Sahai. In all, five presentations were made to cover the subject at the global, regional, national and local level.

Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary GFAR in his presentation entitled “Global ARD Perspective” stated that for agriculture, ‘business as usual’ is not an option any more because of the fast changing agricultural production environment emerging from climate change, diminishing water resources, soil degradation and erosion, high population growth, urbanization, and limited access to technologies and inputs among the poor. The challenge, therefore, is to increase agricultural productivity and farmer income, while sustaining the productive potential of natural resources by faster infusion of new technologies that are cost effective and efficient user of inputs.

He said that the generation and application of knowledge is critical to meet the emerging global challenges facing agriculture, acknowledging at the same time that past research possibly did not benefit the poor. He cited several reasons for the widespread slowdown in agricultural growth such as non adoption of effective technologies at farmers’ level, research and extension institutions being less effective than desirable so much so that society seemed to be losing confidence in agricultural science. It was felt that for sustainable development, a blend of both local knowledge and formal science are now needed.

Dr Holderness stated that Global Forum on Agricultural Research, as a neutral platform, is linking science with society, creating new partnerships to address critical issues determining our future ability to feed humanity and supporting demand-driven institutions as well as innovation systems to meet the complex needs of sustainable agricultural development by remaining inclusive of Farmers, Civil Society Organizations, National Agricultural Research & Extension Systems, Private Sector, International Research Centers, and Donor organizations. Further, the GFAR will bring together all concerned with agricultural research, valuing different perspectives and strengths and encouraging innovation derived from the knowledge of different partners, empowering communities to generate their own solutions. In order to translate its mandate, the GFAR priorities presented were advocacy for the change, inter-regional learning, institutions for the future, shaping global programs and putting knowledge to use.

Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI made a presentation on “Regional ARD Initiatives”. For the benefit of participants, a brief account of APAARI as an organization, its structure, links, partners, functions, programs, funding etc was given. It was highlighted that the APAARI mission was to promote agricultural research for development through novel partnerships involving all

stakeholders, such as: national institutions and systems, NGOs and farmers, international organizations, CGIAR, FAO, and the private sector.

APAARI goals are: Strengthening NARS; Information Sharing; Research Networking; Human Resource Development and Policy Advocacy. It has established network on crops, livestock, fruits, fiber and aquaculture. It also has two main programs namely, APARIS (Asia-Pacific Agricultural Information System) and APCoAB (Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology) with the specific aims of information sharing and advocacy for ICT and use of biotechnology through capacity building, policy advocacy and research networking, respectively.

Dr. Paroda also apprised the participants with APAARI activities and achievements. It was stated that APAARI, through its regular expert consultations, had defined the regional research priorities such as genetic resource management and enhancement, natural resource management, policy research and capacity building of NARS, globalization and its market dimensions, biotechnologies, new agri-food research paradigm (from farm to the fork) and the information technology revolution. APAARI activities have included a range of consultations and reviews on emerging fields. APAARI redefines its priorities as inputs come in from activities and as the issues emerge in agriculture research for development. In order to carry forward the process of ARD, greater involvement of NARS, CGIAR, Farmer Organizations, NGOs, Private Sector and Youth in research planning and priority setting was called for. He emphasized the need for private sector to be more pro-active and forthcoming for an effective ARD participation.

Dr C.L.L. Gowda, Global Leader, ICRISAT, made a presentation on behalf of the CGIAR Science Council on new CG priorities. He specified that *“The Science Council proposes that the Future Harvest Centers and the CGIAR members agree to allocate (following a transition period not to exceed a three year period) 80% of the total CGIAR budget to the five priority areas”*. In keeping with the mandate, the five priority areas for research include: i) Sustaining biodiversity for current and future generations; ii) Producing more and better food at lower cost through genetic improvements; iii) Reducing rural poverty through agricultural diversification and emerging opportunities for high-value commodities and products; iv) Poverty alleviation and sustainable management of water, land, and forest resources; and v) Improving policies and facilitating institutional innovation to support sustainable reduction of poverty and hunger. The new priorities, needed to be seen as describing an agenda of research for development and not development *per se*. It was further explained as to how the CGIAR centers develop approaches to thematic challenges through collaborative, system-wide research arrangements where it links with existing international expertise (e.g. human nutrition and health, climate change research) without replicating the efforts of others. Dr. Gowda also highlighted the importance of CSOs in addressing new challenges in ARD.

Dr Mahabub Hossain, Executive Director, BRAC mentioned that his organization came up to rehabilitate Bangladesh nationals who had fled to India after the war in 1971. Presently, BRAC's agricultural research, extension and support services include a poultry and livestock program, fisheries extension program, a social forestry program and a sericulture program, along with Arong handicraft production and marketing, vegetable exports, soil testing facilities, seed production with emphasis on hybrid seed of rice, maize, potato and vegetables, as well as tissue culture based potato seed production. The program on agricultural research and development also aims to strengthen infrastructure like production and processing of quality seed, a milk processing plant, feed mills, seed production centers, fish and prawn hatcheries and marine fish breeding centers.

Mr. Subhash Mehta, Trustee, Devarao Shivaram Trust, (DST), Bangalore, India, said that the National and International public funded and Govt. Organizations should develop programs that ensure agriculture to be less polluting (without the use of pesticides and GMOs), and agricultural education system be focused on rich agricultural heritage, articulate science to traditional knowledge of farmers, and address food and nutritional security of farm families and the rural communities. In addition, he said that NGOs and small farm holders organisations should be facilitated to: (i) organize their fora (ii) have an equal say in research and (iii) are actively associated with policy making bodies. Farmer groups should be funded to set-up producer companies (PC), staffed by professionals, to take over their risks and responsibilities, other than farming and on farm activities, thereby ensuring their sustainability and prosperity. Moreover, institutions that are engaged in social reforms and enjoy the confidence of communities must become partners in agricultural development and research for achieving millennium development goals (MDGs). He also said that policy makers need to ensure that, ARSs, re-align their research to address problems facing small holder farmers, e.g. increasing input costs lower yields and lower net incomes year after year. He also suggested that public funded ARD should focus on developing technologies that are suitable for the local soil and agro-climatic conditions and use locally available natural resources. Also, there is need to enhance Research on needs of Small Farm Holdings, their PCs taking over the Extension linkage responsibility, so that learning becomes a bottomup process.

