**DOCUMENTATION REPORT**

**GAFSP KM Workshop**

November 9-11, 2012

Phnom Penh Cambodia

**INTRODUCTION**

The knowledge learning and sharing workshop entitled “Lessons Learned from Farmers’ Involvement in GAFSP Processes” was held last November 9-11, 2012 at the Cambodiana Hotel in Phnom Penh Cambodia, organized by AFA, AsiaDHRRA and CSA, hosted by FNN, and supported by Agricord. The workshop was organized as one of the activities under the Agricord project entitled “Supporting Inclusive Planning of country projects financed by the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program,” a two-year project being supported by IFAD that will end on December 2012. (See Annex 01: Workshop Design)

Participants included representatives from AFA member FOs and their support NGOs in GAFSP countries such as Cambodia (FNN), Mongolia (NAMAC and ADRA) and Nepal (ANFPA and WOCAN), agri-agencies such as AsiaDHRRA, CSA, and SCC (as observer), and staff from the AFA secretariat. (See Annex 02: Directory of Participants)

The workshop proper was conducted on November 9-10. On November 8, a national dialogue on GAFSP in Cambodia was also held. Participants included FOs and NGOs in Cambodia, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and Economics, and the ADB in Cambodia. On November 11, participants went on a field visit to Takeo province to meet with two farmer organizations. One is running a rice mill that was set up using funds from their savings group. Another is running a community bank, also set up using funds from its savings group that provides various financial services to its members. On November 12, an M&E mission on the GAFSP Cambodia project was carried out by a team from AFA, AsiaDHRRA and CSA. A solidarity night was also held on the evening of November 9.

**PROCEEDINGS**

**NOVEMBER 9:**

**Opening Program**

AFA Secretary General Esther Penunia (Esther) opened the program. She thanked FNN members and staff for being present even if it is a national holiday because of the Independence Day of Cambodia. She led the participants in greeting all Cambodians a Happy Independence Day.

Participants then introduced themselves by mentioning their names, organizations, positions, and by saying good morning in their own languages.

FNN President Uon Sophal (Sophal) gave the welcome remarks. He expressed gladness for being the host of the workshop and for the opportunity for FNN to learn from other experiences.

CSA Program Officer Marek Ponanski (Marek) also gave some remarks. He gave a brief background of GAFSP and the involvement of FOs in its processes.

Esther then gave an overview of the workshop (Annex: Objectives and Flow of the Workshop). She explained that the Agricord Project is being implemented in 4 countries. The objectives of the workshop are (1) to know the processes of FO involvement in GAFSP; (2) analyse and draw conclusions to help identify interventions and support needed; (3) plan for future steps and ways forward; and (4) facilitate South-South exchanges. She then gave a run through of the schedule and assigned host teams to help manage the time and the participants.

**Session 1: Sharing of Experiences**

Session 1 gave the participants a chance to share their experiences in getting involved with the GAFSP processes.

**FOs Involvement in GAFSP Processes in Mongolia**

Gerry Ganaba (Gerry) of ADRA and Altantuya Tseden-Ish (Aggie) of NAMAC, shared their experiences in Mongolia. (See Annex: Sharing from Mongolia)

*The GAFSP* ***project*** *in Mongolia is called the “Integrated Livestock-based Livelihoods Improvement Project (ILBLIP)”and covers the provinces of Khuvsgul, Zavkhan, Arkhangai, Govi Altai, and Bayankhongor.*

*It* ***aims*** *to improve rural livelihoods in selected soums (municipalities) through enhanced productivity, market access, and diversification in livestock-based production systems.*

*It has three inter-related* ***components****. Component 1 (Linking Farmers to Market) focuses on value chain development and income diversification (through vegetable production). Component 2 (Improving Livestock Productivity and Quality) deals with animal health, genetics and breeding, and animal nutrition. Component 3 is Management and Donor Coordination, including technical assistance.*

*Project* ***activities*** *have been conducted according to the following schedule: Preparation (Sep 2011-Jan 2012); Approval/Agreement (Feb 2011-May 2012); FAO Inception (Jun 2012); WB Inception (Jun-Jul 2012).*

*FAO’s activities under the project will include: provision of CTA; production of project implementation manual; and some small-scale start-up activities.*

*There have been several* ***initiatives*** *by FOs and CSOs in Mongolia to get engaged in the GAFSP process. A CSO Forum for the GAFSP Project was organized with the support of AFA and AsiaDHRRA. Cooperatives and herders groups have been profiled. A consultation workshop with members of herders group in GAFSP target areas has been conducted to validate community needs and concerns. A meeting with the FAO Chief Technical Adviser has been held.*

*In carrying out these initiatives, FOs and CSOs faced several* ***challenges****. Firstly, the Ministry of Agriculture has been reluctant to engage FOs and CSOs especially when the latter have some sort of monitoring responsibility over a certain government project. Secondly, involvement of CSO’s in government-implemented projects is a new paradigm, and because it is a new modality, government agencies do not have the experience to effectively manage the interaction, and are therefore not able to benefit from the engagement. Thirdly, there is a general lack of transparency and accountability among government agencies.*

