



Report of the

FAO-VREDESEILANDEN Southeast Asia Sub-Regional Seminar on Enhancing Capacities of NGOs and Farmer Groups to Link Farmers to Market

9-12 May 2006 in Bali, Indonesia



Agricultural Management, Marketing and Finance Service, FAO

Vredeseilanden, Indonesia

Table of Contents

Acronyms	4
I. Background	5
Rationale of the Seminar	5
Objectives	6
Seminar Design	6
II. Opening Ceremony	10
III. Keynote Session	10
IV. Plenary Sessions	11
Session Highlights	12
V. Field Trip	20
VI. Workshop Discussions in Groups	23
VII. Closing Ceremony	29

List of Tables

Table 1. Seminar session objectives	8
Table 2. Group workshop session objectives	9
Table 3. Session 1A Highlights	12
Table 4. Session 1B Highlights	13
Table 5. Session 1C Highlights	14
Table 6. Session 1D Highlights	15
Table 7. Session 2A Highlights	16
Table 8. Session 2B Highlights	17
Table 9. Session 2C Highlights	18
Table 10. Session 3 Highlights	19
Table 11. Discussions with “Bali Fresh”	21
Table 12. Discussions with “Ady Processing”	22

List of Attachments

Attachment 1. Program	31
Attachment 2. Profile of NGO Participants	36
Attachment 3. Directory of Participants	41

Acronyms

AFA	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Development
AIDFI	Alternative Indigenous Development Foundation, Inc.
ANGOC	Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
APNFS	Asia Pacific Network on Food Sovereignty
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AsiaDHRRRA	Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia
BIMP	Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines
CenDHRRRA	Center for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia
CI	Consumers International
CIAT	Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (International Center for Tropical Agriculture)
COGENT	International Coconut Genetic Resources Network
CORDAID	Organization for Development Cooperation
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DHRRAW	Development of the Human Rural Resources in Asia Workshop
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FT	Food Teams
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (Technical arm of the German Development Agency)
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
IDE	International Development Enterprises
IPGRI	International Plant Genetics Research Institute
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
KDFI	Kasilak Development Foundation Inc.
LEISA	Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture
LGUs	Local Government Units
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NPI	Natural Products International
NTT/NTB	East Nusa Tenggara/West Nusa Tenggara
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRISM	Poverty Reduction through Irrigation and Smallholder Markets
R&D	Research & Development
SEA	Southeast Asia
SEC	Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission
SNV	The Netherlands Development Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VECO	Vredeseilanden Country Office
WTO	World Trade Organization

**FAO – VREDESEILANDEN Southeast Asia Sub-Regional Seminar on
Enhancing Capacities of NGOs and Farmer Groups
To Link Farmers to Markets**

9-12 May 2006

I. Background

Rationale of the Seminar

As a region, Southeast Asia (SEA) plays a key role in the global agri-food system as it accounts for 45 percent of the world's agricultural production and 30 percent of agriculture input use. The ten countries comprising it, namely, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), Myanmar, Brunei and Singapore, are agriculture-based, with the exception of the latter two.

For a region contributing much to global food supply, it is ironic to see a great number of small producers still in poverty and lacking in opportunities to find sustainable markets for agricultural produce. Identifying markets and consequently gaining access to them is something that most small family farmers cannot do by themselves.

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are increasingly recognizing that if they are to promote livelihoods diversification it is not sufficient to encourage farmers to produce new crops by providing inputs, credit, and extension advice. Such approaches have been shown to be unsatisfactory because they fail to take into account the market demand for the products, the supply chain or marketing system through which the products will have to reach the consumers, processors or exporters, and the potential profitability of the recommended production. Thus the great majority of NGOs are moving towards the "new paradigm" of encouraging farmers to carry out market-led production and of being supply-chain facilitators, rather than the old "charitable" approach, which had little chance of sustainability.

However, in order to encourage a market-oriented approach, NGOs also need new skills. Many recognize that they do not have these skills and are seeking external assistance. For example, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is working with CIAT to develop supply chain training materials. Others are trying to develop their own materials. There is often a lot of "reinventing the wheel" and those preparing training materials are not always well-equipped to do so.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is increasingly working with NGOs in other parts of the world and the response has been very enthusiastic. A proposal was therefore put forward to extend that collaboration to Southeast Asia to bring together FAO experts and NGO staff working on marketing linkage development in order to explore ways of improving collaboration to the benefit of NGOs and ultimately of the farmers. Such collaboration would also serve as an opportunity for FAO to articulate its development objectives in the field of agricultural marketing.

Vredeseilanden's initial venture into the field of marketing has been in support of sustainable agriculture through its country offices (VECO). Efforts have been focused on gaining insights to serve as input to a marketing intervention strategy formulation. The intervention of VECO, just like other service providers, has for years been production oriented, as program interventions have focused on enhanced agricultural production.

As development efforts gained ground, the problems to address became no longer how to produce but more of where to sell the produce. The objective of viable livelihood, however, remained distant for lack of incentives to produce beyond immediate consumption needs of farming households.

Thus VECO-Indonesia embarked on a multi-donor, multi-stakeholder umbrella program to gain a better understanding of marketing and what it entails and to contribute to enhancing market orientation of small-scale producers. The glaring finding of those initial initiatives is that, while gains were achieved, they were limited by the fact that most NGO partners were lacking in marketing orientation and skills to help farmer beneficiaries on a more sustainable level.

It is in this light that FAO, together with Vredeseilanden and its country offices in Southeast Asia (VECO Indonesia, VECO Vietnam and VECO Laos) organized a four-day seminar in Bali, Indonesia on 9-12 May 2006. (see **Attachment 1 for the Agenda**) The two institutions saw relevance to address the foregoing concerns, inviting country and regional NGOs to attend the seminar to discuss issues and concerns of linking farmers to markets. The following objectives were set for the seminar:

Objectives

The general aims were to provide a venue for discussion for the NGOs to articulate pressing issues and concerns on agricultural marketing and for NGOs and farmer groups to identify how best they can enhance their roles in assisting small producers to obtain greater returns from their produce.

Specifically the objectives were to:

1. Provide an overview on the state of agricultural marketing in Southeast Asia and the experiences to date in linking farmers to markets across the region;
2. Share and learn from the marketing initiatives and experiences of various NGOs operating in the region;
3. Identify priority areas that will lead to small producers being linked to dynamic and vibrant markets where they get better returns for their produce; and
4. Identify capacity building needs for NGOs to enable them to carry out better their chosen roles in the development of agricultural marketing in the region in the service and to the benefit of small producers.

Seminar Design

Keynote papers, plenary presentations and discussions, field visits, and group workshop sessions were the main features of the seminar. Two keynote papers were presented, followed by sub-sessions on market development/marketing issues, country experiences, and institutional initiatives/insights.

In particular, the seminar geared its technical sessions on emerging issues such as a) production and markets, b) meeting quality requirements at farm, village and consumer levels, c) organizing farmer groups and d) ensuring functional markets for small producers.

The groups' workshop, on the other hand, was designed to focus on critical questions that would be subject for discussion and deliberation among the participants. Objectives and outputs were likewise set to facilitate the workshop activities. (see Table 2)

Table 1. Seminar session objectives

Topics/ Sessions	Objectives
<p>Keynote Papers on:</p> <p>1. State of Agricultural Marketing in Southeast Asia (SEA)</p> <p>2. Approaches to Linking Producers to Markets</p>	<p>Provide an overview of marketing activities in the region to set the tone for the discussion, from the perspective of producers for whose benefit NGOs and farmer groups are working; and from the perspective of a donor/ development agency with varied experiences in the areas of agricultural marketing</p>
<p>Session 1: Towards a Better Understanding of Emerging Concerns</p> <p>Sub-session 1A Production and Markets</p>	<p>Highlight the link between farm-level decisions and practices with that of market requirements and provide a developed model within and outside the region to showcase the same.</p> <p>Share experiences in organizing farmers in value adding in terms of quality enhancement, niche marketing (organic certification) as well as new initiatives such as food teams where a group of households link directly with local farmers for their food supply.</p>
<p>Sub-session 1B Meeting Quality Requirements</p>	<p>Have a glimpse of quality requirement of supermarkets and how farmers could meet them and how quality enhancing technologies are transferred at the village enterprise level by a technology generating institution. The end point is the consumer so a consumer perspective will be shared.</p>
<p>Sub-session 1C Market Support Initiatives</p>	<p>Share recent initiatives of and insights gained from linking farmers to markets for an enhanced understanding of the trends and responses.</p>
<p>Sub-session 1D Market Development-Related Initiatives</p>	<p>To present recent initiatives to better understand driving forces that empower small producers and provide an example how they may be assisted.</p>
<p>Session 2: Agricultural Marketing Experiences, Issues, and Concerns</p> <p>Session 2A Country Initiatives: Sub-Mekong Region</p>	<p>Share country development initiatives of Sub-Mekong region NGOs with agricultural marketing and enterprise components.</p> <p>To have a glimpse of ongoing NGO initiatives at country level and have a first hand account of issues and concerns highlighting Sub-Mekong initiatives.</p>
<p>Sub-session 2B Country Initiatives: BIMP Region</p>	<p>Share development initiatives in the BIMP region of NGOs with agricultural marketing and enterprise components to have a glimpse of ongoing NGO initiatives and have a first hand account of issues and concerns</p>
<p>Sub-session 2C Regional Initiatives of NGOs</p>	<p>Share regional development initiatives of NGOs with regional reach and learn from experiences where partnership and cooperation can be attained towards linking farmers to markets</p>
<p>Session 3: Featured NGOs</p>	<p>Feature other NGOs to the group with the objective of showcasing particular experiences on linking farmers to markets, indigenous groups, women's group, and scientists</p>