Session II: Sharing NGO Experience in ARD

The Technical Session II was chaired by Dr. Roel Ravanera and co-chaired by Dr. Mahabub Hossain. Dr. C.L.L. Gowda acted as Rapporteur. In all, following five presentations were made:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| I. Southeast Asia | - Nathaniel Don Marquez |
| II. South Asia | - Suman Sahai |
| III. PNG Women in Agriculture | - Maria Linibi |
| IV. Alternative Pathway to Sustainable Agriculture | - Hiva Levi |
| V. China Association of NGOs | - Huang Haoming |

Mr. Don Marquez reiterated the need for concerted efforts to build linkages among NGOs, FO, Government, NARS and IARC to empower the farming communities. He also highlighted the areas needing priority attention as:

- a) Inclusiveness and community empowerment involving area of land reforms, rights, policy research, etc.
- b) Sustainable livelihoods that include microfinance and linking farmers to markets.
- c) National resource management, including disaster management, responding to and mitigate climate change effects; and enhance farmer – scientist – NARS collaboration in research.

Dr Suman Sahai, representing Gene Campaign, elucidated several activities that have been or are being undertaken and future issues likely to be taken up by her organization in the regional context. These were:

- a) *Field research*: Natural resource management and sustainable agriculture, document and disseminate under-utilized species; bio-resource based income generation; documenting ITK, training and capacity building.

- b) *Policy research and advocacy*: Issues related to WTO, WIPO, ITP GARA, CBD,
- c) *Future issues*: Approaches to cope with and mitigate effects of climate change and issues related to biofuels.

Ms. Maria Linibi made a presentation on PNG women in Agriculture (PNGWiA) as a forum to address the concerns and issues of women, youth and other disadvantaged groups in agriculture. The PNGWiA envisions to promote equal participation of women in agriculture and strives to deliver benefits to members, promote and support member activities and advocate gender diversity. PNGWiA is involved with PNG-NARI in collaborative research, technology transfer, field days, etc. The programs are being actively supported by ACIAR, NZAid, NARI, FAO, ADB, SPC and World Vision.

Mr. Hiva Levi, representing PIANGO made a presentation on alternative pathways to sustainable agriculture. It was mentioned that the SPC countries are moving away from chemical agriculture to organic farming by using traditional knowledge and methods, wherein national associations have been formed to promote organic agriculture being more beneficial in the long run. The forum facilitated national action plan for members, and mobilized resources to undertake planned activities with an ultimate goal to enhance both the income and livelihood opportunities for small farmers. He stressed the need for establishing quality testing system to meet international standards and favoured organic farming for long term sustainability and overall prosperity for the farmers in the Pacific

Mr. Huang Haoming, on behalf of CANCO presented details of the NGO consortium in China. He informed that there are about 380,000 NGOs (207,000 social organizations, 172,000 private enterprises and 1,370 foundations) and more than 148,000 farmer cooperatives in China. Some of the NGOs are involved in extension, but it is mostly done by NARS. In some provinces (such as Hubei), agricultural extension has become non-enterprise cooperative involving NARI, NGO and farmer organizations. In future, CANCO plans promotion of functional linkages amongst NARS-NGO-Farmers; establish networking between NARI and NGOs; support NGO development in rural areas and expand personnel exchange between NARS and NGO.

Above inputs received in the form of the experience sharing of NGOs functioning in different parts of the Asia-Pacific were well received and formed the basis for panel discussions in the ensuing session.

Session III: Thematic Group Discussions

Three thematic group discussions were organized as Plenary to deliberate on following main issues:

	Discussion Theme	Facilitator
I	Regional NGO Priorities in ARD	Dr. Roel Ravanera
II	Knowledge Sharing and Establishment of e-Forum	Dr. Ajit Maru
III	Modalities for Partnership	Mr. Antonio Quizon

The sharing of NGO experiences highlighted the need to redirect agricultural research with active participation of NGOs in the agricultural research systems (ARS), national and international, towards meeting the needs of small farm holders (SFHs) and other marginalized groups. Also, much of the research should be in on-farm farmer participatory mode and not on the research stations. This

is essential in addressing pressing development issues such as rural poverty, nutritional and food insecurity and the degradation of the environment, as have already been articulated in the MDGs.

The three group discussions were directed towards identifying areas of collaboration and defining a growth path for small holder farmers. Farmers-empowering agro-technologies based on articulation of science to farmers' traditional knowledge and integrated farming systems were supported for inclusion in the NARS mandate and research plans.

Session IV: Panel Discussion on Asia-Pacific NGO Consortium

Technical session IV was chaired by Dr. Raj Paroda and co-chaired by Mr. Nathaniel Don Marquez

In this session, a presentation on "NGO Consortium for Africa on ARD" was made by Dr. Sidi Sanyang, representative of FARA, followed by brief comments by four panelists: Fr. Francis Lucas, Ms. Rohini Reddy, Dr. Raghunath Ghodake and Dr. Mark Holderness.

Dr. Sidi Sanyang gave brief background concerning Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and the recent initiatives taken to accelerate active involvement of different stakeholders such as farmers through their Africa Alliance of Farmers Organization, private sector through the Pan-Africa Agribusiness Committee, and the NGOs through a newly established Sub-Saharan Africa NGO Consortium – facilitated by FARA and approved by its General Assembly in 2005.

He highlighted the need for NGO Consortium which could serve as neutral platform for strengthening the working relationship among NGO community. Such a consortium is helping in strengthening collaborative arrangements among NGOs and providing legitimacy for its presentation in the national, regional and global organizations engaged in ARD. Dr. Sidi also shared the experiences of SSA-NGOC. An interim Steering Committee was established and endorsed by FARA General Assembly in 2005. The developments so far include identification of focal points for Eastern, Western, Central and Southern Africa, and a Code of Conduct for the Consortium membership and a communication strategy is being developed currently for sharing knowledge and strengthening cooperation. The Secretariat is likely to be based in South Africa. Some case studies on ARD related activities have also been initiated. Difficulties currently encountered relate to institutional arrangements, formation of regular Steering Committee, lack of communication system, membership fee, resource generation etc.

