



Empowering small scale men and women farmers in Asia

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Farmers' Voices, Farmers' Choices

AFA Annual Report 2009



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Chairperson's Message

The year 2009 was another milestone for AFA as we continued to pursue our dreams and aspirations for the small women and men farmers in Asia.

We advanced the farmers agenda through our policy advocacy activities.

We helped strengthen our members through our capacity building efforts.

We sustained AFA as an organization of and by farmers through effective governance.

These were all made possible by the solidarity and cooperation among us and the support of our partners.

Let us continue to move forward and face the challenges for the sake of our families and communities in the rural areas of our region.

Sudaporn Sittisathapornkul

AFA Chairperson



2009 at a Glance

AFA advance its advocacy agenda by organizing consultations and forums for its members and partners and attending regional and international gatherings.

It continued to be invited to consultations by CSOs and intergovernmental bodies. It started to receive invitations to private sector gatherings as well.

It increased efforts at building the capacity of its members in organizational management, sustainable agriculture, and marketing.

It continued to provide technical assistance and facilitate training opportunities for its members.

It sustained its organizational systems and processes, as well as communication and information sharing.



Accomplishments in Policy Advocacy

Strategic Objective: to influence key intergovernmental regional and international decision making bodies on common agricultural issues affecting our members

AFA advanced its agenda through consultations, forums, dialogues, direct actions, campaigns, and researches.

It amplified the voice of farmers on various issues and themes such agricultural trade, food security/sufficiency, financial/economic crisis, women, land, sustainable agriculture, family farming, farmer empowerment, and climate change.

It strengthened its networks and linkages with CSOs and intergovernmental bodies.

It sustained its reputation as a credible organization of small scale women and men farmers in the Asian region.



Consultations, fora, and dialogues organized by or with AFA

National Consultation on the Agricultural Trade Agenda of Vietnam. February 16-17, 2009. Hanoi, Vietnam.

AFA and VNFU conducted a national consultation on Vietnam's agricultural trade agenda. It was attended by 32 representatives (26 men, 6 women) from VNFU, from government agencies, as well as from civil society organizations. Through the consultation, VNFU farmer leaders were able to understand the trade situation of Vietnam and the proposed national trade agenda for Vietnam and regional trade agenda for ASEAN gained support from the participants. The consultation was part of AFA's research on the Regional Trade Agenda.

APF Panel on Food Security in ASEAN. February 21, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Co-organized with AsiaDHRRA.

During the ASEAN People's Forum, AFA co-organized a panel on food security in ASEAN, together with AsiaDHRRA. AFA's commissioned researcher presented the Farmers' Trade Agenda. Through the panel, AFA was able to define and articulate its concerns and proposals on food security, small holder agriculture, as well as a just, equity-led trade to a broader movement of regional civil society groups and government allies. The workshop was attended by around 50 participants, almost half of which are women. The workshop summary found its way into the final APF 2009 declaration.

AFA Regional Consultation on the Financial Crisis. February 23-24, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand.

AFA held the regional consultation in order to understand the causes and dynamics of the global financial meltdown, analyze its possible effects and impact on the Asian region's agriculture, and identify the challenges to smallholders. AFA also presented the consolidated results and analysis of the national consultations on trade and validated and approved a regional agricultural trade agenda. There were 36 participants (19 men, 17 women), from 9 AFA member organizations, and 4 partner organizations. CSA participated in this event, the first time it attended an AFA regional event, and Marek Poznanski gave a presentation on the experience of EU (European Union) with the common agricultural policy.

Video Conference on Global Food Sufficiency. April 29, 2009. Makati City, Philippines. Co-organized with AsiaDHRRA

AFA joined other civil society organizations in a global discussion on sustainable food policies through a satellite conference on April 29 that was moderated from the European



Parliament in Brussels, connecting parallel regional conferences in Asia (Manila, Philippines), West Africa (Dakar, Senegal), Latin America (Brasilia, Brazil), and the USA (Washington DC). Co-organized by the EPFS (European Platform for Food Sovereignty), CSA, and the EU, the conference aimed to discuss with stakeholders from Asia, Africa, North America, as well as Latin America, the main problems and possible solutions, leading to a global strategy for sustainable food production and consumption.. AFA was represented by its Secretary General and Project Officer, as well as by the LAKAMBINI (of PAKISAMA) President, Ms. Luisita Esmao, who gave AFA's presentation. Other organisation who participated in this video conferencing were EARWG and TWN who were also members of the RDWG (Rural Development Working Group).

Women Consultation. October 6-8, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand.

AFA conducted a regional consultation entitled "Asian Women Farmers Reclaiming Space for Food Sovereignty amidst Climate Change." The consultation was part of AFA's continuing efforts to deepen the understanding of small scale men and women farmers on regional and global events, especially their implications on small scale men and women farmers. It was held parallel to the UN Intersessional Meeting on Climate Change, also held in Bangkok last September 27-October 9, 2009. Women farmer leaders came together to understand the Asian and global dynamics of the climate change negotiations, to share their initiatives in ensuring food security and in responding to the effects of climate change. The event was hosted by SorKorPor, with the support of Agriterra. There were 44 participants, 17 male and 27 female. Resource persons and guests included representatives from AsiaDHRRA, WOCAN, GGCA, FAO, and IATP. The activities included workshops, a press conference, and a mobilization on climate justice. A video teaser on the gender dimensions of food security and climate change, which was produced by AFA, was also shown.



