

## PROJECT CONCEPT PAPER

# Linking Farmer Movements for Sustainable Agriculture



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### ***Project Summary***

- Duration** 16 months
- Location** Global, involving farmer organizations from both Central America and SE Asia.
- Organisations** Project activities to be managed by 'Campesino a Campesino' and 'Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia' with back-stopping from the FAO Programme for Community IPM in Asia.
- Objective** To develop and test a mechanism and process for direct exchanges of expertise between farmer-led SARD movements
- Key activities** A cross visit between representatives of two large farmer movements from different parts of the world. Farmers will be involved in planning and organizing all aspects of the visits. Documentation of the visits will be internationally disseminated.
- Budget** US\$ 119,800

# Linking Farmer Movements for Sustainable Agriculture

## ***Background***

The growing success of participatory approaches to sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) has given rise to a new, and exciting, phenomena: farmer-led movements. The Association of IPM Farmers in Indonesia, the *Campesino a Campesino* Movement in Central America, the AS-PTA of Paraná, Brazil, and the Movement for Land Care in Australia and the Philippines are four well-documented cases.

Through different formal and non-formal arrangements, these farmer-led movements work with Governments, NGOs, IARCS, NARS, cooperatives and their federations, as well as existing farmers' organizations. Some programs have emphasized participatory technology development (PTD), some have focused on farmer-to-farmer training, while others concentrate on marketing. What these programs share, however, is a vision of building an endogenous movement for sustainable agriculture capable of bringing about changes in both the management of natural resources *and* social relationships.

These movements are more than just an interesting side-effect of SARD projects, rather they are the key to achieving the long-term goals of sustainable agriculture. To be sustainable, agricultural activities must be based on an understanding of the ecological and social environment which is both dynamic and locally specific. Experience has shown that this can only be achieved if farmers are empowered to analyse their own situation, make management decisions for themselves, and take collective action which promotes and protects their interests. Governments and NGOs may play an important role in initiating the development of this capability, but this capability can only be sustained at a meaningful scale if large numbers of farmers are working to help each other.

Farmer-to farmer exchanges and forums have proven to be a highly effective way of building SARD expertise, catalyzing new activities and influencing policy. These exchanges usually start between villages, districts and provinces, but in the last decade farmer exchanges have also been taking place between neighboring countries. International exchanges, as demonstrated by the *Campesino a Campesino* Movement in Central America, have strengthened the vision, the confidence and the capability of farmer organizations in a way which could never be achieved by development projects managed by individual governments or NGOs.

With the rapid consolidation and globalisation and of so many other human endeavors (e.g. agricultural trade, the activities of seed and chemical companies, food policy-making, and consumer activism), it is essential that

farmers also engage in exchanges at a similar level. While farmer-led movements have made astonishing progress in developing their own locally adapted versions of sustainable agriculture, they are continually faced with new outside pressures, and a wide range of technological, methodological and organizational challenges. These factors can constrain the effectiveness of local interaction, regardless of the momentum and enthusiasm within the organisation. Access to information and knowledge from other regions can help key actors in these movements better analyze the problems they face, and formulate or adapt new ideas to overcome limitations. Inter-regional exchanges may also enable farmers to gain a voice in the many global fora which are making decisions that affect their livelihoods.

In this context, the 'scaling-up' of sustainable agriculture involves raising the capability of farmers, not increasing the size of a particular NGO or government 'project'. What is going 'up' is the scope of farmers' interaction, the level of their ability to solve problems, and the height and weight of their influence as a social and economic group.

## ***Objectives and Outputs***

### **Long-Term Goal:**

To promote and strengthen farmer-led SARD movements.

### **Immediate Objective:**

To develop and test a mechanism and a process for direct exchange of experience between farmer-led SARD movements.