Subsequently, panel members made useful interventions. Fr. Francis highlighted the principles of credibility, capacity and constituency, beside dialogue of sharing and caring. According to him, there is a real challenge to involve multi stakeholders in ARD. He also stated that there is need to have a consortium approach for immediate interventions on ARD in Asia-Pacific. Ms. Rohini Reddy was appreciative of current efforts to establish an NGO Consortium for ARD in the region and agreed to extend full support. Dr. Raghunath Ghodake emphasized the need to have greater collaboration between NGOs engaged in ARD, especially to influence policy makers and for faster development and adoption of agricultural innovations. According to him, knowledge sharing, policy awareness, and participation in applied and adaptive research through farmers' participatory mode could be the immediate objectives of such a consortium. Dr. Mark Holderness gave the background of GFAR and its active role for CSO involvement in the national, regional and international organizations. He highlighted the need for resource generation through development of a concept

note for some innovative projects. He further stated that GFAR is fully committed to have active involvement of CSO community and would continue facilitating the establishment of NGO consortium in different regions including Asia-Pacific. During the discussion, Dr. CLL Gowda welcomed the initiative for NGO consortium in AP region and emphasized the need to have legitimacy of representation in order to become effective partners in ARD. Dr. Mahabub Hossian drew attention towards major issue of funding and sustainability of such initiatives.

In conclusion, Dr. Raj Paroda expressed satisfaction over the presentations made and the discussions held. It was felt that the panel members had set the tone for establishing an NGO Consortium addressing priority issues requiring immediate attention. It was hoped that the subsequent session being facilitated by Dr. Mahabub Hossian, will develop better understanding to move forward.

Mr. Nathaniel Don Marquez, co-chair, summarized the discussion into following four areas:

a) Role of engagement, b) Role of responsibilities, c) Resource requirement, and d) Resource mobilization. He emphasized that all these are critical for any new initiative such as proposed NGO Consortium for ARD in Asia-Pacific. All these be deliberated thoroughly by the Group on NGO Consortium while making its final recommendations.

Subsequently, the NGO participants met separately to deliberate the subject concerning establishment NGO Consortium for the Asia Pacific.

Plenary Session

The Plenary Session was Chaired by Fr. Francis Lucas and Co-chaired by Dr. Raghunath Ghodake. Mr. Antonio B. Quizon acted as Rapporteur.

The Rapporteurs of the three theme groups and the one on NGO Consortium made presentations of their group recommendations. As the topics were inter-related, it was agreed that based on the discussions and endorsement of various recommendations, a consolidated report will provide cohesiveness and clear understanding. Accordingly, following is the consolidated report on various recommendations adopted by the participants of the workshop:

Context of engagement:

The sharing of NGO experiences highlighted the need to redirect agricultural research with active participation of NGOs and agricultural research systems (ARS), national and international, towards meeting the needs of small farm holders (SFHs) and other marginalized groups. Also, much of the research should be in on-farm farmer participatory mode and not only on the research stations. This is essential in addressing the pressing development issues such as rural poverty, nutrition and food insecurity and the degradation of the environment, as have been articulated in the MDGs.

The deliberations were directed towards identifying areas of collaboration and defining a growth path for small holder farmers. Farmers empowering agro-technologies based on articulation of science to farmers' traditional knowledge and integrated farming systems were supported for inclusion in the ARS mandate and research plans.

On above note, the NGO Workshop participants unanimously decided to form an **NGO Association for Agriculture Research in Asia-Pacific or NAARAP**.¹

All participants as NAARAP members agreed that research partnerships must involve three major players i.e. APAARI research institutions, NGOs, and small farm holders. It was recognized that any follow-up should be inclusive, so that other NGOs not present in the regional workshop are also actively involved in future.

NAARAP's Scope of Work

- To initiate three levels of interventions and link them to GFAR and APAARI processes:
 - national (ARD Agenda, Advocacy, facilitator)
 - regional (solidarity; ARD agenda, advocacy)
 - global (solidarity with other NGO groups, ARD agenda, advocacy)
- To participate actively in determining the direction, content and conduct of ARD at national, regional and international, levels
- To generate, document and disseminate information, knowledge and skills relevant to ARD.
- To share knowledge, experiences, expertise, and replicate successful practices and lessons learned in engaging with ARD
- To document the entire partnership process in ARD so as to share with farmers and in their local languages
- To create a steering committee (SC), to form a working committee from among the SC members, sub-committees as needed to fulfill specific roles such as resource mobilization, identifying research needs, themes, etc.

NAARAP members also noted that the partnership will have to focus on the need for a shift in the orientation of ARD, in terms of:

- Research agenda; purpose of research
- Paradigm, e.g. a fresh “*learning*” framework recognizing farmers as scientists

¹ The participants agreed on the following sub-regional focal points: CANGO for East, SARVODAYA for South, ANGOC for Southeast and PIANGO for the Pacific. These focal points will be responsible to bring in other NGOs into NAARAP. NAARAP shall also create sub-committees as needed, to fulfill specific roles such as resource mobilization, identifying research themes, etc. A resource generation committee has also been proposed composed of DST, Members BRAC, ANGOC, APPARI and GFAR. The members also committed to contribute annually US\$100 as membership fee to demonstrate their commitment to NAARAP.

The Secretariat of NAARAP shall be small, and shall be rotated to the sub-regions every two years. It was decided that the First Consortium Secretariat will be located with ANGOC for the period 2008-2010.

- Working context of small farm holders, or the reality addressed
- Methods of work; e.g. linking knowledge to field practice and policy; and scaling-out

NAARAP further noted the need for changes in the current nature of ARD, towards one that is (*among others*):

- Farmer-driven and in partnership with NGOs and Agri Research Systems (ARS) at national, regional and international levels
- Directed at the needs of the poor/vulnerable small farm holders
- Intimately linked to farmer-to-farmer learning
- ARD Systems that are supported by Government should focus on the most prominent (successful) farming system of each area and facilitate their replication by farmers of the area, willing to change.
- Based on identification and promotion of agro-technologies that are environmentally benign and which can reverse the negative fallouts of conventional agriculture, re-empower farmers, and ensure quality and sustainable levels of yields
- Based on agro-ecology as a scientific basis, with traditional knowledge as a starting point
- Fully inclusive of women, indigenous peoples and other under-represented groups
- Producing outputs that are not privatized and that remain in the public domain
- Embedded in a larger context of policy development that emphasizes poverty reduction, especially in rural areas
- Scaled up to bring large numbers of farmers back into the fold of low cost farming systems of the area, producing inputs on farm. This would require policy and developmental support from governments and multilateral institutions.
- Directed at nutrition, health and food security, especially in marginal/vulnerable environments where the poor live, and guided by concerns of national food sovereignty, right to nutrition, health, food and equity
- Based on full and real participation of small farm holders and CSOs in priority-setting, agenda formulation, research collaboration, governance and decision-making in partnership with ARS
- Address issues of resource access for poor people, e.g., land, water, genetic resources

NAARAP believes that research partnership must be based on mutually-accepted working principles, which should be formulated and agreed upon. Some of these principles are:

- General principles of mutual trust, and recognition of NGO autonomy
- Inclusiveness and legitimacy
- Built on recognition and credibility, capacity and constituency of each other
- Working towards common goals

NAARAP also framed a plan of action for itself that would be directed towards enabling empowerment for small farm holders and reorienting the agriculture research systems, national, regional and international, to involve them and their NGOs, actively in all research initiatives and

use the knowledge and expertise of the successful farmers in each area, for replication after being verified by science.

