

ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2017

"Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific"

29-31 March 2017 | UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE CENTRE, BANGKOK, THAILAND

SIDE EVENT

The contribution of Family Farming to achieving SDGs in Asia

Venue: UNCC, Meeting Room E

Date: 31 March 2017

Time: 11:30 – 12:30

Organizers: AsiaDHRRA and World Rural Forum

Background

Family Farming as defined by FAO – a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labor, both women's and men's – has a clear relevance on the Sustainable Development Agenda. A key principle of family farming is that *the* family and the farm are linked, coevolve and combine economic, environmental, reproductive, social and cultural functions. Therefore, family farming is much more than an agrarian economic model: it is the foundation for sustainable food production, environmental management of rural and marine areas and their biodiversity, the source of significant cultural elements for each people, and ultimately, a fundamental pillar of countries' overall development and a key element for achieving SDGs. Hence, poverty eradication strategies in Asia and the Pacific need to take into account the potential of family farming.

Family farming produces between 70 and 80% of food globally, playing a vital role in achieving food and nutritional security, as well as rural employment, income creation, and the appropriate management of its natural resources, including land and water. Developing family farming could allow rural youth to have opportunities of well-being, develop projects of dignified livelihood, which ensures that the country has the human capital it needs to sustain agricultural production. These objectives are fundamental pillars for achieving social peace and for developing peaceful, resilient and sustainable societies.

In December of 2011, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). During the International Year of Family Farming, the UN and its agencies emphasized the potential of family farmers. The FAO declared that family farmers are an important part of the solution to a world free of hunger and poverty. It also stressed that there is plenty of evidence to show how poor family farmers can quickly grow their production potential in an environment where favorable policies are effectively implemented. This commitment to the growth of family farming and its contribution to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals is the key current campaign lead by the government of Costa Rica to request the UN General Assembly to declare a Decade of Family Farming.

Support for family farming is especially relevant for the achievement of SGD1. SDG 2- but family farming plays a relevant role in the achievement of several others SDGs. We believe proper development of family farming systems could be considered a key aspect to unlock many of the targets in several of the SDGs.

Nearly 80 per cent of the extremely poor live in rural areas, with rural people being four times more likely to suffer extreme poverty than urban areas. At the same time, 40% of the world's households depend on agriculture as a way of life. In order to achieve SG1 and put an end to the scourge of poverty, it is necessary to focus efforts in rural areas, especially by favoring the most important actors of change, family farmers, artisanal fishers, pastoralists, etc. and enhancing local capacity to produce and access food, in addition to establishing social protection systems. There are more people to feed with less water, less farmland and reduced biodiversity. But the world produces enough food for everyone. We need to transform existing food systems, which employ a large amount of inputs, to make them more sustainable –including reducing food loss and waste-through better management and better techniques in agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry. Regarding SG1, family farming can play as special role in objective number one making sure that all men and women, particularly the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control of land and other property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technologies and financial services, including microfinance.

SDG 2- End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. All the goals of SDG 2 are clearly linked to family farming given the inseparable link between food security, adequate nutrition, local economic development and family farming. Family farmers produce 80% of the food consumed globally and they are the main source of local development. Above all, family farming can ensure agricultural growth which in agrarian and low-income economies is at least twice as effective as growth in other sectors to achieve food security.

SDG 5- Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

One-fourth of the world's population is women farmers, often heads of households, who represent some 1.6 billion people (Women's World Summit Foundation, Geneva). Women contribute a significant proportion of the agricultural labor force in developing countries. FAO estimates this figure at 43%, while UNIFEM estimates between 60-80%. Addressing the structural gender imbalances regarding access to and control of resources linked to land, access to technology, training and/or credit is essential to achieve SGG 5. Moreover, the implementation of ODS 5 necessarily involves the strengthening of the status of women farmers and their rights. Something that family farming puts at the core of its definition.

SDG 14- The small-scale fisheries sector falls under the definition of family farming adopted by the international community in the framework of the International Year of Family Farming. This way of fishing accounts for about half of the world's fish catches and it represents two-thirds of the total catches intended for direct human consumption. This way of fishing is less harming for the environment and it guarantees the sustainability of the aquatic resources.

Scope

From the stand point that the development of sensible policies towards family farming is key in eradicating poverty in Asia, this event aims at creating a strategic alliance between farmers groups, coalitions working specifically on family farming and those NGOs working on rural development and poverty eradication. This side-event will present the importance of promoting better policies for family farmers and it will generate recommendations towards localizing SDG commitment especially at national level. Specifically this side event will:

- Show real examples of local and regional efforts to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Increase the visibility and recognition of the important role that family farming plays in feeding the world population, ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition.
- Increase collaboration between different stakeholders that operate in the rural areas.
- Promote concrete actions towards ending discrimination in all forms against women and girls in rural areas, promoting their empowerment through the increasing of their access to information, productive and financial resources and decision-making processes.

Key Questions

The key questions to be discussed in this side event are:

- What are the main sources of poverty in rural farming populations?
- What are the linkages between sound policies for family farming and poverty reduction?
- How can sound policies for family farming help achieving concrete targets on the SDGs 1, 2, and 14?
- What are the necessary arrangements needed to translate global commitments into tangible results and how could these be monitored?

Tentative programme

- Presentation of the AsiaDHRRA regional paper on localizing SDGs in the context of rural development and poverty eradication
- SDGs and family farming: how can better policies for family farmers contribute to achieving SDGs 1, 2 and 14 in the Asia Pacific Region
- A decade for family farming: thinking forward to achieve SDGs while promoting sustainability in farming

Panelists/discussants

- Genesis Catindig, AsiaDHRRA
- Daniel Ruiz de Garibay, World Rural Forum
- Katinka Weinberger, ESCAP, Environment and Development Division

Moderator:

Proposed programme

1. Opening & Introduction by Moderator (5 mins)
2. Panelist interventions (30 mins)
3. Response from UNESCAP (10 minutes)
3. Q&A and discussion (10 mins)
4. Key messages and closing (5 mins)

For more details and information contact:

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