Table 2. Group workshop session objectives

Workshops	Objectives	Inputs	Outputs
<p>Group 1 What are the major risks that farmers face in developing market-oriented production? What are the priority interventions for NGOs in addressing these risks?</p>	<p>Articulate and discuss the risks facing the farmers in linking them to markets and identify intervention strategies for NGOs to address these risks.</p>	<p>Keynote paper, technical updates and the sharing of marketing issues and concerns by sub-regions in addition to participants' individual experiences</p>	<p>Identification of risks and intervention strategies</p>
<p>Group 2 Given that the meeting has been informed of several examples of activities collapsing after the withdrawal of external support, how can NGOs and other organizations best ensure the sustainability of their interventions? How can successful and sustainable interventions best be replicated on a large scale without the need for widespread NGO and donor support?</p>	<p>What specific roles should NGOs and farmer groups assume to be more effective in a sustainable manner towards helping small producers find income-enhancing market options.</p>	<p>Presentations on country and regional initiatives Discussions on functional markets for small producers and insights gained from field trips</p>	<p>Model interventions of NGOs that can be replicated in a sustainable and cost-effective manner</p>
<p>Group 3 What capacity building inputs (training, materials, etc) are needed to better equip NGOs and farmer groups? In particular, what subjects need to be covered, what should be the focus, and what presentation style should be adopted (for training materials) Who can assist NGOs and farmer groups with their work on agricultural marketing and enterprise development? How can communications between NGOs active in agricultural marketing development be promoted and improved?</p>	<p>Assess and evaluate NGOs and farmer groups' current marketing and institutional capacities. Identify needs which when met will enable them to better assist small producers in addressing identified concerns. Specify capacity-enhancing inputs in terms of training materials, among others, which can be provided by FAO (or others) to help achieve a match between needs and service delivery provision</p>	<p>Insights gained from session presentations and the discussions on emerging issues and concerns</p>	<p>Identified agricultural marketing and enterprise related capacity building needs of NGOs to be of better service to small producers</p>

II. Opening Ceremony

The sub-regional seminar was formally opened on 9 May 2006. **Dr. Mieke Leermakers**, Country Representative of VECO Indonesia welcomed the 50 participants from Southeast Asia representing various sectors such as the NGOs, private sector, government, and research institutions. Her message was geared towards finding ways to work together to address the common concerns on how small farmers would be linked with markets ensuring that they get a good and fair price for their agricultural produce. She emphasized that the seminar would be a great opportunity for sharing and exchanging different experiences from which they could learn from each other. At the same time participants should reflect on their responsibilities to farmers, and in the end go home with new ideas on the work to be done. She encouraged everyone to help make the seminar successful and fruitful.

Andrew Shepherd, Marketing Economist of Agricultural Marketing Group of FAO, Rome discussed the seminar rationale and objectives. He highlighted the need to revisit approaches of NGOs on sustainable agriculture emphasizing efforts that take into account market demand as well as processes within the entire chain from production to markets. He mentioned that NGOs have limited marketing skills and that useful ideas on what works and what does not work will be drawn from the exchanges of experiences among the participants. With the seminar, FAO will be assisted in knowing the problems participants are facing and how FAO can assist. This seminar would also be an opportunity for FAO to disseminate information on the available training materials on agricultural marketing. It would also help in the identification of new topics for training materials useful in linking farmers with markets. This activity would be the avenue for participants to learn from each other and explore the possibilities on how to cooperate in the future.

Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Regional Marketing Advisor for Asia of VECO Indonesia formally introduced the 50 participants, as follows: 34 participants from BIMP region (22 participants were from Indonesia, 5 from Malaysia, 7 from Philippines), 12 from Sub-Mekong region (3 were from Cambodia, 3 from Lao PDR, 2 from Thailand, 4 from Vietnam), and one from Australia, together with FAO participants. At this point she also acknowledged the support given by CORDAID. (**Attachment 2 and Attachment 3**)

III. Keynote Session

There were two keynote speakers. The first speaker was **Mr. Rene Salazar**, the Executive Director of the Philippine-based SEARICE. His presentation, entitled "Empowering Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Managing Markets for Poverty Alleviation", addressed two emerging and important characteristics of farmers today: they have moved from subsistence agriculture to a production system that incorporates strong market orientation; and second, they have moved from extensive and low input agriculture to intensive and high input production systems. He also pointed out that Asia's agriculture markets are quite strong, and trade between the region and with the EU and North America is also increasing.

On CSOs, **Mr. Salazar** spoke about how CSOs can be effective in assisting farmers to manage and cope with emerging market demands. He shared the sentiment that CSOs' involvement in agricultural marketing is a new

development arena, further recognizing the need of such seminars, workshops, and training to orient development workers in assisting farmers to link to markets. He stressed the need to manage markets, as he concluded that “conflicting objectives of stakeholders are unavoidable if market forces are left alone.” Managing and using market access to alleviate poverty, according to Mr. Salazar, is a new challenge for CSOs.

The second keynote speaker was **Mr. Shepherd**. In his presentation entitled “Approaches to Linking Producers to Markets”, he began with a description of agri-food systems world-wide and the “rapid transformation” that it is currently undergoing. He then cited examples of different types of market linkage. A number of factors were then analyzed as they affect the success of these farmer/producer linkages with markets. He emphasized some of the lessons learned from these factors by citing previous experiences within and outside the region. He stressed that small sustainable projects are much better than big unsustainable ones, even though large projects may achieve short-term success.

During the open forum after the two keynote paper presentations, some clarifications were sought. One of the issues that was clarified was on the conclusion that an NGO may have difficulties linking very poor farmers to markets as it may not be sustainable in the long run. This statement was made on the premise that poorest of the poor farmers lack the natural and financial resources to supply the market on a sustainable and reliable basis and are often too remote from markets. One of the participants from Vietnam raised this observation as he believed that even poor farmers have many things to sell in the market. Most of the issues that were raised were about how to enable resource-poor farmers to benefit from linking in the market that demands efficiency from them.

IV. Plenary Sessions

The four-day program was divided into plenary sessions (two days), field visit (one day), and group workshops (one day). The plenary sessions were further divided into three that included the following:

- Session 1: Towards a better understanding of emerging concerns
- Session 2: Agricultural marketing experiences, issues and concerns
- Session 3: Featured NGOs

Session 1 featured four parts where the speakers focused on production and market linkages (sub-session A), meeting quality and market requirements (sub-session B), market support delivery (sub-session C), and market development initiatives (sub-session D).

Session 2 consisted of three parts where the presentations focused more on country experiences of NGOs who shared the challenges of linking farmers to markets in their respective country or areas of operation. The first part grouped the countries in the sub-Mekong region (sub-session A), while the second part grouped the countries in the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines (BIMP) corridor (sub-session B). The third part consisted of NGO presentations with regard to regional activities in Southeast Asia (sub-session C).

Session 3 featured four special NGOs with specific activities involving linking farmers to markets. The four speakers, from the Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia, shared their current activities as they assist farmers benefit from their linkage to the markets.

Presentations can be downloaded from:

<http://www.fao.org/ag/ags/subjects/en/agmarket/linkages/bali.html>

Session Highlights

Session 1 discussed emerging concerns on linking farmers to markets. Session 1A on production and linkages presented differing views on whether to link farmers to markets or markets to farmers. A presentation by a private firm in Thailand also showed how farmer groups can break into the export market without major intervention from the government. (see Table 3)

Table 3. Session 1A Highlights

Session 1A Production and Markets	Highlights
David Hitchcock, FAO From Markets to Farmers or Linking Farmers to Markets	-presented the issue of globalization as dramatic change affecting small farmers leading to concerns of urban and rural poverty -emphasized the extreme importance of risks to small farmers because of their limited access to resources -pointed out that farmers need to have access to information -highlighted the importance of capacity building in areas of project identification skills and proposal development for NGOs to ensure that they would impact on farmers
Session 1A Production and Markets	Highlights
Mieke Leermakers VECO Indonesia Food Teams: Farmers to Consumers: A Case from the North	-presented the system of food teams (FT) and how they worked sustainably in Belgium; consumers have direct linkage with producers -focused on FT support to sustainable agriculture and fair prices for farmers -imparted the importance of conducting participatory self-assessment evaluation of the FT concept -shared to the participants the possibility of adopting the concept to Bali and other parts of Asia
Paichayon Uathaveekul Exotic Farms Thailand Breaking into the Organic Export Market	-reported on the prerequisites for breaking into export markets and on how to sustain exports -focused on the standards and certification procedure according to country standards -cited the need to be familiar with the modern retail chains (70%) as the emerging market for organic products -discussed the significance of traceability in addressing the consistency in product quality -emphasized that the critical key in market sustainability is the acceptance of the reality of market forces, thus the need to really understand the market; farmers should produce what the market demands.
Issue/s Raised	What are the risks/ cost/ impact/ losses and gains in bringing farmers to markets?