Rationale for the engagement

- Asia-Pacific is the home for most of the world's poor, majority of whom are small farm holders
- Civil society carries a responsibility to develop community-based approaches for health and nutrition, food security, poverty alleviation, environment protection and rural development, incorporating the principles of social justice

Principles of engagement

- Move towards an agricultural research system that combines community knowledge, verified by science, to address the needs of small farm holders and landless farmers, livestock keepers and pastoralists, fisher folk, forest dwellers, rural and tribal communities and incorporating gender equity.
- A major goal of NAARAP is to partner with APAARI, GFAR and other international and global actors to facilitate transformation from agricultural research institutes (ARIs) to ARS (systems approach, covering national, regional and international) where Small-holder Farmers Organizations (SFHOs) and CSOs play integral roles in determining the directions, content and conduct of ARD.
- Conduct jointly the need assessments based on research prioritization for the region.
- Policy research and advocacy for the region in ARD
- Participate in research evaluation and impact assessment of ARD

It was noted that partnership must be based on mutually-accepted working principles, which should be formulated and agreed upon. Some of these points that were emphasized for the new research partnership to work are:

- The need to involve, from the start, NGOs/CSOs and SFHOs in joint planning, budgeting and in shaping the agendas for research
- The need for institutional-research system reforms, including changes in mandates, norms, values and attitudes, and the way by which institutions currently operate; not just “business as usual”
- Responsibilities should not just be transferred to NGOs/CSOs and SFHOs; responsibilities should be accompanied by appropriate levels of authority and resources allocated to NGOs/CSOs and SFHOs under this partnership.

NAARAP's focus

To initiate following three major interventions and link them to GFAR and APAARI processes at the national, regional and global levels:

- i. To participate actively in determining the direction, content and conduct of ARD at national, regional and international levels
- ii. To generate, document and share knowledge, experiences, expertise, and replicate successful practices and lessons learned in engaging with ARD

- iii. To document the entire partnership process in ARD and to develop possible modalities to the above with farmers ARD experiences in their local languages. The specific goals and objectives under each of above three interventions should be:

I Regional NGO Priorities in ARD:

NGO competencies in ARD were identified and areas where they could contribute were articulated:

Linking Small Farm Holders, NGOs, CSOs and Agri Research systems (ARS), small farm holders and other clientele groups (e.g. women, rural youth, etc.) at the national, regional and international levels

- NGOs be involved in the planning, budgeting and decision making process of ARS (National, Regional and international), to reflect needs of NGOs/CSOs and SFHs in their research plans and priorities.
- Conduct farmer-participatory research on SFHs' technologies, backed with science and required documentation for adoption by ARS.
- Enable on farm production of inputs to facilitate adoption and replication of successful technologies by SFHs.
- Facilitate access by SFHs to information, appropriate technologies, expert data banks and ARIs.

Impact Assessment and Advocating Policy Changes

- Identify constraints to adoption and advocate policy changes needed to remove the constraints.
- Assess outcomes and impact of technologies on SFHs and document, share with key stakeholders.

Thus, the following agenda have been identified by NAARAP:

- i) technology development,
- ii) sustainable natural resource management,
- iii) facilitating farmers' access to markets and other support services, and
- iv) agenda for overall partnership.

Technology Development

- Developing local farming systems to increase farmers' incomes, without neglecting socio-cultural aspects (farmers' context, role of women, acceptability by SFHs) and the environment utilizing innovative participatory approaches
- Production of needed inputs on farm to increase farmers' incomes

On Sustainable Natural Resource Management:

- Adaptation study on the impact of climate change focusing on the vulnerability of agriculture and the SFHs. Specific topics would include mitigating losses, risk transfer, increasing resilience, coping mechanisms, nutrition and health, and recovery and rehabilitation.
- Sustainable natural resource management (land, water, forest, etc.) based on bio-diversity, gender equality and genetic diversity.

On facilitating farmers' access to markets and other support services:

- Developing models of linking farmers to market where small farm holders could get a fair price for their safe, healthy, tasty and quality products.
- SFHs promoting *producer companies (PCs)*, by, of and for the farmers, staffed by professionals, to take over all risks and responsibilities, other than farming and on farm activities.
- Developing sustainable/green internal control system (and/or standard for organic products) that is nationally, regionally and globally acceptable.
- Establishing mechanisms to reduce farmers' financial vulnerability such as micro/farmers insurance, microfinance/credit and savings for self-reliance.
- Facilitating farmers' access to information (digital, printed, radio, video) and documentation of local innovation development.

On Agenda for Overall Partnership:

- Moving national, regional and international ARIs (institutions) towards adopting a more inclusive ARS (systems) approach that have significant role for CSOs, NGOs, SFHOs and other institutions engaged in social reforms, as partners.
- Advocate for a new research paradigm that is small farm holder-led. It should recognize the holistic and sustainable approach in agriculture farming system done by farmers of the area, as well as the pivotal role of women. Develop technologies and interventions that empower farmers and enhance sustainable livelihoods among indigenous and rural communities with ARS, nationally, regionally and internationally.
- Joint advocacy with public and public policy on development priority that should be given to agriculture, food, nutrition, health and rural development; need for funding the work of various stakeholders such as CSOs, NGOs, SFHOs.
- ARD institutions and extension systems be restructured for effective partnership with the local area PCs, NGOs CBOs and SFHs.

II Knowledge Sharing and Communication Strategy:

The NAARAP would have to carefully consider this process as to how they communicate specially with each of the above categories.

Following the identification of those the group would need to communicate with, the group considered the question of what they would communicate.