*From these experiences, several* ***recommendations*** *can be made. CSO actions to engage government agencies should be sustained, whether as proponents of change, partners of reform, voice of the people, or fiscalizers to stop corruption. Trust building measures between government agencies and CSOs should be strengthened. Mongolia CSOs should learn from the experiences in other GAFSP project countries on how CSOs engage their respective governments, strategize on how they can add value to GAFSP, learn how to constructively engage the government, and enhance their sense of accountability and transparency.*

**Open Forum**

The following additional points were made in response to the questions and clarifications raised:

***On the trainings (Kanchan):*** *After the constructive engagement training, those who attended shared what they learned to their own organizations, stimulating more requests for trainings.*

***On other agricultural policies and projects in Mongolia aside from GAFSP (Mamadou):*** *Until 1990’s Mongolia was a socialist country with 5 year plans. It is now undergoing analysis and planning for next 5 years. A problem encountered during the social and economic transition was that agricultural policies were left behind. There are projects with WB, EU, and others where the funds are big but the outcomes are not sufficient. Half of the funds go to experts, office maintenance, and local offices, while small funds go to initial beneficiaries.*

*Agriculture in Mongolia is very different from other countries. Most of those involved in agriculture are herders, not farmers who plant crops.*

***On capacity building (Marl/Marek):*** *There is a 1.5 million GAFSP fund for capacity building. GAFSP has a technical assistance component to cover capacity building for government and CSOs. It is usually handled by FAO. Mongolian CSOs met the FOA CTA once and it seemed to be implying that the TA or capacity building is not only for FOs but also for government agencies. CSOs think that it should therefore not be branded as capacity building for FOs.*

***On what facilitated CSO and FO initiatives (Jun):*** *CSOs and FOs used GAFSP as an opportunity by enhancing the project and getting the interest of other CSOs to be involved. That the CSOs also wanted to benefit from the GAFSP project as service providers and suppliers helped in CSO consolidation. It was not only a question of how to take from the project but also how to enhance and add value to it. Mongolia was able to exploit that, while Cambodia, for examle, was not able to do that. There is a need to go back to the document and see what FOs and CSOs can exploit.*

***On FAO and IFAD initiatives in engaging government and CSOs and FOs (Kanchan):*** *Things get lost after the project. Sustaining capacity and initiatives is important. What is lacking in Nepal are grassroots farmers organizations. They are still not succeeding. In Mongolia, CSOs do not have a strategy on how to engage government. They have a pragmatic approach. ADRA, for example, has no strategy. It is true to other organizations too. Other NGOs have strategies coming from their global operations. But each specific NGO should have a specific agenda or strategy related to GAFSP.*

Esther synthesized the presentation, saying that the challenge is how to really empower local groups to claim resources intended for them through big projects coming to the country. The point about the FAO TA is very good and FOs need to address the challenge of how to get the TA component of GAFSP to benefit small farmers. Bangladesh FOs have something to share on this as they have made a step forward with regards to TA handling.

**FOs Involvement in GAFSP Processes in Nepal**

Dr. Keshab Khadka (Keshab) of ANFPA and Kanchan Lama (Kanchan) of WOCAN presented their experiences in Nepal. (See Annex: Sharing from Nepal)

*The history of the* ***project*** *started in June 2010, when the Government of Nepal (GoN) was informed that it is eligible to for GAFSP, with the Country Investment Plan and national priority as pre-conditionalities. In August 2010, the central authorities formed a consortium for the project. In September 2010, the GoN submitted a proposal to the GAFSP Secretariat. The original scheme was for US $65.5 million food and nutrition package program. But the GoN was informed that the proposal was selected at a reduced scale of $46.5 M in grants and $11.5M in fund (?).*

***FOs and CSOs involvement*** *in the project did not start until it was already in the revision stage. In the words of ANFPA, there was “no leakage to FOs/CSOs.” It was through AFA that the FOs and CSOs got information about GAFSP, when AFA co-organized with ANPfa and WOCAN a CSO consultation on Nepal on 10 July 2011. AFA, through its Secretary General, made a second visit to Nepal on Aug 2011 to start off discussions about the project at various levels. She gave a presentation about GAFSP to the National Peasant's Coalition at the ANPFa Secretariat. She also facilitated interactions between FOs and CSOs on one hand and the GoN, FAO TA and World Bank on the other. It was then that FOs and CSOs began their interventions in the project, with were met with a “sour face” from the GoN and the WB team.*

***FOs and CSOs position*** *with regard to the project was clearly enunciated. Good projects fail when grassroots people are ignored as farmers have traditionally been a silent majority. Farmers, who are the ultimate project implementer, should be at centre of GAFSP, which should then be renamed as NAFSP. Diverse ecology needs a biodiversity-based agricultural production enhancement project. This diversity encompasses humid to arid crops pattern as well as a unique community culture. Small and marginal peasants, IPs, women, dalits, landless farmers and farm labour should be the focus. Poor infrastructure, poor access to market, dalit-based agri-labour, and feminization of agriculture are issues that should be addressed. There was insistence on an approach that is “farmer first, with right-based CSO scrutiny.”*

*The FOs/CSOs faced the GoN in what is called the “Dhulikhel fight.” The GoN/MoAC, presented four* ***components*** *of the project: Technology Development and Adaption; Technology Dissemination and Adoption; Livelihood Enhancement; and, Nutritional Status Enhancement. The FOs/CSOs accepted the component titles, but demanded a thorough revision of the content subject to stakeholders' concerns. They also welcomed the selection of the project sites in the 19 districts of the mid/far west mountain & hills, but demanded that the focus be changed from 7 districts to 8 districts(?).After the talk with the Secretary of the MoAC, an agreement was reached to move forward together.*