Session 1B discussed quality and other market requirements which farmers are currently facing. Speakers from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines talked about three major commodities, namely banana, coffee, and mango, discussing market requirements and quality enhancements from the point of view of the market or the consumers. (see Table 4)

Session 1C discussed market support delivery where the presenters discussed financing and R&D experiences to assist small farmers in their marketing activities. (see Table 5)

The last session for Day 1 considered market development initiatives to assist in linking farmers to market. Cases from Vietnam, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea (PNG) were presented. Trends in the retailing sector, particularly supermarkets in relation to marketing of horticultural products in Indonesia, were presented and discussed. (see Table 6)

Table 4. Session 1B Highlights

Session 1 B Meeting Quality Requirements	Highlights
Joel Tukan ICRAF Indonesia Market Chain Improvement: The Case of Banana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presented current program on agro-forestry innovations and livelihood enhancements and described current efforts to link banana farmers to markets - cited lessons learned and success points in linking the banana farmers to traders, recommendations are made for replication in other ICRAF projects
Alice DCruz Consumers International Malaysia Quality Requirements for Coffee at the Consumer Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - described the power of consumers over the market - described basic food consumer requirements (food should be safe; must be of good quality; there is variety of choices, there is relevant information available) - video documentation on four types of sustainable certified coffee production processes in Brazil was shown and assessed the benefits to consumers and growers of coffee
Ana GM Abejuela Philippine Embassy Belgium Quality and More: Accessing the EU Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - described four major critical success points in the marketing of Philippine mangoes to Europe - cited Philippine experience in marketing a “unique” tropical product to the European market - emphasized the need for market research and product innovation to cater to requirements of target markets
Issue/s Raised	Can farmers produce in volume, with high degree of sustainability, reliability, quality, and competitive prices to break into the export market?

Table 5. Session 1C Highlights

Session 1 C Market Support Initiatives	Highlights
<p>Syed Jalaludin Rakyat Bank Malaysia</p> <p>Small Farmers' Financial Window</p>	<p>-presented the agricultural scenario in Malaysia which is mainly concentrated on plantation crops with smallholders managed in conglomerates to be more efficient</p> <p>-discussed that soft loans are being offered and administered by Rakyat Bank of Malaysia making sure that the funds are recovered through repayments</p> <p>-shared the difficulties experienced in assessing loans because of the usual case of farmers having no skills in record keeping as well as cashflow management and emphasized that NGOs can play a great role in building capacity in this area</p> <p>-also mentioned the need to systematize risk assessment of farmers and to formulate insurance schemes for farming activities to ensure that farmers would not be bankrupt when misfortune occurred</p> <p>-added the need for small farmers to understand change management because agriculture is also changing</p>
Session 1 C Market Support Initiatives	Highlights
<p>Nerlita M. Manalili VECO Indonesia</p> <p>Understanding Restructured Markets through R&D</p>	<p>-explained that small farmers should adapt to agricultural systems as a result of market restructuring and that information at all levels is crucial in serving the farmers</p> <p>-cited the Southeast Asia research results of the Regoverning Markets project of the International Institute for Environmental Development</p> <p>-presented also the findings during the global forum sponsored by GFAR which identified the areas of activities for NGOs as being social capital (participatory system collaborative process, conflict resolution), institutional arrangement and support (good governance, institutional innovation), global trade / marketing (market linkages, impact of production cost and environment)</p>
<p>Menno Keizer IPGRI</p> <p>Community Development Marketing Research and Strategies</p>	<p>-discussed the activities by IPGRI and COGENT on working together with the community in conducting participatory market research where farmers are involved in data gathering and analysis with the results presented to the community</p> <p>-concentrated on coconut production and its by-products as sustainable basis for increasing farm productivity and farm income</p> <p>-presented project experiences in Sri Lanka (virgin coconut oil), Vietnam (coffee) and Philippines (coco-sugar)</p> <p>-emphasized the importance of including market research and business development in research proposals (including the budgetary requirements)</p>
<p>Issue/s Raised</p>	<p>Access of farmers to credit and R&D activities must be demand driven.</p>

Table 6. Session 1D Highlights

Session 1D Market Development- Related Initiatives	Highlights
Jo Cadilhon FAO-RAP, Bangkok Trader-led Vegetable Market Development in Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presented the case of the butterhead lettuce wholesale supplier in Ho Chi Minh City's local market who organized local farmers and suppliers to produce top-quality lettuce - cited ways to improve supply chains and the benefits that can be derived by farmers in an improved chain
Sandredo/ Ronnie Natawidjaja Bimandiri/ CAPAS, Indonesia Supermarkets and Horticultural Developments in Indonesia; Dynamics of Supermarket Supplier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presented the rise of supermarkets in Indonesia and cited the decreasing market share of <i>warungs</i> (local retail stores) - presented issues and challenges faced by supermarkets and farmers in sourcing quality fresh fruits and vegetables - cited the experiences of Bimandiri as a primary actor in the supply chain (being a wholesaler) linking farmers and supermarkets for a beneficial partnership
Peter Batt Curtin University, Perth, Australia Enhancing Profitability Via Price Premium for Quality: The Case of PNG Coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presented an overview of the world coffee industry; and coffee production in PNG - identified three main issues that needed to be addressed to improve quality of coffee in PNG - cited nine lessons learned so that farmers will have better chance of improving their coffee production
Issue/s Raised	Impact of changing market requirements on farmers, e.g. hypermarkets and supermarkets, specialty shops, and high-end market

On Day 2, **Mr. Shepherd** presented the FAO Initiatives on agricultural marketing. He mentioned the available FAO marketing publications which are downloadable from the FAO website. He also distributed CD copies of the said agricultural marketing publications. He expressed the importance of creativity in disseminating information and the need for marketing publications to be attractive and easy to use. He mentioned booklets produced by FAO to advise on diversification. These are designed to highlight the possibilities of various agricultural activities and commodities. The FAO website providing examples of market linkages was mentioned. He also encouraged participants to share their experiences by providing examples of marketing linkages for the web site. He mentioned the involvement of FAO on Technical Assistance projects in Southeast Asia, largely in the field of market information, extension, and training material development. He emphasized that FAO was not a donor but could assist in developing training materials, if resources were available.

Mr. David Hitchcock added that the FAO Regional Office in Thailand is interested in the issues NGOs are facing and that FAO's comparative advantage is in terms of being neutral on issues and responding to issues by putting them on the regional agenda for discussion. The issues of interest to FAO are (a) models of market chains to enable farmers to link with markets in a sustainable manner; (b) improving small farmer access to financial credit; (c) message identification and delivery, specifically on farm management with emphasis of helping farmers minimize risk on linking farmers to markets.

Session 2 consisted of three sub-sessions, focusing mainly on country experiences and activities of NGOs in the region. Session 2A grouped the countries in the Sub-Mekong region, such as Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Thailand. (see Table 7)

Table 7. Session 2A Highlights

Session 2A Country Initiatives: Sub-Mekong Region	Highlights
Thong Vang Natural Products International Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - highlighted the importance of access to infrastructure and logistics when marketing agricultural products in Lao PDR - emphasized the importance of support services like extension and training activities in linking farmers to markets
Nguyen Kim Hai CRS Vietnam Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported that participation of local institutions and linkages with other research organization like CIAT are important in Vietnam - Characterized the difficulties encountered in setting up and sustaining agribusiness in Vietnam
Phongsak Thamrongratanasilp Organic Asparagus Farmers Group Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared the success story of Thai farmers engaged in organic asparagus exports - Cited the essential elements in product selection and marketing, such as technical background, basic research, secondary information, (statistics, available market studies), demand for product, availability of logistics, buyers with fair practices - Emphasized the importance of good relationships with other players in the chain - Pointed out the need for assistance in accessing market information particularly in remote areas.