### **Outputs:**

1. A total of 16 representative members of two farmer-led movements will have engaged in direct sharing of SARD experiences, methods, approaches, specific techniques, and organizational modalities
2. Concrete follow-up activities will have been identified and planned by the movements, and pilot activities initiated. These may include mechanisms for further inter-movement information-sharing or training, and field testing of techniques or methods seen during the exchange.
3. Documentation of the exchange will be available to other farmer-led movements, international organizations and donor agencies, thus enabling them to examine the relevance and feasibility of further exchanges and broader linkages between farmers' movements,. To include a 25 minute video, a web-site, farmer reports and a concept paper.

## ***Campesino a Campesino***

For thirty years the *Campesino a Campesino* movement of Mesoamerica has been hard at work developing Sustainable Agriculture, patiently, empirically, step by step.

The movement started with a small group of Cachikel Mayans conducting soil conservation experiments in the Highlands of Chimaltenango in Guatemala in the early 1970s. These activities, which were supported by World Neighbors, are described in the Book 'Two Ears of Corn' by Roland Bunch. The success of these field activities led to the formation of 'Kato-Ki', a 900-member cooperative which provided farmers with inputs, helped them market their produce, and organized farmer-to-farmer training.



Unfortunately the work of the cooperative was resented by large landlords and the Guatemalan army forced the organization to disband.

Some of the members of Kato-Ki fled to Mexico where they joined forces with farmers who had attended training in Chimaltenango. This cross-fertilization resulted in many technical and methodological innovations. The content of farmer-led extension activities started to include bee keeping, dairy goats, animal traction and pruning of fruit trees. Methodologically the integration of Guatemalan and Mexican approaches gave rise to campesino extension teams, consisting of 6-8 *promotores* who ran school gardens and organized community agricultural development projects. With support from SEDEPAC, a local development organization. These *promotores* helped to improve yields and incomes. Their services were great appreciated by local people and one of them soon became elected as the municipal president of Tlaxcala.

The Cachikel campesinos who fled from Guatemala were also in great demand from many NGOs. Several of the exiles formed an organization with Roland Bunch called the Association of Consultants for Sustainable Ecological, People-Centred Agriculture, known as COSECHA based in Honduras. Soon these campesinos were traveling to South America, Africa and Asia to provide advice, make presentations and organize forums.

In 1986, OXFAM sponsored a visit to Tlaxcala in Mexico by representatives of the Nicaraguan National Farmers and Ranchers Union (UNAG). This soon led to a Mexico-Nicaragua Soil Conservation project managed by SEDAPAC and UNAG which involved many exchanges of farmers. It was at a SEDAPA-UNAG workshop in 1987 that the participants gave a name to the movement they were developing: 'Campesino a Campesino'.

The movement in Nicaragua took off after the First National Convention of Sandinista Cooperatives which took place in 1988. At this Convention a Campesino promoter interrupted the proceedings to present the Minister of Agriculture with an enormous bean plant. He also invited the delegates to visit his Municipality; and they came. In 1987 there were *Campesino a Campesino* activities in only 2 Municipalities, but this quickly grew to 21 Municipalities in 1991, and 39 Municipalities in 1993. By 1995 all 67 Municipalities in Nicaraguan were involved in the *Campesino a Campesino* movement.

In the last five years the development of the *campesino a campesino* movement has reached a scale and complexity which makes it difficult to summarise. Let is just be said that there are now affiliated groups in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. In total there are well over ten thousand farmers who are active members of the movement.

## ***Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia (IPPHTI)***

Indonesia has experienced tremendous changes in the past few years. The economic crisis which started in 1997 triggered a political upheaval which culminated in the election of a new government in 1999. This represented an historic shift towards a more democratic country, creating many new opportunities for Indonesians to participate in the development of their country.

Many Indonesian farmers no longer want to be part of the silent majority. They are expressing their concerns and demands to the government on a range of issues. These issues include input and output prices, access to resources, protection of their welfare, health, and the environment. Perhaps the most vocal group of farmers in the country at the present time are those belonging to a newly formed association called *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia, IPPHTI* – The Indonesian IPM Farmer's Association.