*A big challenge presented itself in the form of how to consult stakeholders of the project. Funds had to be raised through different means for a stakeholders' consultative conference in Surkhet. On February 17, a WB follow up visit was met with sharp criticism(?). During a follow up visit of AFA, through Soc Banzuela, a small fund from AFA/AsiaDHRRA was finalized. Finally, on June 15-17, a consultative conference called “Big Bang Surkhet” was held, where farmers were able to show off their strength.*

*The “Surkhet War” was a victory for the FOs/CSOs. In the words of the organizers, “hundreds attended and thousands spoke.” Different groups and stakeholders were represented. They included: all key FOs and NGOs working on food security, peasant rights and natural resource management; FOs who are part of the Peasants' Coalition (Part of IFAD MTCP) including water and forest users; public officials of the concerned Ministry and Offices; farmers and peasants in the project aread of GAFSP /NAFSP focusing on the hard-hit 8 districts; and, other stakeholders such as, Feminization & Gender Justice, dalits and IPs, lagged behind social groups, HR activists, media people, lawyers and professors, and the WFP(?).*

*The initiatives of FOs/CSOs resulted in one major output - revised project components. Out of the 17 members of the national steering committee, 3 came from FOs and 2 from CSOs. The NPC at regional, district and VDC(?) body are involved in program designing, M&E and local leadership(?). It is still very challenging at the FO front, but warm relations have been established, as food security was enshrined as the guiding principle for the engagement.*

***The revisions made included: e****mphasis on local seed and breed; sustainable natural farming + zero budget crops; biodiversity-based local technology promotion; and, socio-cultural, gender, IPs, local people centre(?).*

*So far, some* ***progress*** *has been achieved. The July Review of WB and FAO was mutually respectful(?). During the final appraisal mission last Sept 7-17 and the meeting with FOs, the emphasis was made on result-oriented implementation(?).Esther Penunia of AFA reported that the WB has the tabled final proposal at the GAFSP Secretariat and remarks have been made on October 23. The GoN is now ready to implement the project by January 2013. And in a phone call with the Secretary of MoAC and others last November 5, everything seems to be going well.*

*Some* ***lessons learned*** *have been noted. The historic Peoples' Movement II of 2004 has led to a common agenda of food sovereignty (?). There is a common FO platform in MTCP, which is facilitated and enhanced by the NPC and GAFSP and ADS interventions(?). The FOs had an encounter with GAFSP, rather than mere involvement, as the FOs/CSOs had to fight to be there. The different farmers and peasant organizations are sitting at the national table and are building alliances. And importantly, a common understanding among FOs is vital for a strong assertion of position.*

*An initial analysis of the FO engagement in the process bears some important observations. There was no longer opposition after involvement but neither was there submission, as constructive criticism and grassroots based facts force the bureaucracy to go along. Accountability, transparency and mutual confidence building bring farmers together. There is less politicisation, but much policy intervention, which has earned mass support. Finally, due to GAFSP, farmers are learning about governance.*

**Open Forum**

The following additional points were made in response to the questions and clarifications made:

***On MTCP vis-à-vis GAFSP (Marlene):*** Nepal made use of MTCP and GAFSP for its agenda. The challenge is how to merge the two processes in other countries like Cambodia.

***On the capacity building component (Marek)****:* A question arises as to what is the entity that implements the capacity building component and what it will be used for. In the technical adaptation part, there is a capacity building program. It should be more FO-oriented rather than government-oriented. There is a need to know what capacity the farmers need. At present, they only know how to produce, not to market. The challenge is how to defend the FOs. When the government implements the program it will be monitored by CSOs. FAO will handle the TA for GAFSP Nepal, while the WB is the supervising entity, with FAO implementing the TA component.

***On the FO platform:*** Because the FOs are active in GAFSP, the Agriculture Ministry has also invited them to help in the agricultural development strategy. NGOs have their own roles defined. If a national farmers platform is formed, there is much potential. The CSOs were very loose on the street. But now they have survived and there is less politics and more policy. The transformation was due to GAFSP.

**FOs Involvement in GAFSP Processes in Bangladesh**

Amirul Islam (Amir) of ActionAid, a partner of KKM, an national FO in Bangladesh, presented their experiences via Skype. (See Annex: Sharing from Bangladesh)

*The Bangladesh* ***proposal*** *for GAFSP funding is called the “Integrated Agriculture Productivity Project (IAPP) for Agro-Ecologically Constrained and Economically Depressed Areas,” which was approved by the GAFSP Steering Committee in June 2010. GAFSP will fund $50M of the project, while the Government of Bangladesh will fund $17.5M. It will be implemented over a period of 5 years.*

***Agricord-IFAD*** *has also funded the project “Strengthening Kendrio Krishok Moitree (KKM) for Enhancing Solidarity among Farmer Associations in Bangladeshm” which involved FOS from selected districts of Bangladesh, namely Kurigram and Patuakhali.*

***Stakeholders*** *to this project include: two districts representing 6 union based farmers’ alliance of KKM (180 village-based farmer organizations, their members); FOs and partner local/national NGOs, and agriculture/rural development authority of the government; and, Civil Society Organizations and FAO.*