Sub-session 2B grouped the countries of Indonesia, Philippines, and Malaysia. All three country paper presenters discussed the various successes and difficulties of their respective institutions in their efforts to link farmers to markets. (see Table 8)

In sub-session 2C, NGOs with regional activities presented their own experiences. Two NGOs from the Philippines, one from Cambodia and another from Lao PDR presented papers. (see Table 9)

Session 3 featured four special NGOs with specific activities on linking farmers to markets in their areas of operations. Two NGOs from the Philippines, one from Vietnam, and one from an international NGO with offices in Indonesia presented their papers. (see Table 10)

Table 8. Session 2B Highlights

Session 2B Country Initiatives: BIMP Region	Highlights
<p>Agusdin Pulungan WAMTI</p> <p>Indonesia</p>	<p>-mentioned that farmers have the position of price takers in the production chain, price disparity occurs from farmers and consumers, and the question of who benefits is relevant</p> <p>-discussed the small farmers' lack of linkage with the market (wholesaler, supermarket and even agro-industry in the region) through the examples of supply chains of star fruit, rice paddy, and vegetables</p> <p>-described the changing market because of the mushrooming of supermarkets, which has effects on government policies and international market agreements</p> <p>-expressed the need for NGOs to capacitate small farmer skills in terms of business plan preparation (what to plan, how to plan, how to price products, and how much would be the income) and increase competitiveness by improving management</p>
<p>Joemil S. Montebon KDFI</p> <p>Philippines</p>	<p>-presented the strategic framework on partnership and community development and focused on the discussion of community development and environmental management in addressing development issues</p> <p>-highlighted the agri-enterprise development project using the CIAT- CRS Learning Alliance from agro-enterprise development with direct participation of farmers and interaction with NGOs, LGUs and the business sector</p> <p>-presented several lessons/insights from the project and emphasized the need to manage farmers' organizations in a businesslike manner and the need for continuous networking and engaging more institutions as partners for development</p>
<p>Anisa Isahak WIJADI</p> <p>Malaysia</p>	<p>-described the Women's Innovation Self Development Movement geared towards biodiversity-based sustainable livelihood related to herbal herbs and plants for single mothers in Malaysia</p> <p>-shared the experience on biodiversity community awareness and the promotion of indigenous knowledge on the creation of livelihood from the extraction of essential oil as well as establishment of organic gardens for food and medicinal purposes</p>

Table 9. Session 2C Highlights

Session 2C Regional Initiatives	Highlights
<p>Nathaniel Don Marques</p> <p>Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -identified issues in marketing organic products in SEA -presented country situations on organic products in 4 countries -identified capacity building needs for SEA -called for the formulation of an industry master plan and organic standards and certification process for the region
<p>Lany Rebagay</p> <p>Asia Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRAA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cited 11 important lessons and insights on current efforts to link farmers to markets, among them, that management of agro-based enterprises requires the right mix of home-grown farmer entrepreneur, professional managers, crops and industry experts -cited 4 regional challenges in terms of engaging farmers to agribusiness, such as capacity building of NGOs in marketing, and continuing advocacy on agricultural trade
<p>Long Dimanche</p> <p>Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Development (AFA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -described the issues faced by a typical Asian farmer in terms of production and technology, human resources, farmers' rights, marketing and trade -described typical effects of trade liberalization on Asian farmers -shared AFA's current efforts in responding to marketing issues being faced by Asian farmers
<p>Ros Kimsan</p> <p>International Development Enterprises (IDE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -presented a current project of IDE called PRISM – Poverty Reduction through Irrigation and Smallholder Markets -presented the PRISM approach in Cambodia and a case study in Nepal demonstrating IDE's approach towards poverty reduction

Table 10. Session 3 Highlights

Session 3 Featured NGOs	Highlights
<p>Aladino Moraca</p> <p>Alternative Indigenous Development Foundation, Inc.</p>	<p>-presented the problems of upland communities, such as low productivity, migration of farmers to urban centers, low sustainable livelihood options, no access to government support in terms of infrastructure and lack of access to market information</p> <p>-discussed the options in addressing the problems by the implementation of water system project in upland communities using appropriate technologies (hydraulic ram pump), integration of sustainable livelihood options and organic farming technologies, marketing and research and development support services</p> <p>-mentioned the effects and impacts of the projects in the community and focused on developing the capacities of the community through integration of technologies and direct involvement of small farmers</p>
Session 3 Featured NGOs	Highlights
<p>Phan Thi Nguyen Minh</p> <p>Institute for Research & Cooperation</p>	<p>-described how NGOs support farmers in the market, considering the current situation in Vietnam</p> <p>-showed a video on the activities in genetic conservation of a project funded by Global Environment where farmers are interested in upgrading the varieties of banana in order to make farming a profitable venture</p> <p>-discussed the importance of organizing farmers into associations, helping them to access information and at the same time developing relationship between farmers and businesses/enterprises</p>
<p>Koronado Apuzen</p> <p>Foundation for Agrarian Reform Cooperatives</p>	<p>-presented the situation of the agrarian reform beneficiaries engaged in banana production and exportation</p> <p>-shared experience on linking farmers to international markets through joint ventures with Japanese company in conventional and organic bananas</p> <p>-emphasized the niche market on organic agricultural products in the international market</p>
<p>Arman Ginting</p> <p>Oxfam GB</p>	<p>-presented the case of brick production as reconstruction work of Oxfam for tsunami victims</p> <p>-described Oxfam's intervention in making brick production more efficient through technical assistance in introducing/fabricating machines that increased productivity to meet market demand, with the cooperative paying for the machine</p>

V. Field Trip

The site/field visits were designed to complement the theoretical concepts discussed during the seminar and to lay the groundwork for the group workshop activities. The enterprises visited were Bali Fresh and Adi Processing .

Women vegetable farmers have been linked to the market by Bali Fresh, a trading company. This was a good example of where a company had developed linkages itself without the support of an NGO. Bali Fresh had identified women farmers partly from a social welfare perspective but also because women are considered more reliable repayers of loans. It provided inputs for the women on credit and maintained technical and coordinating staff in the area of the farms, where it also ran a research station. Although the company stressed that it ran a purely commercial operation, it had subsequently been successful in attracting donor support.

The field trip also visited a small-scale agro-processor, Adi Processing, which had developed a range of products based on sweet potato. This tuber has been widely grown in Bali but has now largely been replaced by rice. The entrepreneur also mixes business with social aims as he plans to encourage women to sell sweet potato ice cream in the villages, instead of more commercial but less nutritious ice cream. Other products developed include a soft drink and “brownies” made with a 70 percent wheat, 30 percent sweet potato flour. All products are being marketed under the “Sweet Purple” label.

The field visits also gave the opportunity for the participants to interact with the owners of the enterprises. (see Table 11 for the Bali Fresh Interview and Table 12 for the Adi Processing Interview)

Table 11. Bali Fresh Interview

Questions	Answers
What is the key to the success of Bali Fresh's marketing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to know information in the market chain You should have commitment of your clients Communication is essential
How do you get the Lettuce seeds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From different shops in Indonesia, or sometimes from international sources in Thailand and Holland.
How do you manage the nursery and succeed? How do you access the soil condition, fertilizer need and watering?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We conduct simple research (not too much science) and involve and allow the farmers to participate. The important thing is to develop the kind of lettuce specified by the market. We consider the technical aspects of needed water for irrigation and maturity of lettuce for harvesting. The research team also included students from different areas and fields of specialization e.g. Aceh, from Java island and presently we have a student from Wageningen University in Holland.
What is the impact of your project on local people/community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We generated employment in the community Farmers are producing agricultural products and therefore derive income from the activities, thus improving their lives Some of the female farmers cannot read and write so we are strengthening their capability with reading and writing courses.
What are the other impacts you can foresee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are planning to organize and establish a school for children in the area. This will make access to education easier, nearer and reduce the cost of transportation. This idea is supported by the local government. One of the hotels that are no longer being occupied due to absence of tourists can be converted into a school.
What is the term for the land you are using in your business?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are renting the land with long-term contract of 5 years. We have agreed that local authorities (head of village) will provide security guarantee and no extreme increase on rental cost. We have the kind of social accountability, e.g. education, income, etc and vice versa from local people. This is a partnership project. Financially we have some support from: ACCESS (Australian project), Coldchain, HPSP (Dutch Cooperative), PT. Nusantara, PT. Jero, UPM (Indonesian business institution). However, this support was not the driver for the project, which began without external assistance.
How do you manage Bali Fresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I manage Bali Fresh. However, we are now planning to hire a consultant for 6 months to set-up the revolving fund we are managing. Bali Fresh tries to ensure that communications with partners, suppliers, market, and female farmers are fully transparent. We are looking for a female farmers project officer who is Balinese with high social skills.
How do you meet market demand?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to know what the market wants and needs. Have reliable supply of your products. There is a need to have open communication with market to know its needs and address it.
How do you achieve your payback period and how long will you achieve it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payback period will be after 2 to 2,5 years, if bank interest is normal. If more than 2.5 years then it will be risky /dangerous for the business.
Do you use pesticides? How do you address environment issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic farming here is impossible. We need pesticides, but we are working with principle of "responsible growing". It means we use pesticides or chemicals if needed for plant survival and growth. We do not use them every day. We observe the crops every day and ensure that chemical use is very minimal.
How do you ensure continuous supply of your products especially during peak season?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We buy from other suppliers and we make different packaging to differentiate it from our original product (BALI FRESH). We make use that we always have a good supply plan.