Consultations, fora, and dialogues attended

Capacity Development Workshop on Improving Agricultural Productivity, Water Use Efficiency and Strengthening Rural Livelihoods. January 28-30, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by the UN DESA/DSD, UNWDPC, UNESCAP.

AFA participated in the capacity development workshop on the thematic issue of land, together with ILC and AsiaDHRRRA. It brought together senior government policymakers, representatives of local authorities, officials from the United Nations System, researchers and experts, as well as practitioners, to share lessons learned and best practices in the area of sustainable agricultural and rural development. The results of this workshop were inputted to the final UNCSD 17 Chairperson's text, which was discussed during the UNCSD 17 meeting in May 2009 in New York. AFA was represented here by its Chairperson, Secretary General, and the Secretary General of Sor Kor Por. The AFA Secretary General delivered a presentation on "Sustaining Smallholder Farming Systems: Opportunities and Constraints". Also, AFA worked with AsiaDHRRRA and the ILC in making a CSO statement during the workshop.

Round Table Discussions on Smallholder Agriculture and Food Security in the 21st Century. IFAD Governing Council, 32nd Session. February 18-19, 2009. Rome, Italy. Organized by IFAD's Policy Division.

The AFA Secretary General was invited to be a discussant during one of the three roundtable discussions (RTDs), entitled "Research and Innovation for Smallholder Farmers in the Context of Climate Change". The purpose of the roundtable was to share experiences and good practices in agricultural research that nuance the ability of smallholder farmers to cope with the challenges of climate change, as well as to discuss how the research agenda can combine the objectives of resilience, adaptation to local changes, and higher productivity. The RTD was joined by delegates to the IFAD's Governing Council meeting. AFA also participated in a press conference organized by IFAD Gender Division. The press conference made a small splash in a UN newsletter.

APNFS Regional Conference. February 19-20, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by APNFS.

AFA participated in the regional conference of APNFS (Asia Pacific Network for Food Security) entitled "Responding to the Global Crisis: Actions and Policy Recommendations." AFA was represented by the AFA Chairperson, SorKorPor Chairperson (with translator), AFA Project Officer, and AFA-commissioned researcher on trade (Riza Bernabe). API was also invited. During the conference, AFA, through its commissioned researcher, presented the "Farmers' Trade Agenda in ASEAN." AFA was able to share its regional agriculture trade agenda (the initial results of the national consultation processes mostly held last year).



APF 2009 & 4th ACSC. February 20-22, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by APF and ACSC.

AFA participated in the ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF 2009) and the 4th ACSC (ASEAN Civil Society Conference) with the theme "Advancing the ASEAN Peoples' Agenda". AFA was represented by the AFA Chairperson and other AFA ExeCom members (API, FNN, PAKISAMA, SORKORPOR), AFA Secretary General, AFA Project Officer, and AFA Researcher. The whole APF 2009 was attended by around 700 participants, 300 of which came from outside Thailand. It was capped by a dialogue with the ASEAN Secretary General and the Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs who was the host of the ASEAN February Summit. AFA signed on to the statement presented to the ASEAN summit. AFA was able to join the dialogue with important and relevant officials of ASEAN regarding its policy perspectives and proposals for the development of small men and women farmers in the region.

29th FAO RAP Bangkok. March 26-31, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by FAORAP.

The FAO held the 29th FAORAP (Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Conference in Asia and the Pacific) last March 26-31, in Bangkok, Thailand. Around 150 delegates from 33 countries participated in the conference. AFA participated as an observer, with a Liaison Status with FAO, in this conference, represented by its Chairperson (with translator), and Secretary General. Observers from nine NGOs have joined efforts to make valuable interventions and come up with one common statement. Besides AFA, other CSOs present included Action Aid, AsiaDHRRA, EARWG (East Asia Regional Working Group), Focus on the Global South, PAN-AP, PNLs, SEACON, and TWN. The summary of this common statement was presented by the AFA Secretary General during the Ministerial Meeting last March 30.

The Need to Regulate Markets: Analysis and Proposals in View of the Recent Food Price Crisis. May 4-5, 2009. Brussels, Belgium. Organized by CSA.

The objective of the seminar was to re-examine the question of agricultural market regulation in the light of liberalization, deregulation and free trade; problems which manifested in volatility of prices of agricultural products. The workshop was organized by CSA, Oxfam-Solidarity, and farmers organisations - Belgian Beet Growers, European Coordination Via Campesina, ROPPA from West Africa and FETRAF from Brazil. AFA was represented by its Secretary General, who was also requested to make a presentation on "Market Access for Farmers at Local Level: Reduction of the Imbalance in Trade Relations, Reinforcement of Transport Infrastructures".