Based on the discussions in preceding session, the main messages would be related to:

- i. Problems of farmers, the value addition chain and their solutions
- ii. New concepts, processes, skills and technologies

- iii. Awareness, Sensitization and Advocacy related to critical issues in agriculture and its development as applicable to the local areas
- iv. Funding in agricultural development and support for the Consortium and its members

Having identified the key categories of messages, the group then considered how they would communicate with the various categories of their clients for their communications. They had to consider issues of availability, accessibility, relevance, usefulness, accuracy and timeliness of the information and messages as key parameters in deciding the content and process of their communications. Careful consideration of who was being communicated with and what was being communicated would be needed to identify how the information and messages were to be communicated and the medium to be used. A wide variety of media and in different mixes could be used for the Consortium's communications.

A matrix which indicates to whom the Consortium would communicate to, the category of information and messages to be communicated and the medium to be used would constitute the core of the Consortium's communication strategy or plan.

The use of new ICT, especially cellular telephony and the Internet was considered. It was felt that with rapid developments in access to this new technology, new avenues in communication were emerging. The use of this technology would need to be looked at seriously.

The group also deliberated on the need to incorporate the concept of assessing the outcomes and impact of communications at every level in the communication process. It was felt that the Consortium's primary aim in communication was to change behavior and attitudes of all with whom they were communicating, including research institutions (national, regional and international). The evaluation of the Consortium's communication should also include assessing these changes.

The group then considered the fact that providing information alone in a passive manner would not result in knowledge sharing. Knowledge results from learning from useful information and adding experience. Thus, the Consortium will have to consider creating learning systems for those they primarily wish to communicate with.

APAARI and GFAR offered the use of their platforms, APARIS and EGFAR, respectively for communication within the CSO groups at national, regional and global levels and with other stakeholders in agricultural research for development.

The group also felt that Workshop, as held for the Sub Saharan African CSO Consortium, to develop its communication system, may also be planned for this Consortium.

III Possible Modalities for Partnership:

Several modalities for working together were culled from various presentations by GFAR, APAARI and NGOs. It was further noted that appropriate structures/ mechanisms for partnership will be necessary for working at different levels – community, national, regional and global. Further, NAARAP should consider the following:

On information-sharing, forums and dialogue:

- Sharing of information; e-forums
- Forums and consultations for discussion, dialogue and exchange
- Developing joint research agendas together with SFOs; identifying priorities for ARD where sustainability/increased net incomes are ensured for SFHs; ensuring SFH and civil society voices in developing research agendas.

On advocacy and policy dialogue:

- Joint public/media advocacy on the importance of SFHs in agriculture as well as the need for ARD; joint sponsorship of events. However, it was noted that any joint public advocacy should be based on consensus among partners.
- Linking up research with policy reforms; implications of research on policy; ensuring enabling environment for SFHs; direct policy advocacy
- Discussion and advocacy on global policy and trends (WIPO, IPR over PGR, PGR access and benefit-sharing, CBD, WTO in agriculture, especially in the light of emerging food crisis, GMOs and bio-safety, agro-fuels vs food production)

On joint research-related activities:

- Conducting and assessing research need assessments
- Developing participatory approaches and modalities; promoting paradigms and practice that recognize “farmers teach farming to the scientists”; linking science of institutions on small farmer fields/community indigenous knowledge; giving recognition for indigenous knowledge and innovations; new paradigm shift of “*farm-to-lab-to-farm*”
- Ensuring transparency in information, ex., on risks of new technologies
- Linking small farmers/producers with markets; improving the product chain to ensure benefit for small farmers
- Debate on risks of new technologies
- Producer Companies (PCs) of farmers to link with markets
- Improving the value chain to ensure benefit for small farm holders
- Collaboration on actual comparative field-level research and development, based on farmer-led approaches
- On-field adding value/processing, using technologies and approaches suitable to the farm conditions and meets people’s aspirations
- Discussion and consensus on what makes a good agricultural practice (GAP), participatory guarantee systems (PGS) for traceability, Standards, etc, separately for each area,
- Scaling-up the most successful farming systems of each area and scaling out all packages of practices in force
- Developing modules on sustainable agriculture; documenting under-utilized crops
- Documentation on indigenous knowledge systems, e.g. science of monsoons
- Mandating ARS to do comparative studies, giving farmers different options

On capacity-building:

- Training and capacity building that recognizes the contributions of indigenous knowledge of farmers, putting in the best that formal knowledge of science has to offer to optimize their operations
- Ensuring that SFOs and NGOs/CSOs play integral roles in national ARDs, as APAARI's focus shift from dealing with NARIs (*institutions*) towards supporting NARS (*systems*)

In the concluding remarks, both Co-Chairpersons Fr. Francis Lucas and Dr. Raghunath Ghodake expressed their satisfaction on the outcome of the workshop and expected that all concerned will extend their full support for the functioning of newly proposed NGO Consortium named as NAARAP. They also hoped that organizations such as APAARI, GFAR, CGIAR and FAO would extend their support for desired success of this new initiative. While thanking the participants for their active involvement for the success of the workshop, they also expressed their thanks to the Secretariat of APAARI in getting the meeting so nicely organized, and to the GFAR for its funding support.

**SESSION I: Agricultural Research for Development in Asia Pacific:
Challenges Opportunities and Priorities**

Chair: Dr. Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary, GFAR
Co-Chair: Dr. Suman Sahai, Chairperson, Gene Campaign

- 11:00-11:20 Global ARD Perspective: - Dr. Mark Holderness, GFAR
11:20-11:40 Regional ARD Initiatives: - Dr. Raj Paroda, APAARI
11:40-12:00 CGIAR System Priorities: - Dr. CLL Gowda, ICRISAT
12:00-12:20 NGO Experiences for Engaging in ARD: - Dr. Mahabub Hossian, BRAC
12:20-12:40 - Mr. Subhash Mehta, ICAP
12:40-13:00 Open Forum/ Discussion
13:00-14:00 **LUNCH**

SESSION II: Sharing of NGO Experiences in ARD

Chair: Dr. Roel Ravanera, Dean, Xavier University
Co-Chair: Dr. Mahabub Hossian, BRAC

- 14:00-14:20 South East Asia: - Dr. Nathaniel Don Marquez, ANGOC, Philippines
14:20-14:40 South Asia: - Dr. Suman Sahai, Gene Campaign, India
14:40-15:00 Pacific: - Ms. Maria Linibi, PNG Women in Agriculture
- Mr. Hiva Levi, PIANGO, Fiji
15:00-15:15 Other NGO presentations (if any)
15:15-15:30 **Coffee/Tea Break**