Table 12 Adi Processing Interview

Questions	Answers
Did you test market the ice cream?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community alone has 600 farmers with family members • We educate customers that in our ice cream there is beta-carotene. • 70% cocoa solid; higher than what they usually use commercially. Other company uses palm oil and as an effect, the consumer will have sore throat • We already tested that when a processor uses sweeteners and preservatives, the result is sore throat, its guaranteed.
How do you organize sweet potato farmers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I work with the department of agriculture and they have special task to alleviate poverty. I use the group to grow the sweet potato then when they harvest we divide the harvest into two, 50% goes to the farmers and 50% I will get. Then I teach them how to make flour and take the half of the production. It is an agreement.
Why do you engage in the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It all about earning money and at the same time helping the community • There is a crisis in Indonesia and wheat is expensive so I look for alternative and sweet potato (purple one) is very suitable
How do you make the sweet potato flour?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun dry the sweet potato then we have small electric milling machine. There are by-products, the skin of sweet potato is being used for fertilizer and the oil for cooking oil and beauty soap
Where do you get the technology?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From FAO and the internet. I do research too.

VI. Workshop Discussions in Groups

The last day of the conference saw the participants being divided into three groups to tackle issues that arose during the plenary sessions. The participants were tasked to elect a chair and a secretary who would facilitate the activities, and were given two hours to discuss and prepare a resolution to be presented in the subsequent plenary session. Each group was composed of participants representing, as much as possible, the different countries and institutions present in the conference.

The workshop questions that were tackled by the participants were:

1. What are the major risks that farmers face in developing market-oriented production? What are the priority interventions for NGOs in addressing these risks?

2. Given that the meeting has been informed of several examples of activities collapsing after the withdrawal of external support, how can NGOs and other organizations best ensure the sustainability of their interventions?

How can successful and sustainable interventions best be replicated on large scale without the need for widespread NGO and donor support?

3. What capacity building inputs (training, materials, etc) are needed to better equip NGOs and farmer groups? In particular, what subjects need to be covered, what should be the focus, and what presentation style should be adopted (for training materials)?

Who can assist NGOs and farmer groups with their work on agricultural marketing and enterprise development?

How can communications between NGOs active in agricultural marketing development be promoted and improved?

Presentation of Group Reports

Group 1

Question 1a: What are the major risks that farmers face in developing market-oriented production? What are the priority interventions for NGOs in addressing these risks?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge and understanding of the market • Lack/ Inadequate technical knowledge of the product • No baseline information from other experience and practices resulting in resistance to change. • The ability and capability to manage market information. • Lack of access to capital/ financial support • Engaging in massive production with no market-link.
Question 1b: What are the priority interventions for NGOs in addressing these risks?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Proper Education on Managing Market Information and Market System. • Technical Support to improve yield and quality. • Model Presentation (showcasing). • Linkaging with the market. • Promote proper farming practices to meet quality requirement of the market • Encourage market-driven production • Facilitate access to capital/ financial support.
Question 2a: How can NGOs and other organizations best ensure the sustainability of their interventions?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizing the Farmers into Farmer Groups <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. "Seeing the value of working together" b. "Keeping the promise" 2. Proper Education and Capability Building on the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Product quality b. Logistical Support c. Quantity and Sustaining the Volume
Question 2b: How can successful and sustainable interventions best be replicated on a large scale without the need for widespread NGO and donor support?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commercial network 2. Engaging other players, or working with other Institutions such as the business community
Question 3a: What capacity building inputs (training, materials, etc) are needed to better equip NGOs and farmer groups? In particular, what subjects need to be covered, what should be the focus, and what presentation style should be adopted (for training materials)?
<i>Farmer Groups</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding the Market b. Product Development <i>NGOs</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Documentation and b. Communicating
Question 3b: Who can assist NGOs and farmer groups with their work on agricultural marketing and enterprise development?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Research Institutions b. Business/ Private Sector
Question 3c: How can communications between NGOs active in agricultural marketing development be promoted and improved?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Through networking - Local first then expand

Group 2

Question 2a: How can NGOs and other organizations best ensure the sustainability of their interventions?

1. **Strengthening & Capacity Building for local organizations / farmers' groups**
 - Local leadership
 - Building on local potential
 - Entrepreneurial culture & business concept
 - Let actors in market decide what they want
2. **Strategies:**
 - Role of NGO
 - Phasing out strategy
 - Unsubsidized interventions (e.g. no per diem, pay for services)
 - Specialize
3. **Policy and government support**
4. **Business strategy development**
 - Ensure profitability
 - Target groups increase income
 - NGOs should support business
 - Ensure quality standard of products
5. **Market information development**
 - Market information at village level
6. **Supply chain development**

Question 2b: How can successful and sustainable interventions best be replicated on a large scale without the need for widespread NGO and donor support?

1. Identification of best practices - mapping
2. Documentation and dissemination through appropriate media
3. Promotion:
 - Learning visits
 - Demonstrations
 - Workshops
 - Multi-stakeholder events
4. Networking:
 - Alliances to institutions
 - Collective marketing groups
5. Advocacy:
 - Policy support (e.g. infrastructure, transport, support for micro-business)
 - Consumer awareness
6. Involvement of local government
7. Support for service delivery:
 - Credit
 - Communications
 - Infrastructure
8. Paradigm Shift
 - "Business is part of sustainable development"

Group 3

Question 3a: What capacity building inputs (training, materials, etc) are needed to better equip NGOs and farmer groups? In particular, what subjects need to be covered, what should be the focus, and what presentation style should be adopted (for training materials)?
<p>Training needs of farmers' groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to analyse market needs and market information to make better decisions• Technical aspects on quality and quantity of the product and increased appreciation of local products, indigenous knowledge and plants• Build up entrepreneurial marketing skills and mentality: making business plans, cost analysis...• How to network and build relationships to understand market and consumer needs• Strengthening of farmers' organisations for better sustainability
<p>What are the needs of NGOs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical knowledge for increased production, and products for (niche) markets• Market research and analysis• Understanding the current system through a culturally and gender-sensitive approach• Adapting NGO strengths and capacities into the area of marketing• Project implementation funding
Question 3b: Who can assist NGOs and farmer groups with their work on agricultural marketing and enterprise development?
<p>Who will assist farmers' groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGOs have clear function to play catalyst between farmers and the market and government. They should help farmers meet actors in the market to increase their marketing horizon (Actors, Activities, Resources)• Government authorities have the capacity to train farmers (technology and links with consumers) but there are constraints in resources and attitudes• Religious institutions• Important for these to link farmers with a customer
<p>Who will assist NGOs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business corporations and private enterprises• International NGOs• International organisations• National and local governments• Universities and research institutes
Question 3c: How can communications between NGOs active in agricultural marketing development be promoted and improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experiential learning• Farmers fields schools for marketing• DVDs and films of success stories• Training material and modules (cartoons)• Directory of traders and international customers
<p>Role for FAO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing an overview of the current training tools for experiential learning and analysis in marketing• Develop and provide new tools on marketing, which can be adapted to national contexts

Workshop Synthesis

After the three groups reported to the body their workshop output, **Mr. Shepherd** was tasked to synthesize and present the workshop conclusions. There were nine points that he identified as important and critical issues that were presented on the floor. However, while the participants had sufficiently covered all the important issues and concerns on linking farmers to markets, **Mr. Shepherd** observed that much had been left out on how to address those issues.

The nine points that were identified were:

1. Linking farmers to markets: What does it mean?

In simple terms, linking farmers to markets is just providing avenues for farmers and traders to meet. It can also simply mean providing farmers with market information such as prices. It can also mean allowing farmers and traders, exporters, supermarket owners, to meet in an informal and harmonious environment where they can talk about prices, contracts, quality and delivery among other things. Linking farmers to markets, thus, does not have to be a very sophisticated activity.

2. Farmers' production capacities: Will they meet new demands (quantity, quality, reliability) of the markets?

Markets require new standards of quality, in high volumes, and in a high degree of reliability in terms of consistency and regularity of delivery from farms to markets. Do farmers have the production capacity to conform to the demands of buyers?

Will these demands require new linkages to bring farmers to markets? Can the private sector on its own provide the linkage? Will NGOs be able to work with the private sector in linking it to the farmers?

3. Communicating needs

NGOs have an important role to play on the question of communication and understanding, and in bringing people together.