*The project ran for* ***five months*** *from August to December 2012.*

*The main* ***objective*** *of the project was to initiate a broad-based platform through KKM for addressing food and nutrition security issues of small-holder farmers in Bangladesh.*

*It used ActionAid’s HRBA* ***approach*** *during project planning and implementation. This approach focuses on the key concepts of empowerment, solidarity and campaign.*

*The project had 4 main* ***components****: mapping/scoping of FOs; learning-sharing workshop; capacity building of KKM and other FOs on leadership, OD and networking; and, initiative for broad-based regional platform of the KKM and allied farmer groups.*

*So far, FOs in Bangladesh have not yet had any experience with the instrument, process and modalities partnership with government on public resources, but are now in the position to endeavor/try to initiate or pilot it since they now have a broad-based FO like KKM and a newly formed FO platform lead by KKM.*

*The main* ***problem*** *being addressed by the project is that the broad-based FO platform has just been initiated so they have no scope to build partnership with government. On the other hand, there has no plan on the part of government to partner with FOs in government circulated plans.*

*In order to address this problem, project* ***initiated*** *some bold moves. Capacity building activities have been taken for the FOs leaders for ensuring their rights from government and institutional services. Strategies have also introduced in line with AA’s HRBA for FO capacity building and to bargain with the respective parties on food security-related project planning and implementation.*

*These initiatives have resulted in some concrete* ***gains****. A broad-based platform of FOs has been initiated. Action plans have been formulated by the FO leaders to strengthen their capacity for organizational management, leadership development and networking. The trained leaders have started to disseminate the knowledge they gained from the trainings among their respective group members following their action plans to strengthen their organizations.*

*The following factors have* ***facilitated*** *these initiatives: open information flow; participatory planning based on farmers’ needs; consideration of the following factors when planning for FOs needs -- farmer’s crisis, dependency and deprivation.*

*The following factors, on the other hand, have* ***hindered*** *these FO initiatives: donor-driven planning; inaccessibility/insufficiency of government planning information to the grassroots farmers; government bureaucracy; and, political influences.*

**FOs Involvement in GAFSP Processes in Cambodia**

Pan Sopheap (Sopheap) and Uon Sophal (Sophal) of FNN presented the experience of FOs in getting involved in GAFSP processes. (See Annex: Sharing from Cambodia)

*FNN implemented the project “Strengthening Farmers’ Organizations (FOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for Effective Engagement in the GAFSP Process at the National Level” from July to October 2012.*

*It covered 8 provinces out of the 10 target provinces of the GAFSP project -- Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng. Two exceptional provinces were Preah Vihear and Odor Meanchey, because both provinces were out of FNN target provinces.*

*The project targeted the participation of the following: 15 participants per province, or 120 participants for 8 provinces; 24 participants for national consultation workshops; and, 24 participants for the national policy dialogue. Stakeholders included representatives of FNN, FOs and NGOs in the 8 target provinces, representatives of national and international NGOs, and the government and international institutions.*

*The objectives of the project were to: know the situation, the initiatives, the challenges of the farmers in the target areas of GAFSP; inform the farmers in the target areas of GAFSP about the GAFSP proposal and the ADB projects and get their feedback as well as their views on these two projects; strengthen the capacities of the FOs in the CSO Working Group in developing proposals that can be submitted to the government and ADB with regards the final implementation plan; and, develop and implement strategies for effective influence of the CSO Working Group on the GAFSP final implementation plan as well as the technical component.*

*A participatory and gender balanced approach was observed in the provincial and national workshops.*

*Several activities were conducted such as: mapping and consultations among farmers in GAFSP target areas of Kg Cham, Kg Speu, Takeo, Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, Bantay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Kg Thom (15 farmers per province whom 30% are women will participated); national consultation attended by representatives from among the regional or provincial consultations; meetings with the government and the ADB (Supervising Entity) and individual meetings separately between FNN’s president and vice president with Ministry of Agriculture, ADB, WB, IFAD, FAO, CARD and MEF; policy workshop; and, farmers exchange visits.*

*FO partnership with government on accessing public resources is taking place in the context of a government that has recently set a new development policy to reduce poverty in Cambodia, i.e. export one million ton of milled rice by 2015. It has established a policy of supporting farmer cooperatives, self-help saving groups, and organic and sustainable agriculture. There is an acknowledgement of the need for farmers to be formed into groups.*

*There have been many similar laws and policies in Cambodia. The problem, however, is that some articles of laws and policies are not so helpful for the farmers and farmer organizations. They need to be discussed, consulted and amended. Examples of these are the anti-corruption law, association and NGO laws, cooperative law, and agricultural land use law, among others. The government seems to be open to this review, but it seems to lack the budget to implement it/*

*In order to approach the government and access public services and resources, farmer organizations generally organize and participate in meetings and workshops with the governments and other partners. FOs are proactively pursuing cooperating with government by initiating the building of good relationships.*

*Under the project, several activities have been conducted. Provincial consultation workshops were held in 8 target provinces (out of 10), which include Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey. A national consultation workshop and policy dialogue was also organized in Phnom Penh. These activities included 213 participants, 72 of whome were female.*

*In 2011, FNN also organized a national consultation workshops in Phnom Penh in cooperation with AFA, where several COs, FOs and international institutions participated. They also met with representatives of MAFF.*