Meeting of Farmers' Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and the FAO. May 25-29, 2009. Bellagio Center, Italy. Organized by FAO.

As part of its "Reformed FAO with Growth Process", FAO organized this meeting with a small group of selected representatives of FOs and international NGOs to strategize effective partnerships and mutual collaboration to foster world food security, strengthen institutions of assistance to small farmers, and increase productivity of marginalized farmers. Main topics in the meeting included: (1) examination of the major global events relevant to food security starting with the Rio Summit in 1992 to gather lessons learned in terms of participation and cooperation; (2) the vision, till 2015, of a reformed FAO highlighting structures and mechanism for effective partnerships; (3) vision of a reformed Committee on Food Security. FAO invited AFA, through its Secretary General to this meeting. During this meeting, the AFA Secretary General reported the results of a workshop group and co-facilitated another workshop group.

ASEAN-FAO Conference on Food Security. May 27-28, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by ASEAN and FAORAP.

The objective of this conference was to provide a consultative platform for the ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners and international organisations to address food security issues in the ASEAN region. AFA Chairperson Sudaporn Sittisathapornkul (with translator) and Mr. Raul Socrates Banzuela, PAKISAMA National coordinator, represented AFA. Ms. Sudaporn and Mr. Banzuela prepared and delivered the AFA statement on the second day of the conference. AFA and AsiaDHRRA drafted and finalized a one-paragraph concluding CSO statement, upon consultation with other CSOs who were present during the meeting. This one-paragraph statement was captured in the adopted Joint Chair's Summary.

RTD on AIFS-SPA-FS. June 24, 2009. Quezon City, Philippines. Organized by the RDWG.

AFA participated in the round table discussion on the ASEAN Integrated Framework on Food Security and the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (AIFS-SPA-FS) in order to generate clear comments and concrete recommendation on AIFS-SPA-FS and identify areas of mutual interest and action points for national and regional level towards pushing for food self-sufficiency. The meeting was organized by the RDWG (Rural Development Working Group), a loose regional platform composed of 10 regional CSOs working with rural communities, and grassroots organizations of farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples, operating at the Asian region, of which AFA is a member.



China Lecture Series. July 7-10, 2009. Quezon City, Philippines. Organized by Focus on the Global South.

AFA attended a lecture on China's economic development. The lecture was an opportunity for AFA to get more information on China's development and its implications for small farmers in Asia. This subject was also the theme of AFA's regional consultation in February 2008 in Korea. AFA was represented by its 2 Chinese interns.

Regional Conference on the Impact of the Global Economic and Financial Crisis to the Vulnerable Sectors in the Region: Civil Society Voices and ASEAN. July 28-29, 2009. Jakarta, Indonesia. Co-organized by AsiaDHRRA, AFA, Uni-APRO, ASEAN.

In this conference, AFA was able to articulate its concerns, perspectives and proposals with regards the financial crisis and the farmers' sector, as it shared the results of the AFA financial crisis session conducted last February 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. AFA sent the following delegation to this conference: Ms. Sudaporn Sittisathapornkul, Chairperson, AFA, and Adviser, SORKORPOR; Mr. Pote Chumsri, Secretary General, SORKORPOR and translator; Mr. Mudzakir, Vice Chairperson, AFA, and Chairperson, API; Mr. Nuruddin, Secretary General, API; Mr. Muhammad Rifai, Program Officer, API; Ms. Julia Lestari, Deputy for International Relations, API; Mr. Vicente Fabe, Treasurer, AFA and Chairperson, PAKISAMA; Ms. Esther Penunia, Secretary General. A major achievement in this conference was the inclusion of AFA's agenda in the final conference statement. AFA was also able to establish contacts with other CSOs and ASEAN secretariat and government representatives.

SOM AMAF Meeting. Hanoi, Viet Nam. August 11-13, 2009. Organized by ASEAN.

AFA joined the Rural Development Working Group (RDWG) in an audience with the Senior Officers Meeting-ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF). The agenda of the SOM-AMAF meeting was the operationalization of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security-Strategic Plan of Action (AIFS-SPA) framework (first discussed in May, 2009, with AFA participation also). The results of the meeting were to be presented to the regular meeting of the AMAF in October in Brunei, Darussalem. AFA's objectives for participation were to strengthen contacts with ASEAN, identify the units/divisions in ASEAN for advocacy on food security, identify food security projects that can be submitted to ASEAN foundation, promote AFA in ASEAN, maintain active participation in the RDWG, and explore possibilities of AFA participation in the AMAF meeting in October in Brunei and the possibility of recognizing an ASEAN Small Rural Producers' Council. The AFA delegation included: Ms. Sudaporn Sittisathapornkul, Chairperson, AFA and Adviser, SKP; and Mr. Wunchai Satjabanpot, Translator of Ms. Sudaporn. The ASEAN secretariat officials appreciated the meeting with the CSOs.



Agriculture Outlook Asia 2009. September 14-16, 2009. Singapore. Organized by Terrapin.

