



Central Asian Agricultural and Rural Development Policy Forum

Income Diversification for Sustainable Agricultural Growth

Ankara, Turkey, 25 to 28 October 2009

Objective of the forum

The goal of this first *agricultural and rural development policy forum for Central Asian countries* is to stimulate discussion on issues of common interest to agricultural policy makers. The idea of the forum is to improve the dialogue and contacts between government personnel, as well as to bring the views of other stakeholders in agriculture and rural development to the attention of governments. This forum is based on the proposition that improved dialogue between government representatives and other stakeholders specializing in agriculture and rural development can over time lead to a better appreciation of the commonalities of policy issues pertinent to agricultural and rural development and may contribute to the search of governments in the region for solutions to these issues.

Topic of the forum

The topic of this first policy forum is *income diversification for sustainable agricultural growth*. The forum will cover four main policy topics of relevance to income diversification for agricultural growth in Central Asia--agrarian reform, livestock and pasture policy, crop diversification and potential of bioenergy to diversify rural incomes. These topics will form a basis for discussion of how policy changes can lead to the further development of agriculture with concomitant increases in rural incomes.

Recent World Bank research has shown that agricultural growth is an important driver of poverty reduction. For instance, Byerlee, Diao and Jackson (2005) have illustrated that agriculture has played an important, and often a lead, role in the early stages of pro-poor growth, and Christiaensen, Demery and Köhl (2006) have shown that poverty gains from growth in agriculture are far larger on average than those from growth in non-agriculture. In Central Asia the poor have benefited quite substantially from agricultural growth in the past few years. However, what further policies could extend such growth, despite the world wide economic slowdown? In order to understand further growth, this forum will examine a number of potential drivers of agricultural growth in Central Asia--agrarian reform, livestock and pasture policy and crop diversification.

Introduction of bioenergy production has the potential to contribute to income diversification and independence from external energy supply, hence reduce vulnerability and increase resilience of rural households, as well as to contribute to job creation and income generation, which have a direct positive impact on rural out migration and retention of rural population. In the case of bioenergy production, important outcomes include the capacity of agriculture to make households less vulnerable to disturbance in energy supply (e.g. gas). The bioenergy production, if wisely introduced, might turn many of the challenges into opportunities, but for sure could contribute for farm income diversification and rural enterprise development.

Expected results of the forum

- Analysis of selected existing policies related to agrarian reform, livestock and pasture policy, crop diversification and bioenergy development.
- Appraisal of specific approaches to farm income diversification by bioenergy and wood energy production in East European countries as an example of successful rural development.
- Improved dialogue and trust between government representatives specializing in agriculture and rural development from Central Asian countries.
- Proposals and recommendations for future activities and assistance for:
 - policy changes to improve the environment for farm-household incomes;
 - development of policies and programmes to facilitate the sustainable development of bioenergy in Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

Implementation and inputs

To achieve the objectives, around 30 participants, including government, civil society and private sector representatives, with proven background, expertise and responsibilities related to the topics of the Forum, from Eastern European¹ and Central Asian² countries, will meet for three day consultations.

¹ Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Hungary, Moldova, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine

² Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

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Agenda

Day 0: 25 October	
	Arrival of participants
Day 1: 26 October	
9.00-9.30	Opening and Welcome
Agricultural and rural development policies for growth and poverty reduction in Central Asia	
9.30-10.00	Agrarian reform and its economic effects in Central Asia
10.00-10.30	Water management in Central Asia: policy issues
10.30-11.00	Coffee break
11.00-11.30	Livestock and pasture management policies in Tajikistan
11.30-12.00	Crop diversification in Turkmenistan
12.00-12.30	Discussion
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break
Potential for bioenergy production on small and medium sized farms in Eastern Europe and Central Asia	
14.00-14.30	Recent developments in bioenergy production in EECA
14.30-15.00	Forestry policies for wood based energy generation in Central and Eastern Europe
15.00-15.30	Coffee break
15.30-16.00	Contribution of bioenergy production to livelihood diversification in Central and Eastern Europe
16.00-16.30	Driving factors and enabling environment for diversification into small scale bioenergy production

Day 2: 27 October

Country presentations on state and approaches to bioenergy production for farm income diversification

9.00-10.30	Country presentations on state and approaches to bioenergy production for farm income diversification
10.00-10.30	Coffee break
10.30-12.00	Country presentations on state and approaches to bioenergy production for farm income diversification
12.00-12.30	Discussion
12.30-14.00	Lunch
14.00-15.30	Round table: Small-scale bioenergy production and diversification for increased income and livelihoods in EECA
15.30-16.00	Coffee break
16.00-16.30	Proposals and recommendations for future activities and assistance
16.30-17.00	Closing session

Day 3: 28 October

Field trip

Departures