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# conference

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS - ROME

**E**

## Twenty-seventh Session

Rome, 6 - 25 November 1993

### PRESENTATION OF THE B.R. SEN AWARDS (1992 and 1993)

1. The B.R. Sen Award was established in pursuance of Resolution 33/67 of the Fourteenth Session of the Conference, as a permanent feature. The Award, which is conferred annually, is named after a former Director-General of FAO, Mr B.R. Sen, and is directed towards the goals he served. Any officer who has served in a field post in any of the activities of FAO in the year for which the Award is made is eligible for nomination. The recipient of the Award must have a minimum of two years' continuous service in the field and must have made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the country or countries to which he/she was assigned. This contribution must be clearly identifiable; it may take the form of technical innovations in agriculture, fisheries or forestry; institutional or development support improvements; discoveries of new resources as a result of surveys or other investigations; establishment of training and research institutions.
2. The elements of the Award are:
  - (i) a medal bearing the name of the recipient;
  - (ii) a scroll describing the achievements of the recipient;
  - (iii) a cash award of US\$ 5 000;
  - (iv) round-trip travel to Rome for the recipient and spouse.

### Selection of Award Recipients

3. The B.R. Sen Award Review Committee, comprising the Deputy Director-General, as Chairman, the Deputy Director-General, PBE, as well as all the departmental Assistant Directors-General at Headquarters, the Director of the Field Programme Development Division, and the Director of the Personnel Division, reviews nominations received from Regional Representatives, FAO Representatives and Department Heads, and establishes a short-list. The final selection of the award recipients is made by the Director-General, jointly with the Independent Chairman of the Council and the Chairmen of the Programme and the Finance Committees, from the short-list drawn up by the Review Committee supplemented by the views of the Governments where the nominees are serving or have served.

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### Conferment of Awards

4. The Awards are conferred by the Chairman of the Conference at a special ceremony during the first week of each regular session of the FAO Conference. At the Twenty-seventh Session of the Conference, the presentation ceremony will be held for the 1992 and 1993 Award winners.
5. For 1992, the recipient of the Award is Mr Sang-Kyun Choi of South Korea. For 1993, the recipient of the Award is Ms Felicidad L. Villareal of the Philippines. Brief notes on the two recipients and on their achievements are given below.

### Mr Sang-Kyun Choi

Mr Sang-Kyun Choi was born in 1932 in the Republic of Korea and holds a B.Sc. in Agricultural Engineering and a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning, both from the Seoul National University. He has also undergone considerable training in Japan on "Farming on Sloping Land" and in Israel and Italy on "Soil and Water Conservation and Watershed Management" on FAO sponsored fellowships.

Mr Choi worked for more than 20 years for the Government of the Republic of Korea in the technical areas of watershed management, land reclamation, irrigation and drainage in positions of increasing responsibilities. From Agricultural Engineer, he rose to the position of Chief of Survey and Design Division of the Watershed Development Department. During this period, he also worked as national counterpart on two UNSF/FAO Upland Development and Watershed Management projects. This involved multidisciplinary aspects of soil surveys, land-use planning, reforestation, pasture as well as fisheries development activities and including training of local technicians and farmers in demonstration areas for the planning and implementation of comprehensive integrated conservation and development of badly degraded watersheds. These early pioneer models with grassroots level approaches served as good examples for application nationwide and, with time, brought about a re-greening of the mountainous and hilly countryside.

He then worked, from 1978 to 1979, as Land-use Planning and Watershed Management Expert on an IDA-supported project in Ethiopia on restoration of 35 000 ha of degraded watersheds including training of national counterparts.

With this excellent background, Mr Choi joined FAO in September 1979 as Senior Land-use Planning and Training Expert on project ETH/78/003: Assistance to Land-use Planning. Here he assisted three multipurpose farmer training centres (at Agarfo, Bako and Woreta) and an Animal Science Institute (at Fogera) in the preparation of detailed land-use plans while training 46 national counterpart staff.

Mr Choi transferred in 1981 to another project - ETH/82/010: Assistance to Settlement - also as Senior Land-use Planner, in which capacity he served until 1984 assisting in preparation of land-use plans and land suitability classification, soil and water conservation planning for three of the largest settlements at Assosa, Harale/Tedelle and Harawa. He instituted a training programme for national counterparts and settlers. He continued for two more years with this activity under project ETH/82/012.

He was appointed Senior Watershed Management Advisor, from 1987 to 1989, on project ETH/85/016, also in Ethiopia. He assisted in the preparation of simplified watershed management plans of 16 sub-watersheds and in implementing, monitoring and evaluation of field level activities. He prepared training materials and various guidelines in watershed planning and monitoring, and participated in training.