AFA participated in this conference in order to bring the perspective of small farmers in the discussion on investment strategies in agriculture by producers, buyers, and investors. AFA was represented by its Secretary General Esther Penunia, AFA Treasurer Vicente Fabe, and TWADA Deputy Secretary General Dr. Wenchu Huang. Ms. Penunia made a presentation on "Ensuring Sustainable Agriculture by Allocating Control of Production Resources to Small Scale Farmers." Mr. Fabe was a panellist, while Dr. Huang was the moderator in the session on "Power Panel of Farm Associations: Building the Capacities of Small Scale Agricultural Players by Responding to the Challenges of Sustainable Agro-based Initiatives".

Preparatory Meeting for the Asia Launch of IYFF. September 22-23, 2009. New Delhi, India. Convened by WRF, Hosted by CIFA.

World Rural Forum (WRF), an international organization based in Spain, has spearheaded a campaign for the United Nations to launch an International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). AFA is considered a valuable key supporter of the campaign. In September 2009, WRF convened a preparatory meeting to plan for the campaign's Asia Launch. Attending the preparatory meeting besides AFA (represented by its Secretary General) were AsiaDHRRA and the Consortium of Indian Farmers' Association (CIFA). A program was designed and dates were tentatively set for December, and the three organizations (AFA, AsiaDHRRA, and CIFA), together with WRF, will co-organize the event. However, budget constraints forced the groups to re-set the event to March, 2010.

Caucus on ASEAN FTAs. September 24, 2009. Quezon City, Philippines. Organized by the EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign Network.

AFA attended the caucus entitled "ASEAN FTA's: Boon or Bane to Development and Regional Integration?" Vicente Fabe, AFA Treasurer and PAKISAMA Chairperson, represented AFA and gave a presentation on AFA's Regional Trade Agenda. Copies of the AFA Regional Trade Agenda were distributed to the participants and became the anchor for discussions on alternatives to FTAs. It should be noted that this Regional Trade Agenda was a product of a research conducted by AFA last 2008. CSO participants to the Caucus expressed support to AFA's trade agenda with ASEAN.

Workshop on Empowering Small Producers. September 24-25, 2009. Rome, Italy. Organized by FAO.

AFA participated in the workshop "How to Empower Small Producers: Learning from Good Practices in Institution Building". The workshop was designed to jointly review the main lessons and conclusions from the good practices in institution building identified so far and



identify policy implications and recommendations by different stakeholders to promote effective rural institutions. AFA was represented by Raul Socrates Banzuela of PAKISAMA, who showed a 3-minute video of the Sumilao campaign, highlighted the assassination of Ka Rene Penas (PAKISAMA Vice President), and provided a synthesis formula of the lessons learned during the workshop. FAO asked AFA and PAKISAMA to send them several other cases that would highlight farmers' advocacy on food security.

WTO Public Forum 2009. September 28-30, 2009. Geneva, Switzerland. Organized by WTO.

AFA, through its Secretary General, and PAKISAMA National Coordinator, attended the WTO Public Forum 2009, held in Geneva, Switzerland. AFA gave a presentation on AFA's regional trade agenda during a panel session organized by IATP, entitled "Global Problems, Global Solutions: Towards Better Global Governance". The Forum was an opportunity to listen to diverging perspectives on global trade issues, as well as build and even strengthen contacts with some other groups.

Workshop on Markets. October 1-2, 2009. Brussels, Belgium. Organized by CSA.

The farmer is a player with the least market power because of the characteristics of the agricultural sector, the specific behaviour of the agricultural markets and the fact that farmers are exposed to genuine competition while other players benefit from dominant positions, such as the large distribution companies. This workshop allowed a starting discussion on the instruments to strengthen the market power of producers, starting from concrete experiences in various regions (Africa, Latin America, Europe, and Asia). AFA was represented by its Secretary General Esther Penunia and Soc Banzuela of PAKISAMA. Farmers have two main ways to increase their market power. First, through collective marketing, supply management, and producers' integration (cooperatives). Second, through instruments requiring responsiveness to market signals, adaptation to meet quality standards, finding niches and direct sales. These two main ways can co-exist and can be complementary.

Strategy Meeting for Agriculture and Climate Change. October 4, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by IATP.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), an international organization who has offices in Geneva, China and Minnesota, organized a strategy meeting on how to include agriculture in the current UN negotiations on climate change. The strategy session was timed with the UNFCCC negotiations in Bangkok. One of the objectives of the workshop was to provide a space for networking and build contacts to develop collaborations for advocacy on agriculture in UNFCCC negotiations. As a result, a small advocacy group was formed for networking and coordination of activities while in Bangkok, and leading to Copenhagen



meeting (UNFCCC COP-15). AFA's researcher, Ms. Riza Bernabe, represented AFA in this small advocacy group. This small group, which included AFA, EAFF, IATP and Practical Actions (an NGO based in the UK), worked with other CSO players during the UNFCCC negotiations. AFA's Secretary General Esther Penunia made a presentation during the meeting, entitled "Smallholders' Experience and Solutions to Climate Change."