SESSION III: NGO Roundtable Discussion

		<u>Facilitator</u>
Topic A:	Regional NGO Priorities in ARD	- Dr. Roel Ravanera
Topic B:	Knowledge Sharing and Establishment of e-Forum	- Dr. Ajit Maru
Topic C:	Modalities for Partnership	- Mr. Antonio Quizon

19:00 **Reception Dinner hosted by APAARI**

Friday 18 April 2008

SESSION IV: Panel Discussion on Asia-Pacific NGO Consortium

Chair: Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI
Co-Chair: Mr. Nathaniel Don Marquez, ANGOC

- 09:00-09:20 NGO Consortium for Africa on ARD: - Dr. Sidi Sanyang, FARA
- 09:20-10:30 Panelists: (10 min each) Fr. Francis Lucas, Ms. Rohini Reddy
Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Dr. Mark Holderness
- General Discussion
- 10:30-11:00 *Coffee/Tea Break*
- 11:00-13:00 Working Group Session on Modalities for Establishing NGO Consortium
Facilitator: Dr. Mahbub Hossian, BRAC
Rapporteur: Mr. Subhash Mehta, Devarao Shivaram Trust
- 13:00-14:00 **LUNCH**
- 14:00-15:30 Working Group Session (Continued)
Facilitator: Dr. Mahbub Hossian, BRAC
Rapporteur: Mr. Subhash Mehta, Devarao Shivaram Trust
- 15:30-16:00 *Coffee/Tea Break*

PLENARY SESSION

Chair: Fr. Francis Lucas, Chairman, ANGOC
Co-Chair: Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Chairman, APAARI

- 16:00-17:00 - Presentation and Adoption of Recommendations
- Group on NGO Priorities: - Dr. Roel Ravanera
 - Group on Knowledge Sharing: - Dr. Ajit Maru
 - Group on Partnership: - Mr. Antonio B. Quizon
 - Group on NGO Consortium: - Mr. Subhash Mehta
- Concluding Remarks by the Chair and Co-Chair
- Vote of Thanks by Executive Secretary, APAARI

**Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Agriculture Research for Development (ARD)
(Organized jointly by APAARI-ANGOC-GFAR)**

**Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok
16-18 April, 2008**

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**Welcome Remarks by Dr. Raghunath Ghodake
Chairman, APAARI**

Good Morning to all!

Honorable Dr. He Changchui, Fr. Francis Lucas, Dr. Mark Holderness, Dr. Sidi Sanyang, Dr. Raj Paorda, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of APAARI, it is my great pleasure and honor to welcome you all. We are specially pleased and privileged that this morning we have with us dr. He Changchui, ADG-FAO Bangkok, to open this important meeting. This certainly shows the significance and importance of this forum to Dr. Changchui, FAO and to all of us...

I specially welcome Fr. Francis Lucas, Chairman, ANGOC for his presence and his coming forward to form a partnership with APAARI and all others, in our joint efforts in successful agricultural research for development.

Our warm welcome to Dr. Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary, GFAR (Global Forum on Agricultural Research), who has taken this role a couple of months back. We than him and GFAR for their active involvement and support in organizing this meeting.

We consider this workshop to be of great importance and value it as an important milestone for APAARI and for those of us in agricultural research. This is because the major focus of this workshop will be on understanding of the roles played by the Non-Governmental Organizations in strengthening agricultural research for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region. This is very crucial for APAARI and others involved in agricultural research for development at various levels such as national, regional and international levels.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you would perhaps agree with me that no single organization or individual can address all issues involved in successful ARD. We in APAARI do believe that the role of CSOs and NGOs is indeed very crucial in translating research outputs into R&D. Outcomes and further into development impacts at the stakeholders levels. That is by taking new technologies/innovations to the field through a continuum of research generation, assessment, refinements, adaptations and adoption, up-scaling and out-scaling, using the farmer participatory approaches.

This is also very opportune time for us to be consulting and interacting. As you may know the 2008 World Development Report brought out by the World Bank, emphasized the agriculture as the centre of the world development agenda, especially in poverty reduction and sustainable development in developing countries.

We are glad that APAARI, with funding support of GFAR, is able to facilitate this meeting. We are pleased that various representatives of NGOs from different parts of the Asia-Pacific region are able to come and will be discussing their on-going ARD initiatives and priorities for future. In this workshop, we also wish to learn your perceptions towards ARD agenda and see as to how we can strengthen various on-going efforts and partnerships at various levels. This will certainly enable us

not only to share interesting success stories but also to bring the key players together for future activities.

APAARI, for over a decade, has been engaged in research prioritization exercises, involving key stakeholders, including NGOs. We firmly believe in partnership and thus are pursuing the goal of making NARIs and NARs, contributing effectively to the agricultural development.

We are also pleased to have with us Dr. Sidi Sanyang, Coordinator, FARA (Forum on Agricultural Research for Africa) to share his experiences of building partnership among NGOs in Africa. FARA has facilitated the establishment of NGO Consortium, which is now working very closely with the Regional and Sub-Regional organizations in Africa to strengthen ARD activities for overall development of agriculture in Africa...

My colleague Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI will further highlight the specific objectives and details of this workshop.

Once again, I welcome and thank very sincerely our Chief Guest Dr. He Changchui and all of you for making it convenient to be with us this morning. We are also very happy that you all could make it possible to be with us for this forum.

Let us all strive to address successfully the new challenges. In doing so let us building the much needed mutual confidence and trust through new partnerships.

Thank you for your kind attention and we look forward to very successful workshop.

Welcome Remarks by Fr. Francis Lucas, Chairperson, ANGOC

Honorable Dr. He Changchui, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative, FAO; Dr. Ragnunath Ghodake, Chairperson of APAARI; Dr. Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary GFAR; Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Director APAARI; Dr. Sidi Sanyang, Coordinator, FARA; fellow colleagues from the NGO community, welcome to the land of smiles and a pleasant morning to all.

Since the 1990s, the Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC) has actively supported the adoption of sustainable agriculture in lieu of conventional, synthetic chemical monoculture. In 1998, the ANGOC network embarked on an initiative called the *200-Village, action research project* as an attempt to monitor the implementation of the World Food Summit. The initial results in five countries showed there is a positive correlation between food security and agricultural productivity. However, shifting to high input agriculture proved insufficient in securing food security, especially for resource poor farmers. These findings confirmed ANGOC's strategy in advocating for a more holistic and sustainable farming system that would ensure household food needs. ANGOC's premise is that sustainable food production is best achieved by promoting a form of agriculture that raises farm productivity and diversity while keeping external inputs to a minimum.