*Partnership with government was facilitated by organizing meetings, workshops, and field visits and inviting key and relevant government representatives. Another thing that helped was doing advocacy based on principles.*

*On the other hand, several factors hindered more effective partnership. There is the view by government and some NGOs that farmer organizations are small and weak institution and entity, or that that they lack the competence to handle and manage both human and financial resources by themselves. Both the government and NGOs, sometimes, act on behalf of the farmers and assume that they know what the farmers think, want or need. Farmers and farmer organizers are always told to ignore and not be involved with politics. There is also the perception that the GAFSP project a Government project, and therefore, no CSOs should be included.*

*From these experiences, a few recommendations can be made. The government has its own agenda, policies and strategies. So, FOs, CSOs, and NGOs must be proactive, resourceful, active partners, and critical. They should not wait for the project come to them, but they should be actively getting involved in the project. FOs/CSOs must build stronger cooperation and coordination among themselves to build one voice, one strategy and one vision toward GAFSP or other government projects through collective monitoring and evaluation processes. There is a need to act as a “football team.” It is not enough to just pint out the negative side of the Government. But there is to change government by making FOs and CSOs stronger and acting on clear principles.*

**Open Forum**

The following additional points were made in response to the questions and clarifications made:

***On maximizing the common GAFSP platform for FOs (Keshab):*** *Cambodia has a different context. First, Dr. Koma has influenced the Agriculture Ministry. He can push for FO initiatives in the process. Second, FOs and CSOs already know about the GAFSP project and will be able to influence the process from now on. Third, the government invited Dr. Koma to a dialogue regarding sustainable agriculture in Cambodia. He has consulted the CSOs and will meet with government again. He can share about GAFSP and the FNN chair or other FOs leaders can also bring GAFSP there.*

***On the government’s target and strategy to export 1 million tons of rice by 2015 (Cuong):*** *This year, Cambodia did not import because there is already surplus for export. But the government needs to organize rice coops to meet the target. Different rice varieties also require rice coops.*

***On following up government commitments (Cuong):*** *In the EFAP project, the government involved NGOs and CSOs as independent monitors. CEDAC was one of the NGOs that tried to bid. To follow up the process, FNN will organize in December or January a meeting among CSOs and other stakeholders. FOs will be invited. They have close cooperation with ADB*

*In Vietnam, the government says “this is good, we will come back to you,” but they forget it. So CSOs have become proactive to get commitment. They prepare detailed proposals so they get positive results.*

***On the existence of a platform or network of FOs for agriculture issues and policies (Marek):*** *In Cambodia, CSOs have several networks, but they act individually based on their respective agenda. They have different principles and cannot work together. For example, FNN is focused on organic farming. There is no common ground or basis of unity yet to come together in one platform.*

***On getting support of government (Sophal):*** *FOs in Cambodia do this by initiating action. When there are more FOs, the voice gets stronger and government is forced to listen. After the consultation on the GAFSP project, the MEF also started to know about FNN, not just the Ministry of Agri.*

*There was 3.6 million tons of surplus rice in 2010, but farmers did not sell them, but the middle men. FNN has to work with NGOs with similar vision. FNN now has 10 million USD in savings capital. It has formed 28 rice cooperatives in 14 provinces. It plans to set up one national rice mill in Phnom Penh and 50 rice mills in 50 districts. FNN will use it to push for the FO agenda.*

***On the situation of land grabbing in Cambodia (Cissokho):*** *Land grabbing**is a huge and critical issue. It is happening mostly in upland areas with small population and large areas in forest areas. The lands are usually bought by huge foreign and local companies. They get economic land concessions from government, which affect people in the area. FNN is not working in those areas. Most FNN areas are not affected.*

**FOs Involvement in GAFSP Processes (Regional and Global Perspective from AFA)**

Esther Penunia shared the experiences of AFA in FOs involvement in the GAFSP processes at the regional and global level (See Annex: CSO Asia Report - Video)

*AFA did not hear about GAFSP before until Cissokho and Nora McKeon wrote a letter informing that there are CSO representatives in the GAFSP SC.*

*As of May 2012, the GAFSP SC CSO Asia Representative has conducted total of 11 missions in 4 countries. These include: 4 visits to Nepal -- 2 in 2011 and 2 in 2012; 3 visits to Cambodia – 2 in 2011 and 1 in 2012; 2 visits to Bangladesh – 1 in 2011 and 1 in 2012; and, 2 visits to Mongolia – 1 in 2011 and 1 in 2012.*

*A typical mission includes: meetings with government officials, meetings with supervising entities, consultations with CSOs and FOs, interviews with CSOs, field visits, building and nourishing friendships and relations.*

*There were also knowledge and learning activities.*

*CSOs have the view that, generally, GAFSP projects, if implemented well, will help small-scale women and men farmers. But several issues need to be addressed, such as land, water, and forest rights; inclusion of marginal small-scale farmers (women, youth, and dalits); sustainable technologies adapting to climate change; promotion of traditional, local, nutritious crops; improvement of local markets; and, significant involvement of FOs and NGOs.*

*The engagement of CSOs in GAFSP projects have has some positive developments. In Nepal, there is the presence of a farmers’ forum with independent FOs in the Nepal Farmers’ Coalition. A CSO Working Group on GAFSP was also established. In Mongolia, a CSO working group has also been formed.*

*FO/CSO involvement in GAFSP has the following aims: voice/participation; partnership of FO-SE-GO; strong leadership capacities; involvement in project design and implementation; food-secure households; unity in diversity; and, improved, happy lives.*

Several factors helped facilitate the achievement of the above-mentioned results. AFA is part of the GAFSP SC. There is annex 3 (guidelines for participation) that came from FO and CSO proposal in SC. AFA has funds from WB and from IFAD. AFA has worked with Agricord. AFA has good relations with FAO people, especially in Bangladesh. AFA has contacts in different GAFSP countries – GFF, ActionAid, etc.