World Food Week. October 12-16, 2009. Rome, Italy. Organized by FAO.

AFA Secretary General Esther Penunia represented AFA to the World Food Week events. She was a panelist in the session on technology innovations during the High Level Experts Forum on "How to Feed the World in 2050" held at the FAO Headquarters in Rome on October 12-13. It was a talk show format. She was also a panelist in the IFAD-sponsored workshop on organic agriculture on October 15, where she outlined the challenges in mainstreaming organic agriculture. And she was also a panelist in the CSO roundtable on October 16, where she presented AFA's efforts to engage ASEAN on food security concerns.

International Meeting on Climate Change Vulnerabilities. October 21-22, 2009. Brent, Le Quartz, France. Organized by FAO and UNDP.

AFA attended the international meeting entitled "Territories, agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors faced with climate change: A better understanding of vulnerabilities for a more efficient response." AFA was represented by its Secretary General Esther Penunia. During this meeting, a territorial approach to respond to climate change issues was explained in more detail. The meeting helped establish contacts with some secretariat people of UNDP.

CSO Forum Parallel to World Summit on Food Security. November 13-17, 2009. Organized by the Steering Committee to the CSO Forum; World Summit on Food Security. November 16-18, 2009. Rome, Italy. Organized by FAO.

AFA participated in the international conference entitled "People's Food Sovereignty Now: Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Forum Parallel to World Summit on Food Security 2009". AFA was represented by Ms. Sudaporn Sittisathapornkul, Chairperson, AFA, and Adviser, SKP; Mr. Pote Chumsri, Secretary General, SKP and translator; Mr. Jonjon Sarmiento, Youth Leader Organizer, PAKISAMA; Ms. Luisita Esmao, Chairperson, LAKAMBINI-PAKISAMA; and Ms. Ma. Estrella Penunia, Secretary General, AFA. The purpose of the CSO forum was to facilitate the participation of women, small-scale farmers and peasants, Indigenous Peoples, artisanal fisherfolks, food and rural workers, youth, the urban poor, environmental organizations, human rights defenders, NGO and other CSO working for food sovereignty and to ensure that their voices are heard in the World Food Summit; and to seek the commitment of governments and UN agencies to the people's food sovereignty agenda as key alternative to eradicate hunger. The purpose of the FAO World Food Summit,



on the other hand, was to agree on key actions to tackle this crisis. In the words of FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf, “The silent hunger crisis — affecting one sixth of all of humanity — poses a serious risk for world peace and security. We urgently need to forge a broad consensus on the total and rapid eradication of hunger in the world.” AFA was represented by Ms. Penunia to the Steering Committee which finalized the program and declaration for the CSO forum. This was AFA’s first engagement with both international NGOs and FOs in an international conference as a Steering Committee member.

ASEAN Stakeholders’ Symposium. November 23-25, 2009. Jakarta, Indonesia.
Organized by ASEAN.

AFA participated in the ASEAN Secretariat Symposium on “Methods of Stakeholder Involvement in Regional Organizations” to build new contacts and strengthen old ones with other regional organizations and ASEAN secretariat officials; exchange views on suggested processes and mechanisms for involvement of CSOs in ASEAN consultative and decision-making processes (e.g. AFA agenda on Rural Producers’ council, climate change); and follow-up AFA accreditation process with ASEAN. Major results of this symposium include: CSOs were able to propose to co-host the 1st ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Forum (ASCCF) in 2010; AFA became part of the working group to plan for the establishment of an ASEAN Civil Society Council (ACSC) as the umbrella of all CSOs engaging ASEAN, including the small rural producers’ council advocated by AFA; conceptualization of 17 other projects on ASEAN-CSO partnerships, with AFA joining 3 project working groups on establishing national consultation processes, the establishment of a pool of trainers on ASEAN, and the setting up of an ASEAN Micro-credit Fund. AFA was represented by Sec Gen Esther Penunia.

Sustainable Sourcing Conference. November 30-December 1, 2009. London.
Organized by the London Business Conference.

AFA attended the conference on “Sustainable Sourcing and Tracing of Agricultural Raw Materials” upon the invitation of the London Business Conferences. The purpose of the conference was to help create sustainable sourcing partnerships between multinational food and drink retailers and manufacturers and the farmers who underpin their supply chain. AFA was represented by PAKISAMA Vice President for Mindanao Michael Saguisihan who gave a presentation on the situation of coconut farmers in the Philippines, and AFA’s sustainable agriculture initiatives in the session on “Overcoming the Challenges Involved in Reaching Across the supply Chain to Engage Farmers and Suppliers in Sustainable Sourcing... What’s Working in the Real World”, which sought to find solutions on how food manufacturers and retailers can engage farmers in sustainable sourcing in order to facilitate cross-supply chain partnerships and what information and resources farmers need from the industry to achieve this.



UN COP 15. December 3-12, 2009. Copenhagen, Denmark.