This association was established in July 1999 at a meeting of 540 representatives of farmer groups that had sprung up across the country in the previous five years. These groups were made up of farmers who had graduated from training carried out under The National Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program, managed by the Government of Indonesia with technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN. Unlike other extension and training projects, the National IPM Program encouraged farmers to make their own decisions and organise their own activities. Since the program started in 1989, approximately one million farmers have graduated from IPM Farmer Field Schools. More than 20,000 graduates have completed additional training as *petani permandu* (farmer leaders) who are now forming networks across the country.



The current activities of *petani permandu* include: conducting IPM field schools (FFS), organising field days and campaigns, conducting health surveys, carrying out field trials and studies, organising technical meetings and workshops, carrying out advocacy activities and mobilizing funds, organising group action such as rat control, producing bio-control agents and marketing. These activities are being carried out by IPM farmers in at least 200 sub-districts across Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi,

Bali and Nusa Tenggara Barat. During the last 24 months, local IPM farmer associations have organized congresses in 6 Provinces and at the National Level, attended by more than 2000 IPM Farmer representatives.

Building on the strengths and interests of the *petani permandu*, the *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia* has a vision of Empowering Farmer Role and Ecological-based Farming. The IPPHTI mission is to declare and maintain Farmer's Rights. The rights include: the right to manage their lands, the right to get service from the government, the right to determine prices, the right to get accurate and honest information, the right to have a healthy environment, the right to develop their own seed, the right to manage water resources, the right to establish marketing organisations, the right to build their own associations, and the right for expression (while preserving their own language, culture, religion and art).

The strategies of IPPHTI are: to strengthen farmers organisations in villages, to educate farmers in IPM FFS and training for farmer trainers, to develop networks across farmer groups, to mobilise funds, to strengthen farmers' science through field and local policy study implementation, and to organise advocacy activities.

## **Strategy**

In simple terms, this project will provide farmers representatives from two SARD movements with an opportunity to share experience. Because of the participatory and exploratory nature of the process, the exact outcome of the exchange cannot be determined in advance. Nevertheless, from past exchanges at the local level and between neighboring countries, this process is expected to generate new initiatives and new capabilities within and between the farmer movements which are involved.

The exchange has been designed as a learning process, not as a single predetermined event. There are a number of steps in the process, each of which will be organized in light of the outcome of earlier steps. It is also possible that new steps will be added. At the time of preparing this proposal the following steps are anticipated.

1. electronic information-sharing between *Campesino a Campesino* and *IPPHTI*, and separate meetings in each country ;
2. a reconnaissance and planning visit by a small group from Indonesia to Central America;
3. preparations for the cross visit, both in Central America and Indonesia
4. a 3-week cross visit from *Campesino a Campesino* to Indonesia, including field activities and workshops;
5. documentation of the process and the lessons learned
6. follow-up activities based on ideas generated during the cross visit

Further details are given below. It is important to reiterate that the purpose of the project is not simply to organize an exchange between these two movements, but to develop and test a mechanism and process which may benefit other farmer movements. This will be a theme for discussion throughout the process, which will be captured on video and in reports prepared by the participating farmers and the coordinator. It is expected that this cross visit will lead to more efficient and creative ways of linking farmers' movements around the world.

## **Activities**

### **Step 1: September 2000 to March 2001**

Long-distance planning and information exchange: A electronic communications linkage will be developed between *Campesino a Campesino* and the *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia*. The project coordinator will facilitate from the Central America side, explaining the goals of the program and facilitating discussions, fleshing out details, schedules, activities, expectations, etc. On the Indonesian side, FAO Community IPM team members will work closely with the leadership of *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia* to plan the program and initiate exchange of information and documentation. These teams on each end will delineate the possibilities for sites visits, create and inventory of possible themes that can be addressed, develop criteria for

participant selection, and outline administrative structures and needs for coordinating the program.