**FOs Involvement in GAFSP Processes (Regional and Global Perspective from ROPPA)**

Mamadou Cissoko shared the experiences of ROPPA in FOs involvement in the GAFSP processes at the regional and global level (See Annex: Sharing from ROPPA)

**(WAS RECORDING CISSOKHO’S SHARING ON VIDEO -- GO BACK TO VIDEO RECORDING)**

**Open Forum**

The following additional points were made in response to the questions and clarifications made:

*The global process is very useful. (Kanchan)*

*We can go beyond GAFSP. (Esther)*

*We are diverse but there is necessity of being organized. There must be a common front for agricultural negotiations. (Marek)*

*GAFSP is an opportunity for FOs. The challenge is to take this opportunity. There is fund for small grant to support FO engagement in the process. (Cissokho)*

**NOVEMBER 10:**

**Recap of Session 1**

AFA Advocacy Officer Lany Rebagay of AFA presented a brief recap of the previous day’s sharing of experiences on FO involvement in GAFSP processes. (See Annex: Recap of Session 1)

*The* ***broad objectives*** *of FO involvement in GAFSP processes are: food sovereignty; empowered FOs; participatory and good governance.*

*However, this process is beset by* ***problems*** *of lack of transparency and openness of governments.*

*In spite of this and in response to these problems, there have been several* ***initiatives*** *by FOs/CSOs in GAFSP engagement. These include: building FO/CSO platform through activities such as FO profiling; capacity building through activities such as training on constructive engagement and policy advocacy; engaging government through consultation workshops and by providing comments in the project design; community visits/consultations/validation; and, active role in GAFSP SC by uploading and downloading information.*

*These initiatives have resulted in some concrete* ***gains****. FOs/CSOs have commented/influenced the GFASP project design (sites, components, etc.). “Warm relation” has been established among FOs/CSOs and partly with government. There is also complementation in MTCP, GAFSP, and other processes.*

**Session 2: Analyzing the GAFSP Experience**

AFA Knowledge Management Officer Jun Virola facilitated the session. (See Annex: Analyzing the GAFSP Experience)

The purpose of the session is to help the participants go beyond a description of their experiences, generate knowledge from the experiences, and draw lessons that can be used to improve the engagements in GAFSP processes.

The following questions were used as a guide:

1. Was the involvement of FOs in GAFSP processes successful or not?

2. What criteria should we use as basis for saying that we were successful or not?

3. What indicators should we use to say that each criteria has been achieved?

4. What factors affected each of these indicators? (positive and negative)

The participants were asked to form into buzz groups for a plenary workshop.

**Workshop Results**

**(SYNTHESIZE)**

**Success of FOs in being involved in GAFSP processes:**

* Yes, we are successful (Africa, Nepal, Cambodia)
* Partly successful (AFA, AsiaDHRRA, CSA)
* Not yet successful (Mongolia)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria/Basis of Success** | **Indicators/Evidences** |
| 1. GO recognition/appreciation of FOs/CSOs role/openness | * Expressed realization of government that it needs FO participation * (Factor: Link with political parties contributed to the pressure/recognition) * FOs/CSOs invited to meetings by government in GAFSP and other public projects |
| 1. Consolidation of FOs/CSOs | * Coordinated efforts of FOs/CSOs |
| 1. Solidary among FOs/CSOs | * Presence of unified platform * Functional core group * Regular meetings * Institutional commitment/agreement/consensus * Inclusion of involvement in platform in the strategic plan of the organizaton |
| 1. Level of Participation  * Proactive participation in the process through access of information from partners * Able to mobilize other FOs to participate | * Different levels of participation (geographical – district, central; sectoral – women, gender) |
| 1. FO ownership | * Expressed comment of farmers that GAFSP is our project |
| 1. Existence of strong and dynamic FO | * Partnership/relationship among FOs, NGOs, donors * FOs able to demand/exact accountability from government |
| 1. Opening democratic space | * Access to space for participation which allows FOs to access resources |
| 1. Mainstreaming of agricultural project/agenda in broader national/regional development framework/government instruments | * CAADIP – Comprehensive Agriculture Development Project * EPA – opportunity to negotiate trade agenda of FOs |
| 1. Leveraging existing experience/initiatives | * Application of previous linkages and initiatives to GAFSP |
| 1. Level of partnership with government | * Access to relevant project information * Openness to actual partnership in implementing GAFSP project by becoming service provider (bidding) |
| 1. Institutionalized participation of FO  * Broader platform/alliance * Participation of FO in mainstream GAFSP * Participation in other public programs * Linking participation at various levels (local, national, regional, global) | * Part of GAFSP SC * Government responds to CSO GAFSP SC comment * Participation in consensus decision making * Access to resources for informing constituencies * Annex 3 guideline which includes FO participation in GAFSP processes |
| 1. Responsiveness to the needs of small-scale farmers | * Comments of FOs included in the GAFSP project |
| 1. Healthy partnership among FOs and NGOs | * Presence of platform where FOs and NGOs work together * (factor/recommendation: Warm-up/seed fund to catalyze the formation of platform |
| 1. Capacity building | * Presence of training * Number of leaders who participated in training |
| 1. Access to resources | * Able to get budget for consultation process * Link with other resource agencies engaged in GAFSP which can be mobilized by FOs |