AFA's research brief on its participatory gender study entitled "Understanding the Gender Dimensions in Food Security and Climate Change" was distributed during the climate change negotiations in Copenhagen last December, where AFA was represented by Ms. Riza Bernabe, who was part of the Philippine delegation and who worked closely with CSOs looking into agriculture in the UNFCCC negotiations. Ms. Bernabe's participation in the event was supported by WOCAN (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & NRM). The first cut of AFA's video on the gender dimensions in food security and climate change was shown during a side meeting of women's groups who were in Copenhagen for the climate change negotiations last December.



Direct actions and campaigns undertaken

Support to PAKISAMA's Campaign on CARPER. January-June 2009.

AFA supported the campaign of PAKISAMA for the passage of the CARPER law that would give another 10 years for the program's implementation and also arrest some of the flaws of the original law, while strengthening its compulsory land acquisition provision, which is the very heart of the program. The secretariat staff joined some of the mobilizations. The developments in the campaign were monitored and AFA helped gather support from national and international institutions by posting the developments in the website. CARPER was finally signed into law last August 7, after a long battle by farmers and their supporters in Congress and in the streets.

Support to IYFF Campaign. March and May, 2009

The IYFF (International Year of Family Farming) campaign is spearheaded by the WRF (World Rural Forum), an NGO based in Basque, Spain, and an AFA partner. The campaign seeks a declaration by FAO of an "International Year of Family farming". The declaration is seen to intensify efforts of governments and CSOs to reinforce policies, strategies and action programs and tools that will guarantee a decent future for millions of small scale farmers. AFA sees the campaign as another opportunity to push forward its agenda for small scale men and women farmers in the international arena. In support to the IYFF campaign, AFA sent a letter to the FAO Director General last May 12, stating its support to the campaign for the UN to declare an "International Year of Family Farming". It also facilitated the participation of Mr. Huang, Yen Liang, Chairperson of TDFA and an AFA member, to WRF's "World Conference on Family Farming", held in Spain, last March 2009.

Support for PAKISAMA on the search for justice for the murder of its vice-president. June 5, 2009.

AFA supported the activities of PAKISAMA related to the campaign to seek justice for the murder of its National Vice President, Renato Penas, who also led the campaign of the Sumilao farmers for land, as well as the campaign of PAKISAMA for the CARPER law. AFA was able to get some financial support, from World Rural Forum, for the independent investigation by a fact finding mission, as well as statements of support from its partners locally and abroad. The AFA secretariat staff also joined the funeral marches and masses in honor of the slain farmer leader.



Campaign against Large-Scale Foreign Mining, November 2009.

AFA and PAKISAMA supported the campaign of farmers and other sectors in the province of Oriental Mindoro, Philippines against the entry of large-scale foreign mining that will destroy, among others, watershed areas and agricultural lands in the island province. One of PAKISAMA's youth farmer leaders held a hunger strike during the World Food Summit in Rome in November, in solidarity with other farmers and indigenous peoples who staged a hunger strike in front of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Quezon City, to demand the cancellation of an environmental compliance certificate granted to Norwegian mining company Intex. AFA prepared a press release, which was picked up by the Philippine media. AFA also sent a letter of support to the hunger strikers.



Research conducted

Research on Participatory Gender Study on Understanding the Gender Dimensions of Food Security and Climate Change. July-December 2009.

AFA conducted a participatory gender study supported by IFAD, through FAO, in 5 countries – Philippines, Indonesia, Timor Leste, Cambodia, Thailand - in order to seek out their perspectives. Village, district and national consultations, were conducted. In Indonesia and Timor Leste, village and district consultations were conducted in the districts of Solor, Flores, and Adonara, Indonesia through API and in Saben in Oe-cusse, Timor Leste through Veco Indonesia and World Neighbors on July 22-August 2, 2009. In the Philippines, a national consultation was conducted with the women's group LAKAMBINI in PAKISAMA on July 15-16, 2009. In Thailand, a national consultation was conducted with farmers and farmer leaders through SORKORPOR on August 13-14, 2009. And in Cambodia, village, district, and national consultations were held in Cambodia through FNN on September 30-October 3, 2009. Village and district consultations in Laos were originally set in November, but conflicts in scheduling between local host SEDA and AFA compelled the two groups to conduct the consultations in January. The initial findings of the research showed that: women indeed play very important roles in ensuring food security; climate change impacts women and men differently, with women bearing the brunt of the negative impacts. The research was also able to seek out the different food security initiatives and climate change coping strategies of small scale farmers, especially women farmers, in Asia.

Research on Agribusiness. August-September, 2009.

AFA commissioned an international NGO, Agribusiness Accountability Institute, through Mr. Jayson Cainglet, to write a research on the critical issues on the growing market power of transnational agribusiness. AFA used this research report in its various advocacies on agribusiness. When AFA was invited by Terrapin to participate in the conference Agricultural Outlook Asia 2009, AFA used this research for the discussions.

Research on ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement. July-December, 2009.

