



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## CONFERENCE

### Thirty-sixth Session

**Rome, 18-23 November 2009**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE B.R. SEN AWARDS 2008 AND 2009**

1. The Awards for 2008 and 2009 will be presented during a special ceremony at the beginning of the Thirty-sixth Session of the FAO Conference. For 2008, the recipient of the Award is Mr Javier Escobedo from Peru. The 2009 Award is being presented to two recipients: Mr Luigi Damiani from Italy and Mr Kevin Gallagher from the United States. Brief notes on the three Award winners and their achievements follow.

#### **Mr Javier ESCOBEDO**

2. Mr Javier Escobedo was born on 1 September 1947 in Peru. He holds a Doctorate (Ph.D.) degree in Agronomic Sciences from the Faculté des Sciences Agronomiques in Gembloux, Belgium, a Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Quaternary Geology from the Vrije Universiteit in Brussels and a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Agricultural Engineering from the Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina in Lima.

3. Mr Escobedo began his career with the Peruvian Ministry of Agriculture as a soil expert on several projects, including an FAO project. Following his Doctorate, Mr Escobedo worked in Burundi and Rwanda as an agronomist and soil scientist for Belgian and French organizations. In late 1984, he joined FAO as a Soil Surveyor on a project in Saudi Arabia, after which he served as Soil Conservation Adviser on another project based in Ethiopia. His career with FAO continued in the field with postings as Chief Technical Adviser for projects in Senegal and Bolivia. In October 2002 he joined the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) as Area Manager and Senior Agronomist for the FAO Emergency Programme in Afghanistan. His affiliation with TCE continued as Senior Emergency Coordinator for the Emergency Programme in Haiti in 2004, and in 2007 he was designated Regional Senior Emergency Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. Since his appointment as Emergency Coordinator in 2004, the nominee has advanced the struggle for food security in Haiti - a particularly challenging work environment - and in many

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other countries in the region, through the development of the emergency and rehabilitation programmes in that area, testing technical innovations and approaches in complex emergency situations that are later replicated on a wider scale. In this way, his work has had an impact on the emergency and non-emergency programmes, ensuring full coordination and synergies between relief, rehabilitation and development projects.

5. In 2004, when Haiti was hit by Hurricane Jeanne, only low quality grains were available, which was a serious obstacle for the recovery and development of the agriculture sector. As a result, large quantities of seeds had to be imported. In order to overcome this situation, Mr Escobedo initiated a small-scale project (OSRO/HAI/504/FRA) to support farmers' associations through technical, organizational and commercial training, including some inputs and equipment, for the multiplication of quality seeds and the establishment of local seed reserves.

6. New seed varieties, good agricultural practices and soil conservation techniques were also tested in an emergency response context. Vitroplants of banana were introduced using the "pif technique", a technical innovation which is having very good results in the development of this important food crop. The activities of urban agriculture implemented in one of the most conflict-ridden suburbs of the country, "Cité Soleil", have constituted a courageous, innovative initiative, with extraordinary appreciation from beneficiaries. For example, the establishment of infrastructures for the collection of rain water resulted in the reduction of diseases for the beneficiary families; livelihoods diversification (vegetable crops, livestock); improvement of their food security situation; and increased time available to women and children for other activities, who previously had to walk up to 10 km for water. Nutrition components have been incorporated in relief activities, and school gardens established.

7. The results of this project were so positive that it has been replicated on a larger scale and with different types of seeds, increasing the number of farmers' associations actively involved. FAO is now collaborating with IFAD and the Government of Haiti to develop this initiative on a larger scale. Farmers' associations have gone from being recipients of FAO's programmes to becoming suppliers of good quality seeds, as well as sources of employment. The project has significantly reinforced the capacity of local institutions, many of them now working more independently. The tested varieties have had very good results (yields 30 percent higher and disease resistant), and other varieties continue to be tested within the programme. Many small farmers are now willing to buy seeds, instead of grains, acknowledging the comparative advantage of the better quality seeds.

8. There is now a growing national capacity to produce quality seeds in Haiti, which has had a very positive impact on the development of the agriculture sector and its capacity to meet local food needs, gradually reducing dependency on imports.

9. This is one of many projects that Mr Escobedo formulated and implemented to support the country, all aimed at increasing local capacities and resilience to adverse events by reinforcing national institutions and communities and facilitating collaboration among all actors. Most were initiated as small-scale projects, to be later replicated (i.e. seed multiplication, water infrastructure and irrigation systems, disaster risk management practices, watershed protection, etc.).