## **Step 2: March 2001**

Reconnaissance and Planning Mission: a small team comprising four selected Indonesian IPM Farmers and one facilitator/translator from the Indonesian FAO IPM team, will carry-out a 10 day visit to *Campesino a Campesino* programs in Central America. Through direct discussion and through visits to field programs, a joint team will refine the scope of the cross visit to Indonesia and develop a detailed operational plan for the activities of the actual cross visit. Each team will assign itself necessary responsibilities for logistics, administration, contact with partner agencies, etc. A local media person will be hired to document and record the processes and field activities of this reconnaissance mission.

## **Step 3: April 2001 and May 2001**

Preparations for Visit: Based on the outcome of the previous step, *Campesino a Campesino* will select the participants for the cross visit and organize preparatory meetings. Meanwhile, *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia* will make arrangements for receiving the visitors in collaboration with the Indonesian officials and the FAO programme for Community IPM.

## **Step 4: June and July 2001**

Cross Visit to Indonesia: A team of 12 farmer-promoters, technicians and a project coordinator from *Campesino a Campesino* will travel to Asia for a three-week visit. After a few days of rest and program orientation, the team will participate in ongoing activities of *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia*. Small groups will travel to several different locations and programs for periods of between five days to one week. At the end of this first field activity, the teams will convene to share and analyze experience and then be split up to three further locations for further field activities. At the end of the third week, a three day workshop will be held to evaluate the overall experience and develop possible follow-up plans for activities and ideas generated during the cross visit.

## **Step 5: July and August 2001**

Documentation: Farmer participants and the project coordinator, with the assistance of local media people, will be responsible for recording and documenting the pilot cross visit with slides and tapes. Farmer-promoters will be given disposable cameras to take pictures. Local media persons will be hired to record video images to be made into a short documentary. Reports will be compiled and the video will be edited following the visit to Indonesia.

## Step 6: August to December 2001

Immediate Follow-up Activities: Workshops will be held in Central America and Indonesia to review the process and outcome of the visits. A small amount of funds will be made available for implementation of pilot activities in Central America and Indonesia based upon ideas developed during the exchange.

### Post-project:

Program Scaling-up and Scaling out: Further communications and information exchange between *Campesino a Campesino* and *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia* is expected to take place as a result of the visit. The CaC coordinator and FAO staff will ensure that the documents are disseminated to other movements and development agencies. Ideas for further exchanges will be explored.

## Management Arrangements

It is proposed that an international professional with long experience with the *Campesino a Campesino* program will be hired as a part-time coordinator for the project. The coordinator will liaise with CaC and expedite the activities which are to take place in Central America. The FAO Programme for Community IPM in Asia, based in Jakarta, will liaise with *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia*. The FAO Programme will contribute logistic and communications support, including the use of its own facilities and vehicles.

## Budget

Part-time Coordinator	16 mths @ \$1000	\$16,000
Intercontinental Travel	16 RT econ tickets @ \$2000	\$32,000
Domestic Transportation	16 people @ \$300	\$4,800
Per diems, accommodation	500 person/days @ \$40	\$20,000
Media contracts	For video production and editing	\$20,000
Communications	Phone, fax & Email	\$2,000
Miscellaneous materials	Photo processing, copying etc.	\$1,000
Pilot / follow-up activities	16 grants at \$1,500	\$24,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$119,800</b>

## **ANNEX 1: TENTATIVE THEMES FOR SHARING OF EXPERIENCE**

The following themes are possible starting points for the sharing of experience. Actual themes and topics will be identified during the implementation of the project.

### **Training & Education**

The Community IPM Program in Asia and *Campesino a Campesino* utilize similar theoretical-practical farmer-to-farmer training techniques but with very different pedagogical structures. Design, complementarity, interchangeability and evolution of T&E methods and structures for different agroecological themes will be examined.

### **Farmer Science and Agroecology**

Farmer-experimentation is a common approach in both experiences, but the methods, follow-up and linkages with formal research are not the same. Different means of building agroecological knowledge among farmers and in conjunction with other actors in agricultural research (IARCs, NARs, Universities) will be explored. The Indonesian IPM program offers an array of different approaches to 'farmer science' addressing a number of local issues.