Since 1990, Mr Choi has been the Chief Technical Advisor of project MYA/81/003: Pilot Watershed Management for Kinda Dam in Myanmar. In this capacity, he has assisted the Department of Forest in institutionally strengthening the Watershed Management Division to undertake field implementation in watershed management activities at Kinda, Inle and Phugyi lakes. He has made an outstanding contribution to the development of integrated watershed management with the participation of the rural people.

In recognition of his dedicated work and cooperation, the Government of Myanmar requested UNDP and FAO that Mr Choi be given additional charge of project MYA/91/005: Border Areas Integrated Agriculture Development, from July 1991. Mr Choi, as manager of this important project, has made outstanding contributions by:

- introducing community forestry and on-farm agroforestry interventions in remote and unsecured border areas to generate income and improve environmental and socio-economic conditions of the rural people in these areas;
- contributing significantly to the reduction of opium production by demonstration of alternative cash crops and by improvement of agricultural crop yields.

Altogether, some 10 000 farmers have been motivated and involved in the project areas in Myanmar to undertake improved forestry and watershed management activities for their well-being on an environmentally sustainable basis.

As a member of the Committee for Dry Zone Development of the Central Region in Myanmar, Mr Choi has been active in the formulation of a Dry Zone Development Strategy. A programme for the Integrated Development of the Central Dry Zone has been developed with emphasis on agriculture and forestry with his assistance. Funding has been agreed, in principle, by UNDP.

Through Mr Choi's pioneering efforts and able leadership in promoting land-use planning, soil/water conservation activities in integrated watershed management and, of particular importance, in very actively promoting grassroots level conservation and development activities, as highlighted under Agenda 21 of UNCED, and to the satisfaction of the governments and organizations he has served, Mr Choi has earned the plaudits of local people, the Government and donor agency. He has helped to build country capacity in his technical areas and gained recognition of his achievements and that of the FAO Field Programme.

#### **Ms Felicidad L. Villareal**

Ms Felicidad L. Villareal was born in Manila on 24 July 1935 and is a national of the Philippines. She holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of the Philippines and an M.A. in Economics from Fordham University, USA.

Ms Villareal had almost 19 years of professional experience in her country assuming progressively responsible positions with her Government until she became the National Training Director of the Commission on Population of the Philippines. All her work has always been geared to assisting and promoting farmers' groups to increase their standard of living, thus making a positive contribution to the development of her own people.

With this background and valuable experience Ms Villareal joined FAO in 1981 first to serve as a consultant in Indonesia under a UNFPA/FAO project in which she developed project schemes and operational systems for income generating activities for family planning groups. Subsequently she became Chief Technical Adviser in a UNFAP/FAO project in Thailand "Population Education in the Agricultural Sector" where she managed and provided technical inputs in training,

communications planning, and institutional integration of project scheme in nine Government line agencies and four agricultural universities. In 1984 she became the FAO Regional Population and Rural Development Adviser in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok. In this capacity her initial work was in countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) where she displayed technical competence in project formulation, execution and backstopping as well as dealing with national counterparts. In particular, she was able to extend the traditional information-education-communication components of rural population projects by designing them to include the provision of credit for micro-enterprise activities thus responding more directly to the plight of overburdened and impoverished rural women.

During her regional assignment Ms Villareal formulated among others seven important population projects funded by UNFPA in the Chinese provinces of Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, Xinjiang, Shanxi, Hubei, Guizhou and Inner Mongolia. In 1992 she was transferred to China at the special request of the national authorities to provide continuing technical and management assistance to these projects, and in recognition of her unique contribution to their development. The main objectives of the projects are assessment and funding of rural township enterprises, and above all the establishment of self-help women groups who engage in savings mobilization and micro-enterprises. In view of the success of this developmental approach, the UNDP and WFP are now introducing similar activities in their programmes and projects.

At a time when many question the benefits of development projects for the poor, there are important lessons to be drawn from the projects developed and assisted by Ms Villareal. They have shown beyond any doubt that economically productive women are critical to the survival and betterment of poor households, especially in resource-deficient areas and for the economic improvement of rural families in general. Moreover, these FAO projects further demonstrate that poverty alleviation schemes to succeed must be decentralized with a view to improving and empowering the beneficiaries. In this way, a far greater number of households is reached than is the case of the more centralized projects. Most importantly, Ms Villareal succeeded in recognizing the importance of informal and formal modes of community governance and harnessing them to achieve project objectives. At the lowest village levels, she was able to use indigenous cultural systems, linked to family or other local institutions, to advance programmes.

The work of Ms. Villareal in Asia is a substantial contribution to FAO's effort towards the achievement of sustainable development and poverty alleviation in that region.