As one of AFA's commitments to the Trade Advocates Group, AFA conducted a research on "Analyzing the Potential Impact of the ASEAN China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) on Philippine economy". Ms. Riza Bernabe was the main researcher. A focus group discussion was conducted last November 25, 2009 to gather more information from the farmers, laborers and fishers..

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Accomplishments in Capacity Building

Strategic Objective: build strong, capable, credible, far-reaching national farmers' organizations

AFA provided technical assistance and facilitated members' participation in training activities with partners.

It helped build members' capacities in organizational management, marketing, sustainable agriculture, community-based market-oriented organizing and social accountability engagement.

It utilized tools such as video production to improve knowledge sharing of members' production and marketing initiatives.



Technical assistance provided

VNFU Organizational Audit. February 17, 2009. Hanoi, Vietnam.

The AFA secretariat conducted an interview with department heads of VNFU in order to administer the FO growth monitoring tool. The tool measured the strength of VNFU on several indicators. The results will be used by AFA in designing its technical assistance and technology transfer projects.

EAFF Mission. August 29-30, 2009. Nairobi, Kenya.

AFA Sec Gen Esther Penunia took part in an expert mission, aimed at helping the East Africa Farmers' Federation (EAFF) develop an Advocacy Master Plan. She was asked by Agriterria to act as consultant to this mission. The mission composed of reviewing documents, interviewing key informants, and conducting a training write-shop with the advocacy officers of EAFF members. The mission was seen as an opportunity for strengthening of networking and solidarity with African farmers and for further promoting AFA.

Marketing Consultation. October 9-10, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand.

AFA conducted the consultation entitled "Regional Knowledge Sharing on AFA Members' Marketing Initiatives: Basics in Engaging the Market". There were 28 participants; 14 male and 14 female. The members shared their marketing initiatives, and the problems and challenges they face. This knowledge sharing gave the participants additional knowledge and insights on how to develop/improve their marketing strategies of identified focus crops. Towards the end of the knowledge sharing, each AFA member shared their plans on how to improve the marketing aspect of their focused product.

Ainoukai's Study Tour on Sustainable Agriculture. December 4-13, 2009. Bicol Region and Laguna, Philippines.

One of AFA's thrusts in terms of capacity building for its members is to facilitate technical cooperation and farmer exchanges. In one of its meetings in 2008, the Execom mandated the secretariat to set up a system where this processes can be facilitated. Last December, an opportunity came up for a study tour to be conducted in the organic agriculture areas of PAKISAMA in the Philippines by staff of Ainoukai from Japan and the staff of an agricultural college in Allahabad, India. Last December 4-13, 2009, Secretary General Kazuhiro Yamamoto and Ainou magazine editor Ryoko Tsuboi of Ainoukai, an AFA member organization promoting organic agriculture in Japan, came to the Philippines for a study tour on organic agriculture in PAKISAMA member and partner areas. They were joined by Dr. Tiuro Miura, Mr. Takaya Machigami, Mr. Santosh Kumar, Mr. A.K. Mishra, and Ms. Manmeet



Kaur from the Makino School of Continuing and non-Formal Education (MSCFE) in Allahabad, India, who are also practicing organic agriculture. The study tour was also joined by AFA, where both Ainoukai and PAKISAMA are members. The tour included meetings with PAKISAMA and AFA in Manila, where initiatives on SRI and other SA practices were presented, and travel to the Bicol region to visit organic farming initiatives of PAKISAMA Bicol, PARAUMA, PECUARIA, FACE, LIKAS, PANGOPOD, among others. Flying back to Manila, the group proceeded to UP Los Banos and IRRI, before they went back to the AFA and PAKISAMA offices for their final meeting and assessment of the study tour. The participants greatly appreciated the initiatives of Filipino farmers on organic farming. There was a rich sharing of information and technologies. The participants were particularly grateful for the farmer-to-farmer interaction during the visit. As a result of the study tour, Dr. Miura and Mr. Yamamoto, in consultation with AFA and PAKISAMA, have drafted a concept paper for a project proposal on sustainable agriculture technology and livelihood dissemination for possible funding support by private organizations in Japan. The project will support technology transfer activities for farmers belonging to PAKISAMA, initially. Later, it can expand to other countries where AFA has members. The project, if approved, will be implemented in 2011.

National Planning Workshops on Commodity-Based, Market-Oriented Organizing.

National planning workshops on marketing were conceptualized by members in October and proposals for their conduct were sent to AFA starting December. The implementation is projected to happen in the first quarter of 2010. A marketing coordinator has been contracted to help the members design their planning workshops and in implementing their plans.

Video Production of Successful Production and Marketing Initiatives.

A video documentation of the successful production and marketing initiatives of the members has been conceptualized and is being produced and is expected to be finished by the second quarter of 2010. We have been limited by a shortage of footages and may have to conduct project site visits.