### **Organization and Policy**

Forms of farmer organization within and independent from supporting NGOs and GOs are also very different between the movements. *Campesino a Campesino* farmers utilize extensive nonformal methods of organization across counties and international borders to share knowledge, seeds and information. Indonesia IPM farmers have been organizing to influence agricultural policy for sustainable agriculture, conducting workshops on 'Farmers Rights' for local government, and conducting a wide range of advocacy activities. Farmers in Indonesia have experienced several types of 'socio-economic environment', from strongly top-down to the recent (and nascent) democratic setting. Those in Central America tend to be subjugated to conventional demands within existing agrarian unions dominated by mid and large-scale farmers. Organizational strategies for movement building and influencing agricultural policy will be shared, and approaches/methods for strengthening farmer institutions will be examined.

### **Additional Specific Topics**

Specific agroecological and livelihood topics will be addressed through participation in training and education experiences. Among these themes, the pilot cross visit will address: Soil & water conservation, soil ecology, Integrated Pest Management, Organic Agriculture, Natural Resource Management, Microcredit, Cooperative processing & marketing, bio-agent utilization, Certification (Fair Trade, Organic, Eco-OK), Health, and Gender.

## ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANT SELECTION AND ROLES

### ***Campesino a Campesino***

A 12 person interdisciplinary group will undertake the cross visit, consisting of Program Leaders, project technicians, farmer-promoters and an international coordinator.. The functions of the team will be as follows:

International Project Coordinator: A professional from the *Campesino a Campesino* Movement will be given part-time responsibility to organize, coordinate and report on the pilot cross visit. Specifically, he or she will:

- Coordinate with FAO and *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia* to plan and program the cross visit
- Accompany the team during the visit and coordinate their activities
- Document the experience in written and slide form
- Write a report for distribution in Central America and to donors
- Follow up on ideas and commitments from *Campesino a Campesino*

Program Leaders (3): Selected from three main *Campesino a Campesino* programs in Central America, the Coordinators will:

- Analyze and document programmatic and policy aspects of the cross visit
- Make tentative arrangements for follow-up
- Contribute to reports, website and promotional materials after the visit
- Distribute informational materials and investigate/communicate opportunities for teaching and learning linkages between Central America and Asia
- Incorporate aspects of Farmer Field Schools into *Campesino a Campesino* programs in Central America
- Invite cross visit technicians and promoters to their programs to share the cross visit experience at the project and farm level.

Promoters (6): Selected from six different areas of Central America will:

- Share technical, methodological and organizational experience with Farmer Field School counterparts
- Identify complimentary agroecological/NRM management techniques through hands-on farming and training experiences during the cross-visit
- Take pictures to help with their own presentations of the cross visit
- Suggest opportunities for complementarity in Central America
- Share their experience with farmers in the *Campesino a Campesino* movement

Technicians (3): Selected from three main *Campesino a Campesino*

- programs in Central America (not the same as the Coordinators or the Farmer-promoters), will:
- Accompany and participate with farmer-promoters in all activities of the cross visit

- Document learning experiences in visual and in written form
- Help farmer-promoters analyze and identify areas of complementarity
- Report to their programs on the cross visit and implement new knowledge in their own projects
- Invite farmer promoters to their projects to share the cross visit experience

### ***Indonesian participants***

- Co-coordinators (2) from the Indonesian side will be include (1) a leader from the Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia, and (2) a Field Program Specialist from the Indonesian FAO Community IPM program.
- Reconnaissance Mission participants (4 total): the two co-coordinator plus 2 additional participants from the *Ikatan Petani PHT Indonesia*. Preferably, these people will be drawn from locations for possible field activities during the cross visit.

### ***Additional Participants***

If additional funds are available, representatives from other farmer movements and potential donors will be invited to the final workshop in Indonesia. This is particularly appropriate for organizations from participants from (particularly and future potential collaborators and maybe possible donors, at least those in the Asia Region, to attend. This might include up to six persons from such groups as Landcare (Australia and Philippines), and others.

### ***For further information contact the following people***

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