10. In complex emergency situations, Mr Escobedo has focused on reducing the vulnerability of the population, seeking innovative and alternative approaches to tackle the multiple causes of poverty and facilitate sustainable development. Relief interventions have been combined with development-oriented activities, showing the important added value of FAO's multi-sector expertise and its relevance in both humanitarian and development arenas. The vision and pragmatism of the interventions developed and led by Mr Escobedo went beyond the complex situation of Haiti and were implemented in other disaster-affected countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region, responding to cold waves, earthquakes, floods and conflict situations.

11. The achievements of Mr Escobedo in Haiti and in the region are a result of team work, especially with strong national teams that have been established and consolidated under Mr Escobedo's leadership. They are also due to his clear vision, sound technical expertise, excellent interpersonal skills, practical knowledge of the field, and innovative approach. Mr Escobedo spearheaded and promoted during his various assignments the principles that today underpin FAO's Strategic Objective I: improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies. He personally demonstrated the advantages of working as "one FAO" and as "one UN" in "one joint effort" in a given country and region.

### **Mr Luigi DAMIANI**

12. Mr Luigi Damiani was born on 10 October 1949 in Italy. He has a Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Agronomy from the University of Bari in Italy.

13. Mr Damiani began his career as Research Manager for the vegetable sector of a private seed company. In 2001 he entered FAO as Team Leader/Horticultural Crops Specialist and Technical Officer for the Oil for Food Programme in Iraq. In 2004, Mr Damiani joined the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) as Project Coordinator for a Greenhouse Rehabilitation Project in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGs). The same year he took over the position of Senior Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordinator for the Emergency Programme in that country.

14. Since this appointment, Mr Damiani has promoted the recovery of Palestinian agriculture through the development and implementation of an emergency and rehabilitation programme, with over 30 projects providing immediate responses to crises and addressing longer-term recovery objectives. This has been built on the basis of a strong field food security team ensuring continuing monitoring and analysis of the food security situation and needs. The result has been the successful implementation of the projects and impressive growth of the programme, in spite of being in an area of conflict. Due to the tangible results obtained in the field, the good relations created with different donors and the promptness of submitting new ideas and projects, the budget has grown from USD 2.7 million in 2004 to more than USD 18 million in 2009, with an additional USD 8.6 million in pipeline projects. At the same time, the standing of FAO's programme has been enhanced by the development of a coordinated portfolio of projects that are technically well-founded and respond effectively to the real needs of producers affected by conflict and poverty.

15. The programme is increasing income and food security for the Palestinian population, and maximizing the rational use of the scarce natural resources: water and soil. Horticulture, small ruminants, cottage industries, school gardening through the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools, water harvesting and its rational use, and land reclamation activities, among others, have been reactivated and are contributing to the well-being of the population in agriculturally depressed areas. A special focus is given to the integration of women in the production sector; a number of women's groups are now playing an important role in agricultural development. Since 2004 the programme has benefited about 12 500 households and 87 500 persons. In spite of the security problems and interruptions of physical access to the project sites, the areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip covered by the programme are now producing food for the local population, with a potential for export.

16. Mr Damiani has also guided the recent development, together with the Palestinian Authority (PA), of a Medium Term Assistance Strategy that bridges emergency and development for FAO's agricultural assistance to the WBGs. Within a few years, FAO has thus assisted the national authorities and partners with a response progressing from monitoring, through prevention and preparedness, to a rapid response for restoring agricultural livelihoods and "building back better". This integrated approach is fully captured in FAO's Strategic Objective I, aiming at improving preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies and a better transition from emergency to development.

17. Mr Damiani has been able to establish excellent working relations with over 30 national and international NGOs — crucial partners in the implementation of the emergency and rehabilitation programme - and with the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture at different levels, from the Minister to the field staff.

18. Furthermore, Mr Damiani has also established links and plans to join efforts with relevant Israeli institutions supporting the development and rehabilitation of Palestinian agriculture such as the Peres Center for Peace, Galilee College, universities, vegetable and fruit nurseries, marketing companies and other providers.

19. The achievements are the result of a solid and well-motivated team working under the strong leadership of Mr Damiani, and due also to his commitment, management capability, and personal technical contributions. This remarkable team effort has been sustained by the timely advice of FAO's technical services and the continuing support of its Emergency and Rehabilitation Division.

### **Mr Kevin GALLAGHER**

20. Mr Kevin Gallagher was born on 3 April 1957 in the United States. He holds Doctorate (Ph.D.) and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degrees in Entomology from the University of California at Berkeley.