**Others**

* Contribution to broader agenda of food sovereignty
  + GAFSP as an instrument to achieve food sovereignty
  + Access to resources for food sovereignty
* Healthy relationship among FOs/CSOs
  + Presence of platform of FOs/CSOs
* Improve transparency
* Participation in management of resources
  + Decision making/control over resources
* Partnership with government
* Increased capacity to engage

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| **(+) Facilitating Factors** | **(-) Hindering Factors** |
| * Strong FO/leadership of FO (2) * Link with relevant groups with information and influence over government (2) * AFA as one of CSO reps in GAFSP SC (3) * Political parties (1) * NGOs/personalities (Dr. Koma) * Agri-agencies * FO regional groups (ROPPA) * Availability of warm-up/seed fund that supports the initial mobilization of broader CSO (IFAD/Agricord/WB) (2) * Experience/capacity in past engagement was capitalized/leveraged (2) * Contacts/links * Existing mechanism/\_\_\_ * Social capital/trust (1) * Maximize strategic position (AFA being member of GAFSP SC representing CSO Asia) (1) * Existing capacity to synergize * Capacity building/trainings * Learning from other groups * Investment in improving capacity for constructive engagement * Institutional commitment of FO/CSO to join/participate in the platform * Inclusion of its participation in the platform in its strategic plan * Assigned representative to attend activities/meetings * Willingness and capacity to explain/convince other FOs/CSOs to participate in public programs and link various local and global processes/synergize (1) * Program design included participation (1) * Sharing and strategic coordination among regional FOs (ROPPA, AFA, etc.) (1) * Linking/transforming global opportunities and processes to local (1) * Policy dialogue * Transparency in government * Clarify of broader agenda/vision * Link engagement with specific instrument with broader agenda * Capacity of farmer leader to push government/convince government leaders/negotiate * Buy-in of government at all levels * National, local unit * Key leaders, technical staff * Build relationship at different levels of government bureaucracy * Executive * Legislative * Monitoring process * Clarity/agreement on indicator between FO and NGO * Complementation/balancing of roles between FO and NGO as basis of good partnership * Solidarity * Sharing of roles/responsibilities in broader development work * Timing (political context, democratization) * Timely sharing of info * Complementation * Trust/relationship * Diplomacy/pragmatism * GAFSP as an instrument that provides opportunity to collaborate and build capacity to engage in other public programs | * Absence of strong FO/fragmented FO/NGO-led FO * Historical/cultural context (both positive and negative) * Weakness of FOs/lack of readiness to engage with government * For government openness: * Absence of mechanism/policy for participation * Lack of transparency (2) * Have own partner FOs and CSOs; those who will not disagree with them * Inadequate skills, knowledge on government processes and bureaucracy * Absence of common agenda and platform among FOs/CSOs * Lead government agency has no working relationship with FOs/CSOs * Lack of coordination among government agencies (Agri vs. Finance Department) * “undiplomatic” approach * Political constraint – e.g. GAFSP suspended due to election * Lack of proactive action from FOs/CSOs * Lack of clarity of priority pillar/agenda (including indicators for) * Food sovereignty * Access to resources * Transparency, etc. * Not leveled off on indicators/expectations * Competition over resources |

**(SYNTHESIZE)**

**Some Lessons Learned**

1. Strong FO
   1. FO leadership
   2. Strategic positioning
   3. Proactive coordination among FOs from global to national/local
2. Political Context
   1. Democratic space
   2. Government openness/transparency mechanism
3. Capacity + Attitude + Paradigm
   1. Clarity of objective/broader agenda
   2. Skill
4. Trust/relationship/social capital/solidarity
5. Networking/coordination platform
   1. Within FOs/CSOs
   2. Among GOs
6. Maximizing existing mechanisms and initiatives + past experiences
   1. Existing strategic relationship/position
   2. Leveraging
7. Design that include FO/CSO participation
8. Resources/catalytic fund

**Session 3: Recommendations**

AsiaDHRRA Secretary General Marlene Ramirez facilitated the last session on coming up with recommendations.

The following questions were used to guide the participants in coming up with recommendations:

1. What strategies and activities can be undertaken to address gaps and maximize opportunities at the national, sub-regional, regional, and global levels? (short and long term)
2. What support do FOs/CSOs need to facilitate their partnerships with government/other stakeholders to be able to access public resources, e.g. GAFSP? (with whom and from whom?)