4. Market Information

Market information is an important aspect in linking farmers to markets. There is a felt need, for example, to develop a directory of traders – local traders, local markets, local agro-processors – according to some participant NGOs.

5. Finance

Although financing was considered as important as marketing activities, Mr. Shepherd pointed out that the participants, while recognizing its importance, did not talk much about it. He then asked what is the role of NGOs in finance.

As with marketing, NGOs should not be directly involved in providing finance. Mr. Shepherd mentioned that NGOs should aim to work through micro-finance organizations, or through rural development banks.

6. Partner NGOs

Mr. Shepherd related experiences in Africa where major NGOs are dealing directly with the farmers. In SEA on the other hand hundreds of smaller NGOs in local areas are working in partnership with larger, international NGOs. In Africa, the staff of major NGOs are targeted for training, while in SEA, one has to work with the staff of the many smaller NGOs.

7. Capacity Building

What sort of training should be provided; what sort of training materials needed to be developed; how do these training materials reach the staff of smaller local NGOs; what sort of local institutions should be used to provide the training; what institutions exist for such purposes?

Aside from these questions, the question of funding of capacity building also needs to be addressed.

8. Farm Management Skills

It is important that farmers develop farm management skills, such as record keeping, budgeting, understanding risk at farm level, etc. Farmers also need to know how to farm profitably, aside from knowing the market.

9. Networking

Everyone in the workshop talked about networking. But nobody said how networking is to be undertaken. Who should link to who? There is no international organization of NGOs, for example, that could facilitate linkages and information exchange. There is no website where one can publicize a meeting or a book that might be useful for NGOs. There is no NGO website where you can “talk” on a regular basis. There is not yet an international magazine of NGOs.

Where do we network? How do we network? At the local level? At the country level? At the international level? Who is the one going to do it? Someone has to set up a website to facilitate networking.

After **Mr. Shepherd's** synthesis of points raised during the workshop, **Dr. Manalili** commented on the workshop conclusions. She remarked that the problem required a multi-sectoral approach. **Dr. Manalili** encouraged NGO participants to incorporate a supply chain analysis perspective in analyzing problems.

On how things are to be addressed after identifying the issue of networking, **Dr. Manalili** reported that, while there is no international network of NGOs, there are existing networks or associations at the regional level. Her suggestion was to have a listing of associations or networks at the regional or even sub-regional level. She premised this on the fact that there were instances when smaller NGOs in a particular locality were not even aware of what other NGOs were doing in the same locality. From the Indonesian end, **Dr. Manalili** suggested that the listing can be started with a network of international NGOs working on a per area basis, indicating what they are doing, not necessarily in marketing but also in other development activities.

VII. Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony began with a *Response Message* from one of the participants, **Ms. Lany Rebagay** of AsiaDHRAA. She thanked the organizers of the seminar, VECO and FAO, for a well-planned program that also allowed interaction among participants, and where new inspirations and encouragement could be drawn to work more for the benefits of their respective stakeholders. She reiterated the reason why there is a need to empower farmers by connecting them to the markets, and to make markets respond to farmers not only from an efficiency objective but from an equity objective as well. Her parting words encouraged each NGO present to be more focused in its activities, and to exert more efforts towards networking.

After the *Response Message* of **Ms. Rebagay**, the Certificates of Appreciation were distributed and handed over to the speakers and participants by the organizers. A compact disk (CD) was also distributed containing the electronic file copies of the presentation of the speakers, photos, profile of participating NGOs, and the directory of the seminar participants.

Mr. Shepherd in his *Closing Remarks* thanked **Dr. Manalili** for organizing the meeting and planning the agenda and the program. **Mr. Shepherd** also thanked **Dr. Leermakers** for her efforts and for allowing resources of VECO Indonesia to be shared in organizing the meeting. **Mr. Shepherd** particularly recognized the “seamless” organization, and thanked the VECO staff for the job. He also thanked all the participants and speakers who came. He announced a meeting on horticultural supply chains in December 2006 to be held in Chiang Mai, Thailand which was being organized by FAO and Dr. Batt on behalf of the Royal Thai Government. **Mr. Shepherd’s** last words were to encourage participants to keep in touch, particularly on areas where FAO may be of help to the NGOs as a result of the meeting.

In her *Closing Remarks*, **Dr. Leermakers** thanked all the participants who came and while everyone had different expectations of the outcome of the seminar, she wished that the four-day experience of the participants would be put into good use when they return home. She emphasized the point that all participants, as human capital of the organizations they represented, should make good use of the insights learned from the seminar.

Dr. Leermakers expressed her grateful appreciation to the two keynote speakers for their provocative and inspiring messages. She pointed to the very impressive line up of speakers and country paper presenters, and thanked every one of them. She also thanked the VECO Indonesia teams that made the conference possible: the exhibition team, the field visit team, the Secretariat, and the documentation team.

Aside from FAO, **Dr. Leermakers** also thanked the contributions of CORDAID as one of the sponsors of some NGOs who participated in the seminar. For her part, **Dr. Manalili** acknowledged the support of FAO, and VECO Indonesia staff for making the four-day seminar-workshop possible.

VECO Insights

The relevance and the timeliness of the seminar theme is the first insight gained. The sheer number of NGOs who expressed interest and actually attended as well as the fact that participation needed to be limited to one per NGO attest to this. The enthusiasm and depth of participation during the conference itself was another highly positive indication.

The seminar afforded great learning experiences for the VECO Indonesia team. Coordinating an international conference is a first time for the team; as such it was both a learning experience and a challenge. Learning from the experiences of other NGOs in the region provided new dimensions to the rest of participants in general and to the VECO team, in particular, as it provided a basis for comparing how similar or different our own approaches are.

Hopefully these will trigger our minds into making use of this knowledge to further enhance our own approaches. The thematic presentations similarly provided insights on what other institutions are doing all for the same objective of linking farmers to markets and gave us ideas as to who to network with in the future.

The VECO Indonesia team lived up to the challenge not only in making sure that the conference went smoothly given both the technical and logistical arrangements but by likewise coming up with the idea to showcase products of local partners and NGOs through the product exhibit, which in itself is a market-linking initiative.

The partnership of FAO and VECO and VECO's initiative to bring in one of its donors into the activity is proof enough that organizations initially strangers to each other can be effective partners as long as they are jointly committed to worthy cause.

Thanks to the partners for providing us the challenge to coordinate the conference and to the team for successfully living up to that challenge.

**FAO - VREDESEILANDEN
Sub-Regional Seminar**

Enhancing Capacities of NGOs and Farmer Groups to Link Farmers to Markets

9-12 May 2006

Sanur Paradise Plaza Hotel
Bali, Indonesia

Organized by

VREDESEILANDEN



In Cooperation with
the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)



Rationale

For a region contributing much to the global food supply, it is ironic for Southeast Asia to see a greater number of small producers from the region to be still in poverty and lacking in opportunities to find sustainable market for agricultural produce. Identifying markets and consequently gaining access to them is something that most small family farmers cannot do by themselves.

NGOs are increasingly recognizing that if they are to promote livelihood diversification it is not sufficient to encourage farmers to produce new crops by providing inputs, credit and some extension advice. Such approaches have been shown to be unsatisfactory because they fail to take into account many factors. Thus the great majority of NGOs are moving towards the "new paradigm", encouraging farmers to carry out market-led production and of being supply-chain facilitators.

VECO-Indonesia's initial venture into the field of marketing is in support of sustainable agriculture (SA). As development efforts gained grounds, however, it became apparent that problems to address are no longer on how to produce but more of where to sell the produce.

Thus VECO-Indonesia embarked on a multidonor, multistakeholder umbrella program to gain a better understanding of marketing and what it entails and to contribute in enhancing market orientation of small-scale producers. The glaring finding of those initial initiatives is that while gains were achieved, they were limited by the fact that most NGO partners are lacking in orientation and skills to help farmer beneficiaries on a more sustainable level.

The Vredeseilanden, in cooperation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) saw relevance to address the foregoing concerns. Hence the decision to undertake the workshop with the following objectives:

II. Objectives

1. Provide an overview on the state of agricultural marketing in Southeast Asia and the experiences to date in linking farmers to markets across the region
2. Share and learn from the marketing initiatives and experiences of various NGOs
3. Identify priority areas to address that will lead to small producers being linked to dynamic and vibrant markets where they get better returns for their produce
4. Identify capacity building needs for NGOs to enable them to carry out better their chosen roles in the development of agricultural marketing in the region in the service and to the benefit of small producers.

III. Seminar Features

Paper presentations and workshops will be the main feature of the seminar. The presentations will be comprised of a keynote paper on the state of agricultural marketing, followed by a technical update on initiatives and insights gained from linking farmers to markets in the region. A per country presentation of selected NGOs will likewise be undertaken as well as presentations of NGOs with activities across the region. Technical sessions on emerging issues such as a) production and market linkages, b) meeting quality and other market requirements, c) market support delivery and d) market development initiatives are likewise included.