Through the years, NGOs in Asia have made significant contribution in social research and advocacy roles towards sustainable agriculture. NGOs are aware, however, that their efforts alone would not be enough to achieve the interconnected goals of sustainable agriculture. Public agricultural research institutions have an important role to mainstream and upscale sustainable agriculture, to support the agenda of small landholders which comprise more than 70 percent of the farmers in Asia.

As such, there have been attempts by ANGOC and NGOs in the region to engage the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR) and the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI). Towards this end, a concept note was developed last year by ANGOC which APAARI endorsed to GFAR for possible support. A major activity of such initiative which has since then been implemented by APAARI, is the conduct of this regional workshop to build bridges of partnership amongst Asia Pacific NGOs and ARD public institutions.

From the perspective of NGOs promoting and advocating sustainable agriculture, we are here in Bangkok because of two major reasons: *first* is to present and recommend to APAARI from our point of view, the priority research areas that it should undertake, and *second*, to discuss principles and various options on modalities of engagement between NGOs and the APAARI Network, both at regional sub regional and national levels.

For one thing, the agricultural research agenda should emphasize a stronger focus on poverty reduction and household food security, as well as participation, social and gender equity and empowerment. These topics are also the stated goals of most publicly-funded International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs), National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs), and Government Extension Systems (GESs) in the region. However, there is still need to build common platforms of understanding and practice among the various stakeholders that go beyond the development rhetoric.

With a food crisis facing the world today due to the rising prices of food and the lowering volume of cereal productions; the intensity of rural poverty, the widening equity gap between the rich and poor, national growth and equity, the role of agricultural research and the prioritization of agenda need to be reviewed.

To cite one of the urgent issues today about agriculture, and I quote “Producing bio fuels today is a crime against humanity,” unquote. These are the words of Jean Ziegler, UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food. There are other issues we face today which impinges on the small landholder farmers due to reductionist philosophy and science.

With regard to the effectiveness of research and extension, allow me at the onset to put on the table, the approach that most NGOs are mindful of:

- ❑ That it is involved – towards applied problem-solving orientations concerned primarily with small farm holders using the holistic approach a the community
- ❑ The need to subsume *scientific rigor* (scientists) under *field relevance* (farmers)
- ❑ The possibility of integrating social with technical science
- ❑ The interest in social *processes*; and
- ❑ A growing recognition of research as a medium for empowerment and mediation.

How can we build greater scientist-policymaker-farmer-NGO linkages in pursuing common national and regional agendas? How do we build greater participation and “ownership” of rural communities in such processes? How do we strengthen linkages between research and extension to benefit the rural poor? How do we build more accountable and aware public institutions? How can we awaken government and society to value ARD specially for the small farmers?

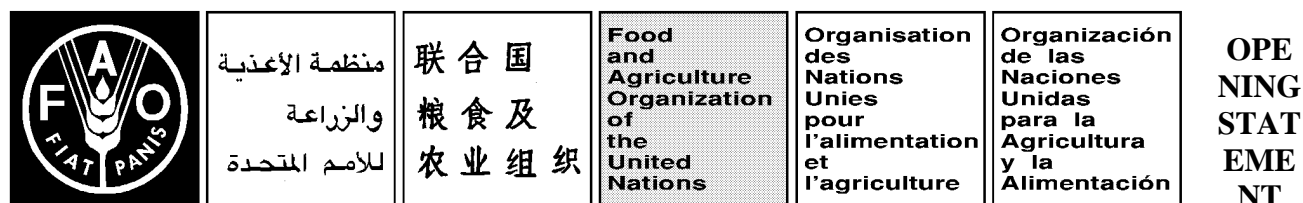
We thank Dr. He Changchui, with whom ANGOC had the chance to meet and discuss matters related to agriculture and sustainable agriculture, for his valuable presence and speech, Dr. Holderness Dr. Ghodake, Dr. Paroda for their support in bringing about this initial step for partnership. Last but not the least we thank our NGO colleagues for their presence and continued efforts in assisting and being part of the rural poor.

Allow me to end this speech by quoting an old farmer who once complained to me “Meeting meeting, wala naming eating.”

Translated. You keep on meeting while we down here remain hungry. We have to install clear actions at the end of this workshop.

We look forward for an active, open and engaging discussion among us.

Thank you and good morning.



By

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Delivered at the

**APAARI/ANGOC/GFAR Asia-Pacific workshop
on agricultural research for development**

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It is an honour and pleasure for me to deliver an opening address at this APAARI/ANGOC/GFAR *Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Agricultural Research for Development* in Bangkok. I am particularly pleased as your invitation is a clear reflection of the importance two key networks in Asia attach to partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and our joint drive to solve the problem of world hunger.

The setting

Despite the continuous growth in the world economy and sufficient food availability at the global level, more than 852 million people are chronically hungry. At present rates of growth and donor aid levels, the World Food Summit (WFS) target of halving the number of undernourished people is far from being reached by 2015. Current projections indicate that the world will be required to produce one additional billion tons of food grains to feed an additional two billion people by the year 2030, nearly 90 percent of whom will be in the developing countries.

Our planet is facing almost insurmountable challenges, challenges that governments on their own cannot fix. In order to survive and progress, we need to collectively embrace and adapt to changes; we need to strengthen our ability to provide life's essentials of food for an expanding human population; in short, we require major advances in science and technology.

Understanding major forces prevailing in the Asia-Pacific region further sheds light on the challenges and concerns we need to address: globalization and market liberalization; decentralization and governance, commercialization and agri-business. But also democratization and participation, the “inclusive”-concept of sustainable development, and the breakthrough of information and communications technology, as well as the potential and promises of emerging sciences and technology, just to name of few.

Priorities and Policies for agricultural research

Science and technology is a production force, said the late Chinese leader Deng Xiao Ping. Undeniably, it is an advance production force. But, in today's changing world, agricultural science and technology research needs to address the implications of climate changes and global warming, and increased variability and more frequent and intense natural disasters, such as droughts, floods and other extreme events. In this connection, agricultural mitigation and adaptation to climate change should be brought up as a priority on the international agricultural research agenda.

Development and safe use of bio-technology require bio-security regimes and transparency, particularly when used for improvement in crop production, nutrition and fortifying of micro nutrients, for example. Both enhanced basic studies and applied research are needed to safeguard human health and environmental security, including preservation of bio-diversity. But regretfully, this vital work is often compromised, if not neglected, due to marginal investment in the sector.