**Workshop Results:**

**(SYNTHESIZE)**

**Africa (ROPPA)**

**Strategies and Activities**

1. Linkage
   1. Identify what we have and the gaps
   2. Government programs
   3. Disseminate information – proactively seek info
   4. Advocacy
2. Capacity building/learning
   1. Orientation on government on what we do
   2. Fund raising
   3. Improved services to members
3. Communication system
   1. National level platform – FO
   2. Regional level platform – ROPPA
   3. +KM
4. Partnership with CSOs
   1. Roles
   2. Sustain CSO platforms processes and more
   3. Consolidating beyond GAFSP
5. Assertive interaction with government
   1. Follow through
   2. Attend meetings
   3. Lobby for the creation of thematic sector working group at national level
6. Accountability
   1. Credibility

**Support Needed**

1. EU Program: Supporting Policy Dialogue (SFOAP in Africa) – equivalent to the MTCP in Asia
   1. Capacity building fund (15M in 43 countries)
   2. Partnership with agri-agencies (process)
2. Capacity building
   1. Platform
   2. FO member
3. Sustain gains and needed support
   1. Various partners
4. Rights awareness
   1. Organizing of FOs

**Nepal**

1. Strengthen linkages, understanding and effectiveness/ Resource Generation
   1. Continue dialogue among FOs and CSOs
   2. Continue constructive dialogue with govt, donor
   3. Strengthen Linkages with GAFSP process thru' AFA, AgriCORD, AsiaDHRRA, etc
   4. Mutual fund raising
2. Assertive interactions with government and stakeholders at local to national level
   1. Strong at strategic designing with clearly defined roles
3. Use GAFSP lessons as spring board for involvement in all major program processes of agriculture and livelihood
   1. Influence Min of Agri to have Farmer Desk
   2. Build Capacity of FOs & related CSOs
   3. Increase link with country level donors
4. Communication & Knowledge Management
   1. Networking & partnership across & vertical

**Mongolia**

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| --- | --- |
| **The gaps** | **The strategies** |
| 1. Lack of information dissemination from government 2. Lack of consultation 3. Lack of capacity of the FOs/herders | * CSOs in Mongolia to proactively seek information from the government * To participate in various government meetings/invite themselves * Lobby for the creation of a national project steering committee with thematic sectors * CSOs should be established or sustained * CSO platform should participate in the international and regional bodies like AFA (e.g. NAMAC can apply as member of AFA) * for national CSOs core group to dev program to strengthen and build capacity (e.g. NAMAC cooperatives at provincial and municipal levels) * for CSOs to improve its delivery of services |

**Support needed**

1. Capacity building of CSO focal groups
2. Capacity building of FOs
3. Financial and technical assistance to sustain gains

**Bangladesh**

**Strategies and activities**

* Strengthening Kendrio Krishok Moitree (KKM) for Enhancing Solidarity among Farmer Associations in Bangladesh
* At least two years close observation and follow-up of the formation of farmers’ association at district level
* Experience sharing among the national and district level stakeholders
* Exchange visit for the neighboring regions for best practice sharing with an aim of model replication for greater platform.

**Follow up activities needed**

* The regional platform has just initiated. Yet we need close monitoring for activation of the association.
* Regular guidance for committee formation in stairs and issue selection for periodic gathering.
* Capacity building for fund raising and campaigning/advocacy to ensure their rights.
* Initial financial support for the field organizers since skill sharing is needed at starting stage.

**Support needed by FOs**

* Initial monetary support for the skilled leaders/organizers to motivate the rest FOs members since the places are scattered.
* Rights awareness
* Capacity building on advocacy/campaign
* Facilitation for organizing and conducting consultation with different departments of government to access public resources,

**Structures for management and cooperation**

* Financial cooperation
* Best practice sharing
* Motivation or consultation with government for partnership with FOs in order to better delivery and wider reach of government services.

**AFA**

**Strategies and activities**

* Continuous monitoring of GAFSP implementation through the national FO/CSO platforms.
* Provide technical assistance and capacity building to FOs on the ff : networking, government policy processes and frameworks, constructive engagement/ policy advocacy including strategy and tactics, organizational mgt, fund management --- targeting local farmer groups who are members of national FOs
* Continue uploading and downloading info
* Knowledge Mgt: documentation of experiences, convening of learning exchanges, making knowledge products (videos, case studies, issue papers, primers, modules)
* New area for engagement : private sector window of GAFSP : representation in d-m, downloading and uploading of info, capacity building of FOs, especially cooperatives

**Support needed**

* From Fos : regular communication and sharing of info, strategizing sessions
* From Agricord: funding esp for regionally coordinated, nationally implemented projects, linking N-S, S-S, joint advocacy with regional and international bodies (ASEAN, SAARC)
* GAFSP-CU- WB (uploading an downloading info)
* From National NGOs : accompaniment to FOs, linking to govt entities, capacity building activities

**AgriCord**

**Mobilization of Resources**

1. National Level

1. How to utilize the capacity-building allocation in country GAFSP projects to: a.1 strengthen FO engagement (e.g. monitoring, evaluation, etc. and 2) in strengthening organized platform
2. Mobilize resources from existing partner-donors, other donors to help strengthen current FO platforms (specific lobby/campaign)
3. Utilization of other opportunities such as the MTCP Phase 2

2. Global Level: Support Facility

1. for FO engagement beyond GAFSP: Key Public Agricultural Policies and Programs
2. Continuing sharing of knowledge and experiences

**Field Visit to Takeo Province**

Takeo province

3 districts in GAFSP province

We chose 2 districts out of GAFSP province

Before we did not know the target area

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