A workshop is to be undertaken to draw inputs from the participants.

The participants will be grouped to tackle the following issues:

- a) prioritization of agricultural marketing issues and concerns
- b) need assessment towards enhanced capacities of NGOs and farmer groups and
- c) roles and input requirements identification.

Field trips showcasing market oriented initiatives and product exhibits are added enhancements.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

May 9, Day 1		
Opening Ceremonies		
7:45	Registration	
8:15	Opening Program Welcome Address Workshop Rationale Introduction of Participants	Mieke Leermakers Country Representative VREDESEILANDEN Andrew W. Shepherd Marketing Economist, FAO, Rome Nerlita M. Manalili Regional Advisor (Asia) VREDESEILANDEN
8:45	Keynote Speeches	Rene Salazar

	"State of Agricultural Marketing in SEA" "Linking Farmers to Markets: Lessons from Experiences to Date"	Executive Director, SEARICE Andrew W. Shepherd Marketing Economist, FAO, Rome
10:15	Open Forum	
10:30	Coffee Break/ Photo Session	
Session 1: Toward a Better Understanding of Emerging Concerns		
Sub-session A: Production & Markets Linkages Session Chair: Nerlita M. Manalili, VECO Indonesia		
10:45	Linking Markets to Farmers or Linking Farmers to Markets: Cases from the South	David Hitchcock Senior Regional Farming Systems Devt Officer, FAO, Bangkok
11:05	Food Teams: Farmers to Consumers, A Case from the North	Mieke Leermakers Country Representative VREDESEILANDEN
11:25	Breaking into the Organic Export Market, Case of Thailand	Paichayon Uathaveekul Exotic Farms Thailand
11:45	Open Forum	
12:00	Lunch Break	
Sub-session B: Meeting Quality and Market Requirements Session Chair: Marco van Grinsven, VECO Vietnam		
1:00	Quality Enhancement Through Market Chain Improvement: The Case of Banana	Joel Tukan ICRAF, Indonesia
1:20	Quality Requirements at the Consumer Level	Alice DCruz Consumers Int'l, Malaysia
1:40	Quality and More: Accessing the EU Markets	Ana GM Abejuela Agricultural Attaché Philippine Embassy, Belgium
2:00	Open Forum	
Sub-session C: Market Support Delivery Session Chair: Jo Cadilhon, FAO-RAP		
2:20	Small Farmers Financial Window	Syed Jalaludin Rakyat Bank, Malaysia
2:40	Understanding Restructured Markets through R&D	Nerlita M. Manalili Regional Advisor (Asia) VREDESEILANDEN
3:00	Community-Developed Marketing Research and Strategies	Menno Keizer Agricultural Economist IPGRI, Malaysia
3:20	Open Forum	
3:40	Coffee Break	
Sub-session D: Market Development Initiatives Session Chair: Ros Kisman, IDE		
3:55	Trader-led Vegetable Market Development in Vietnam	Jo Cadilhon FAO-RAP, Bangkok
4:15	Private Sector-led Market Initiatives	Sandredo & Ronnie Natawidjaja BIMANDIRI / CAPAS
4:35	Enhancing Profitability Via Price	Peter Batt

	Premium for Quality: The PNG Coffee	Int'l Society of Horticulture Science & Curtin University
4:55	Open Forum	
5:15	Announcements/ End of Day 1	
7:00	Welcome Dinner	
May 10, Day 2		
8:00	FAO Initiatives	Andrew Shepherd & David Hitchcock
Session 2: Agricultural Marketing Experiences, Issues, and Concerns		
Sub-session 2a: Country initiatives: Sub-Mekong Region		
Session Chair: Agusdin Pulungan, WAMTI		
8:45	Lao PDR	Thong Vang Natural Products International
9:10	Vietnam	Nguyen Kim Hai CRS, Vietnam
9:35	Thailand	Phongsak Thamrongratanasilp Organic Asparagus Farmer Group
10:00	Open forum/ coffee break	
Sub-session 2b: Country Initiatives: BIMP Region		
Session Chair: Alia Patton, CHF International		
10:45	Indonesia	Agusdin Pulungan WAMTI
11:10	Philippines	Joemil S. Montebon KASILAK Development Foundation
11:35	Malaysia	Aniha Isahak WIJADI
12:00	Open Forum	
12:20	Lunch Break	
Session 2c: Regional Initiatives		
Session Chair: Rella Tung, World Education		
1:30	Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC)	Nathaniel Don Marquez
1:55	Asia Partnership for the Dev't of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRAA)	Lany Rebagay
2:20	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Dev't (AFA)	Long Dimanche
2:45	International Dev't Enterprises	Ros Kimsan
3:10	Open Forum	
3:30	Coffee Break	
Session 3: Featured NGOs		
Session Chair: Stuart Ling, VECO Laos		
3:45	Alternative Indigenous Dev't Foundation, Inc. (Philippines)	Aladino Moraca
4:10	Institute for Research & Cooperation (Vietnam)	Phan Thi Nguyet Minh
4:35	Foundation for Agrarian Reform Cooperatives (Phils)	Koronado Apuzen
5:00	Oxfam (Indonesia)	Arman Ginting
5:25	Open Forum / End of Day 2	

May 11, Day 3 – FIELD TRIP DAY		
7:00 – 1:30	Assembly Time (Hotel Lobby) Bali Fresh Processing House Production Site (Bali Fresh Female Farmers Partnership)	Sanur, Denpasar Kintamani
4:00-5:00	Adi's Processing	Kuta
5:00-5:45	Travel time	
5:45 – 8:30	GWK Recreation/ Dinner	Uluwatu
8:30 - 9:00	Back to Hotel/ end of Day 3	Sanur
May 12, Day 4		
8:30	Workshop Mechanics	Nerlita M. Manalili Regional Advisor (Asia) VREDESEILANDEN
8:45 – 10:00	Workshop Proper	Participants in Groups
Session 4: Plenary Presentation		
10:45	Presentation of Output	Group Representative
12:00	Conclusions & Recommendations of the Workshop	Andrew W. Shepherd Marketing Economist FAO, Rome
12:45	Closing Program	
1:30	Lunch	

Other participating NGOs and Farmer Groups:

ACCESS, CHF, CRS Indonesia,
Bali Organic Association, KRKP, YMTM TTU,
Swiss Contact, LPAM NIAS, VSO,
KRKP, World Education, World Neighbors
VREDESEILANDEN Coordinating Office (VECO)
VECO Indonesia, VECO Laos, VECO Vietnam



FAO - VREDESEILANDEN
Sub-Regional Seminar
Enhancing Capacities of NGOs and Farmer Groups
To Link Farmers to Markets
9-12 May 2006

Attachment 2



Profile of NGO Participants

ALTERNATIVE INDIGENOUS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC. (AIDFI)

AIDFI is a registered non-profit organization, established in 1992 by committed development workers with significant grassroots experience. As a service oriented organization, it promotes and implements appropriate technologies and projects geared towards sustainable community development. It has a deep commitment to effectiveness and efficiency in development management, empowerment of communities, gender equity and cultural diversity.

AIDFI strongly advocates sustainable agriculture through integrated and diversified farming systems and promotes appropriate technologies / renewable energy technologies such as: hydraulic ram pumps, treadle pump, hydro battery chargers, pico-hydro pack/micro-hydropower, ferrocement technologies, biogas, solar heater, essential oil distiller, rice hull stove, rotary weeder and rice hull carbonizer.

AIDFI integrated **marketing support** in its development initiatives in order to address the marketing problems of farmers' products.

Presently, AIDFI has 19 full-time staff and has successfully installed over 70 units of ram pumps including installation of one unit each in Malaysia and Japan. AIDFI has trained and developed installation teams on other islands in the Visayas and Mindanao, Philippines. AIDFI has brought water to at least 40 villages or 12,000 beneficiaries.

**ASIAN NGO COALITION FOR AGRARIAN REFORM
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ANGOC)**

ANGOC is a regional association of 21 national and regional networks of NGOs from 11 countries in South East, South, and East Asia. ANGOC is actively engaged in food security, agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture and rural development activities. Its member-networks have an effective reach of some 3000 NGOs throughout the Asian region.

**ASIAN PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
IN RURAL ASIA (ASIADHRRRA)**

AsiaDHRRA is a regional partnership of eleven (11) social development networks and organizations from ten (10) Asian nations. All affiliates are involved in the development of human resources in rural areas, which accounts for its DHRRA acronym.

AsiaDHRRA traces its earliest roots to the 1974 Development of the Human Rural Resources in Asia Workshop (DHRRAW) which was held in Swanganiwas, Thailand. About one hundred and twenty (120) rural development workers and practitioners gathered to engage in dialogues that focused on the challenges and responses to rural

development. At the end of the eventful three-week workshop, a call for continuous dialogue among the participants was made. As such, a support structure, the Center for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (CenDHRRRA), was created to facilitate the sharing and exchange across the Asian region. Since then, different forms of dialogue and sharing were done to strengthen the movement. In 1994, the movement which was effectively supported by CenDHRRRA formally evolved into its present state, a regional network of country DHRRAs known as AsiaDHRRRA. After more than two decades, the regional network is now composed of DHRRAs from Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nepal, South Korea, Taiwan-ROC, and Japan.