21. Mr Gallagher began his career as a volunteer for local institutions in Indonesia and South Korea dealing with community-based water supply and small scale appropriate technology projects; worked as a research scientist at IRRI in the Philippines; and established a consulting firm in South Korea for organic agriculture and IPM in Asia.

22. In 1988, Mr Gallagher joined FAO as a technical officer for the Indonesian National IPM Programme in charge of developing a large-scale training programme on rice and rotational crop IPM. This included the development of Farmer Field Schools and practical training courses that allowed for rapid scaling-up of programmes for food security. The programme is still active today through farmer associations that are self-financed, with additional funding from local government.

23. Mr Gallagher was appointed Deputy Coordinator of the FAO Inter-Country Programme for Rice IPM in Asia in 1992, after which he became Senior IPM Specialist for the Global IPM Facility at FAO headquarters, in the Plant Protection Service. In this capacity, he assisted in establishing national IPM capacity in southern and eastern Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as promoting policy programmes for the transition from pesticide-intensive plant protection to a non-toxic management-based system. From 2002-2008, Mr Gallagher served as Development Officer for the FAO Special Programme for Food Security with the task of scaling-up food security programmes and assisting in food security policy development within national programmes in selected countries in Africa (Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania) and Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos).

24. In 2008, Mr Gallagher was appointed FAO Representative in Sierra Leone where he was able, within a very short timeframe, to establish a highly recognized FAO country development programme, providing support under the country's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process for the definition of a sector development programme, reinforcing a strong sense of country ownership in the process. In September 2009, Sierra Leone became the fourth country to sign the CAADP Compact, and both the President and the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security were made Champion Head of State and Minister for CAADP in Africa, respectively.

25. Although many initiatives are still underway, the Ministry of Agriculture with developmental partners is making good progress in rebuilding the agricultural sector and supporting structural orientation of the sector to one that is more commercially-driven, less

subsistent-dependent. A national agricultural development plan has been prepared that will operationalize action to achieve commitments under CAADP, particularly Pillar 2.

26. In addition, through collaboration with decentralized authorities, market opportunities have been identified and with support from several projects the capacities of farmers are being strengthened for productivity, post-harvest value addition and market linkages. Mr Gallagher has also forged linkages with other initiatives such as the WFP P4P, practically demonstrating the importance of building the entire value chain for the most important strategic commodity in Sierra Leone, rice, from seed supply through production, processing and sale to final markets.

27. Mr Gallagher has successfully created frameworks, strategies and partnerships that have helped to meld an ad hoc set of field operations into a true development programme that has obtained endorsement from the Government as well as the broader donor community. Programme frameworks have been established in the areas of food security and smallholder commercialization, agro-industry and fisheries, with well-targeted and coordinated projects under each. This approach has enabled the mobilization of substantial financial resources and technical support, allowing FAO to meet the needs of the country in a more effective and efficient manner.

28. Innovative approaches to both communications and field activities have been used. Mr Gallagher established a highly effective discussion platform called “Salone FAB”, a forum for sharing information about farmers and agribusinesses in Sierra Leone. He has also supported the development of innovative Agribusiness Centres for food security that build on clusters of producer organizations. These Centres hold great potential for addressing the critical missing gap in small farmer services.

29. Another important innovation is the strategy of achieving “food security through commercialization” in which support for food security is rebalanced from a production-only focus to add complementary support for strengthening market linkages and introducing value adding post-production activities. The approach being pioneered in Sierra Leone under the leadership of Mr Gallagher, and with the technical support of the Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division, recognizes the importance of ensuring markets for farmers’ production as necessary incentives for increasing food production.

30. Mr Gallagher’s work in Sierra Leone is considered a model for FAO field action. He has co-catalyzed and fully participates in a policy-level inter-ministerial consultative steering group on agriculture in national development, as well as catalyzed a technical level inter-agency working group co-chaired by his senior national programme officer that considers technical options to pursue development policy aims. He works with and for the Government, and also maintains strong relations within the UN Country Team, which is headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General. He has assisted Sierra Leone in mobilizing tens of millions of dollars of new funding to support development plans, and works constantly with donor representatives as well to show how these plans fit together to create and sustain a coherent strategy with attention to production, livelihoods and empowerment. This is totally consistent with Mr Gallagher’s work over the past two decades.

31. The achievements are due to Mr Gallagher’s personal leadership capacity and style, combined with strong technical training and experience, and his consistent respect and sensitivity to Government counterparts and local beneficiaries. Mr Gallagher was chosen for the personal standard he maintains as an outstanding FAO emissary, as well as for his programme achievements.