Appropriate policies for meeting these challenges are both necessary and important. Policies will need to function and evolve within a number of dynamic technological, social, economic and institutional constraints and settings. First and foremost, a good policy must enable research agenda setting being "people centered", and in this connection, small holder farming systems in particular should not be marginalized while promoting economies of scale, competitiveness in the production-processing-marketing chain, and – above all – the utmost goal of research policies should enhance and ensure equitable participation of small scale farmers and their organizations in setting research agendas and fair sharing of the benefits of advancement of sciences and technology.

Not every country needs to develop, or can afford to develop, cutting-edge technologies. But every country does need a minimal national capacity to possess, assess, and use judiciously such scientific knowledge and technology as is consistent with its people's need and aspirations, and suitably adapted to the local agro-ecological environment. Successful examples in a number of member states have shown that sustained and coordinated institutional support to, and adequate financial investment in agricultural science, research, and development by public sector are two essential policy dimensions to be promoted, along with incentive and innovative policies to encourage private sector's involvement and investment in agricultural research and development.

Technical-support organizations such as FAO and CGIAR are crucial partners for governments in creating a knowledge and technology base. They bare equally important stakeholders in promoting information dissemination and knowledge application to enhance productivity and to achieve and maintain comprehensive food security, poverty alleviation and equity.

If the power and potential of science and technology are to be realized, comprehensive policy support and investment shall be required to strengthen skills and human resources, infrastructures and institutional services, and enabling regulatory systems – in public sector research institutes as well as in successful farmer/NGO experiments or traditional farming systems. In this connection, FAO's own farmer field schools 'model' goes a long way in promoting such novel approaches, at the same time narrowing the research-development gap.

On a more substantive note, FAO feels that further strengthening the contribution of

agricultural research to food security, poverty alleviation and rural development needs a comprehensive approach, covering areas broader than strictly technical studies, such as:

- advocacy for greater public investment in agricultural research and development;
- pro-poor policy reform, strategic planning and priority setting;
- strategies for increased public and private sector partnership;
- provision of transparent information including the potential and risk of new technologies;
- strengthening networks and networking aimed at linking research and development with local government and farmer organizations;
- capacity building as vital means for ensuring research and development so that a cadre of appropriately trained manpower is available for different roles.

Partnering in Agricultural research and development

I should like to stress the role of partnership in agricultural research and the need for international cooperation for harnessing the fruits of science and technology for poverty and hunger reduction.

Participation and full involvement of NGOs in research and development is essential for facilitating and translating research results into direct benefits for farmers. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure an appropriate civil society voice in multi-stakeholder research agendas. FAO and its partners recognize the capacities of NGOs for technology implementation and outreach, in particular, its unique role in facilitating partnerships in research between formal scientific organizations and farmer networks.

Due to its strong grassroots level presence, many NGOs also have comparative advantages in terms of community -level advocacy and practical field experiences in adaptation of technology for applications to local condition and ecosystems in developing countries.

FAO has a clear strategy to work with NGOs as partner in implementing our global mandate in the fight against hunger. You may recall that we launched the International Alliance Against Hunger, calling on international organizations, governments, research and academic institutions, NGOs, CSOs, private sector, and individuals to work as partners in achieving the MDGs.

I take this opportunity to mention the special relationship and close partnership FAO has enjoyed with APAARI ever since the establishment of this unique Asia-Pacific network of agricultural research institutions. It is a shining example telling how an intergovernmental organization and a non-governmental research network cooperate on a wide range of activities, from biotechnology policy dialogue to training on IPM.

Although now an independent organization, APAARI's central office in Bangkok is co-located in the FAO regional office, and FAO is a member on two APAARI Standing Committees - the Asia Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology, and the Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System. We also collaborate during technical meetings, workshops and training sessions, and share information and knowledge in many fields.

In the same vein, I should like to emphasize the excellent and long-standing cooperation enjoyed between ANGOC and the FAO regional office in Bangkok. ANGOC has grown and developed over the years and, of particular interest to FAO, became a key player and Asian member of the International Planning Commission which catalyzed civil society inputs for the World Food Summit.

Allow me to emphasize that we welcome the timely initiative of APAARI and ANGOC under the generous sponsorship of GFAR to jointly organize this regional workshop. I can assure you that FAO is fully committed to work with you all at various levels; global, regional, national and local.

It is indeed our experience that working with civil society organizations enables FAO to increase the effectiveness and quality of its work in agriculture and food security. Through dialogues and consultation with NGOs and CSOs, FAO ensures that its decision-making, policies and scientific research and technical development and assistance programme reflect the interests of all sectors of society.

I applaud the inclusive approach taken by GFAR and APAARI to work closely with federations, associations and local groups representing farmers, fisherfolk and herders to ensure that the aspirations of the poor, the disadvantaged, the marginalized and the hungry are successfully voiced, and heard, and more importantly, acted upon.

Conclusion

While the region has made substantial inroads in eradicating poverty and food insecurity over the last three decades, ensuring access to food for the hungry will persist as a major challenge within the strategic horizon towards 2015. Agriculture's ability to respond to the demand for sustainable production will increasingly rely on its growth as a science and information-based sector.

The need for concerted action at national and regional levels to develop the institutional infrastructure for sustainable agriculture and rural development has become more pronounced, and imposes significant changes in the roles of government, NGOs, civil society organizations and farmers' organizations as well as in the mechanisms used by international organizations as both knowledge organizations and service providers.

Demand-driven participatory agricultural research and extension is key to the relevance and effectiveness of agricultural R&D in promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development. Institutional innovations are needed to make agricultural research and extension more sensitive to the needs of small farmers, in particular women and indigenous people.

Innovative support arrangements need to be developed to facilitate small farmer demand-driven participatory agricultural R&D, and more serious consideration should be given by international communities and governments in providing financial support to its partners, such as farmers' and non governmental organizations, as well as international and regional agricultural research networks – such as GFAR and APAARI.

Being an optimist I believe that together we can ultimately solve the problem of food for all. But critical problems are now facing our planet, in the long term that of climate change and its

impact on agriculture; meanwhile, the current soaring food prices worldwide is a wake up call, as it may nullify the last 7 years' efforts by international communities and could bring 100 million people in the world back to poverty, as the World Bank cautioned. These are the problems that need to be tackled head on.

Thank you.