ASIADHRRRA envisions Asian rural communities that are just, free, prosperous, living in peace and working in solidarity towards self-reliance. To contribute to this long term vision, it aims to play the roles of a promoter and catalyst of relationships with various partners through the people-to-people dialogue and exchange approach; of a mobilizer of resources for human resource development in the rural areas; and of facilitator of processes and opportunities for the strengthening of solidarity and kinship among Asian rural communities.

CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL (CI)

CI is a federation of consumer organizations dedicated to the protection and promotion of consumers' rights worldwide through empowering national consumer groups and campaigning at the international level. It currently represents 230 organizations in 113 countries. For more information, check out its website: www.consumersinternational.org

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES (CRS)

CRS was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops of the United States. Its mission is to assist the poor and disadvantaged, leveraging the teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to alleviate human suffering, promote development of all people and to foster charity and justice throughout the world.

Working through local offices and an extensive network of partners, CRS operates on five continents and in 99 countries. It helps the poor by first providing direct assistance where needed, then encouraging these people to help with their own development. Together, this fosters secure, productive, just communities that enable people to realize their potential.

CRS has established its representative office in Hanoi, Vietnam since 1999. Currently, CRS Vietnam has been operating six programs in 15 provinces of Vietnam.

KASILAK DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION INC. (KDFI)

KDFI was organized on March 3, 1997. KDFI was organized as a sustainability mechanism of the Libuganon River Reforestation Project, which was co-funded by Dole Philippines Inc., Stanfilco and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

KDFI is a non-stock, non-profit social development organization. Its primary purpose is to uplift the socio-economic condition of the communities living in a peaceful and ecologically balanced environment. As a social organization promoting an integrated-approach to natural resource management and sustainable community development, it envisions a life for *“people living in prosperity and ecologically balanced environment”*.

Major programs of the foundation are environmental conservation and sustainable farming; livelihood assistance and income augmentation; basic social services; and organizational development. The Foundation is actively pursuing partnership development and resource leveraging to attain impact on assisted communities. KDFI emphasizes strong coordination and partnership with the national and local government units, community-based organizations and other development organizations operating within the assisted areas.

NATURAL PRODUCTS INTERNATIONAL (NPI)

NPI was established seven years ago in Bokeo, in Northern Laos, founded by Alan Bemo who started it as an animal feed producer. NPI now specialized in human food and animal feed. It has just completed its first contract with the World Food Program and had produced 150 tons of high-protein fortified flour. This could not have been possible without the cooperation of the German development agency, GTZ.

NPI selected the animal feed business because there was a large need in northern Laos for proteins. Most of the proteins used in northern Laos (eggs, fish, and other meat) currently come from Thailand or China. NPI also knew that an animal feed mill would create a demand for soybean and corn. This demand would drive the production of those commodities in Laos.

NPI also makes about 300 tons of animal feed a year. Currently over 600 farmers plant soybeans for NPI. Seven years ago, no one planted soybeans.

The development philosophy of NPI is to think and act like a business, believing that it is the only way to be sustainable. By necessity it has had to do all aspects of agriculture business from seed production and distribution to extension work, commodities storage, and food processing. It is hoped that future work will be done in cooperation with other government and development agencies so that NPI does not have to do it all by itself.

OXFAM INTERNATIONAL

Oxfam International is an international confederation, comprised of 12 independent non-government organizations dedicated to fighting poverty and related injustice around the world. Its mission is a just world without poverty and its goal is to enable people to exercise their rights and manage their own lives.

Oxfam International was founded in 1995, formed by a group of like-minded independent non-government organizations, who wanted to work together internationally to achieve greater impact in reducing poverty by their collective efforts. The name "Oxfam" comes from the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, founded in Britain during the Second World War in 1942. This group of Oxford citizens campaigned for grain ships to be sent through the allied naval blockade to provide relief for women and children in Greece. The Oxfam organizations are working to become part of a movement that is capable of global responses to global issues. It aims to create ways of working and structures appropriate to global action in a complex and closely-knit world.

The twelve Oxfam organizations are based in: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Quebec, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Ireland, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain and the United States. A small Oxfam International secretariat is based in Oxford, UK, and the secretariat runs advocacy offices in Washington DC, New York, Brussels and Geneva.

Oxfam works with communities, allies and partner organizations, undertaking long-term development, emergency work, research and campaigning for a fairer world. Oxfam works on a broad range of issues, including trade, conflict, debt and aid, and education. Oxfam works with approximately 3250 partner organizations in around 100 countries.

VREDESEILANDEN

Vredeseilanden is an international NGO whose ambition is to contribute to viable livelihoods of organized family farmers in the south by raising incomes from sustainable agriculture and by empowering them throughout the whole agricultural chain. The current Vredeseilanden is the result of a merger in 2001 of the three Belgium NGOs. VECO-Indonesia (previously known as FADO) has 25 years of experience in Eastern Indonesia in the field of sustainable agriculture. VECO operates in 13 countries, three of which are in Asia, namely Indonesia, Vietnam, and Laos.

1. VECO-Indonesia

In its new programme covering a timeframe of 5 years (2006-2010), intervention strategies focus on raising farmers' capacities on agricultural production, post-production and marketing as well as to become change agents by disseminating LEISA and agricultural chain innovations. In providing technical and organizational support to farmers' organizations VECO-Indonesia is partnering with local NGOs and other local and national civil society, governmental, professional and religious stakeholders as well as national civil society alliances.

VECO-Indonesia's programme ultimately targets poor family farmers in selected rural districts in East Nusa Tenggara, West Nusa Tenggara, south Sulawesi, Central and East Java. Specific strategies and interventions also particularly address women farmers and young male and female farmers acknowledging their strategic role and potential on the one hand, but also their particular needs for empowerment and integration into decision-making.

Many years of support for sustainable agriculture led to an increased production of agriculture produce. However, lack of access to markets and/or a lack of markets that guarantees a fair price for the producers, impeded improved livelihoods of the targeted family farmers. Farmers and partners raised their concern during the 2002 and 2003 annual partner meeting and requested VECO-Indonesia for support in finding appropriate solutions for their problems.

VECO-Indonesia initiated complementary studies over the period 2004/5. This study is comprised of a) a documentation of experiences of about 10 organizations and companies in NTT/NTB; b) small livelihood study in Flores followed by a target livelihood study in collaboration with SC more specifically addressing the cashew nut issue; c) a market opportunity study in Bali.

2. VECO-Vietnam

VECO Vietnam actively supports farming communities in mountainous areas to lead more secure and fulfilling lives. To do this, we equip them and our partners with skills, knowledge, appropriate technologies and opportunities to increase their income. By assisting them in accessing markets and services and exercising their rights we also enhance their ability to make positive choices about their future.

With our program focus on sustainable agricultural practices we have succeeded in reaching around 20,000 households in the last 3 years and made significant contributions in assuring their food security. Our activities are now shifting from production assistance to the market chain approach. Simultaneously VECO Vietnam, in alliance with others like ActionAid, SNV, Plan, and Oxfam, is an active and leading member on advocacy issues concerning WTO, Agricultural Extension policies and Local Rice Seed production including the issues of GMOs and IPRs. We have good lobby and network contacts on the grass roots, national (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – MARD) and regional/ international level (Fair Trade with Oxfam, APNFS, etc.).

3. VECO-LAO

When VECO began activities in Bokeo province in 2002, the main focus was on providing food security through sustainable agriculture, with activities such as developing paddy land and small-scale irrigation, upland agriculture and farmer field schools in rice and livestock. Particular emphasis was given to the development of local institutions, such as the village development committees, production groups, and the village revolving fund committee, with the eventual intention that they could become self-supporting community-based organizations.

By 2005 VECO wanted to expand its role to provide market access to small farmers. Bokeo province is close to the borders of China, Thailand and Myanmar and there were many opportunities for farmers as a result of demand from China and from the Free Trade agreements within ASEAN. However, most farmers were not well prepared, and produced only raw materials of low quality in small amounts and mixed grades. These factors, combined with the lack of organization in producer groups, meant that they only received low prices. VECO thus sees an opportunity to establish and work with farmer groups in order to improve their incomes and support the development of Bokeo province.

VECO Lao has 22 staff, including full time government counterparts. Seventeen of these are based in two field stations in Paktha and Meung districts.



**FAO – VREDESEILADEN Sub-Regional Seminar
On Enhancing Capacities of NGOs and Farmer Groups
To Link Farmers to Markets
09-12 May 2006**

Attachment 3



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