Capacity building activities

2nd LSFM Regional Workshop. January 19-23, 2009. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The AFA Chairperson and the SorKorPor Secretary General, together with project implementors from FNN (Farmer and Nature Net) and VNFU (Vietnam Farmers Union), joined the second regional training workshop "Complying with Market Requirements on Food Safety and Product Quality" under AsiaDHRRA's Linking Small Farmers to Market" project. The workshop aimed to enhance the awareness, knowledge and skills of participants from 10 Asian countries on the importance of food safety and product quality standards so that they become initiators, implementers, advocates and supporters of initiatives that would help small farmers to upgrade their capacities at producing quality and safe food and agricultural products. The AFA Chairperson gave the closing remarks. The AFA secretariat coordinated the participation of AFA members in this seminar.

Social Accountability Training. April 21-23, 2009. Quezon City, Philippines.

AFA and PAKISAMA participated in the training "Social Accountability 101 for Development Practitioners" organized by AsiaDHRRA, ANSA-EAP, and TAN. The workshop aimed to impress upon the participants the value of social accountability in framing their efforts to engage with government and in improving the outcomes of their development interventions. ANSA-EAP is the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and the Pacific, a regional network promoting social accountability by providing common platform for exchange of information and experience and by providing capacity building opportunities and technical assistance to citizen groups and governments. TAN is Transparency and Accountability Network, a growing coalition of multi-sectoral organization seeking to contribute significantly in reducing corruption in the Philippines.

3rd LSFM Regional Training Workshop. June 28-July 2, 2009. Cagayan de Oro, Philippines.

Representatives from AFA member farmer organizations came to the Philippines to attend the workshop on linking small farmers to market organized by AsiaDHRRA. Ms. Khuonn Sey of FNN, Ms. Ririn of API, Mr. Jon of PAKISAMA, Mr. Tham and Ms. Thi Ma of VNFU, and Khun Pote of SorKorPor flew to the City of Cagayan de Oro to attend the workshop from June 28-July 2. They were joined by the AFA Secretary General. The said AFA member organizations attended the workshop to learn about other marketing initiatives in the region and enrich their own marketing efforts. Seeing that the planned workshop was something that can be useful for AFA's marketing component as well, the AFA Secretary General coordinated with AsiaDHRRA for the guide questions for the Workshop. She also gave the synthesis of the Workshop Results. During the workshop, AFA members and the secretariat also had a side meeting to discuss the marketing project of AFA under the Agritererra project.



Accomplishments in Governance

Strategic Objective: strengthen AFA's organizational systems and structures

AFA ensured effective governance through the conduct of regular Execom meetings, staff review and planning, and database training; launching of an internship program; and utilization of information and communication technologies.

It forged and sustained linkages with regional formations and international organizations, as well as a national formation.

It produced information materials such as videos and issue papers, and contributed materials for the production of a poster and an issue magazine.



Efforts at more effective governance

23rd AFA Execom Meeting. February 24-25, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand.

AFA held its 23rd Execom Meeting, where it was able to discuss and decide on relevant organizational matters. There were 6 major decisions made, including: development of a system for bilateral cooperation among AFA members; approval of the new AFA logo; approval of AINOUKAI's regular membership in AFA; approval of the 2009 plan and budget; approval of the event management system; and approval of the FO growth monitoring tool.

Conduct of AFA Secretariat 2008 Year-end Review & Planning for 2009. January 12, 2009. Quezon City, Philippines.

The AFA secretariat conducted a review of the 2008 Operations Plan and Budget and a performance appraisal for each staff. It was followed by planning for 2009, specifically the plans for January to March, pending the approval of the new project proposal for Agriterrra.

Database Training. February 1-7, 2009. Agusan del Sur, Philippines

AFA staff (Esther, Dan, and Jun) attended a database training in order to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills to design and create the database of AFA operations and membership. Through the training, the secretariat staff were able to define its database needs and to design, create, and implement the database. The design is currently being tested.

AFA Internship. April-June 2009.

AFA accepted 4 interns to work at the secretariat office. The 2 Indians (Samuel Reddy and Jyothirmai Paritala) who worked from April to May helped in gathering information for the financial crisis issue paper. They also presented the situation of Indian farmers. The 2 Chinese interns (Lihua Shao and Jia Fei) who worked from June to July helped in translating AFA documents to Chinese, creating the database, creating subtitles for the AFA video. They also went on field visit to a PAKISAMA member PO in the Philippines, and presented a paper on the organic agriculture project of the farmers, as well as the situation of Chinese farmers. The internship was made possible by the partnership with AIESEC (an international student organization), which has a local chapter in the Philippines. The internship program is a way to promote AFA's work among the young, as well as for complementing the human resource in the secretariat with people from other Asian countries.



AFA Website and E-Bulletin Updating

The AFA website continued to be updated with news and information, which were summarized and sent to members and partners through the electronic bulletin. This communication system made sure that members and partners are updated on what AFA is doing and on various issues affecting small-scale men and women farmers. The AFA website is averaging 50 hits per day. Articles uploaded to the website consist of AFA's own news and information, as well as other news and information relevant to Asian farmers and gathered from other sources.



Linkages forged and sustained

AFA maintained active participation in regional formations namely Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA), Rural Development Working Group (RDWG), and EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign Network. AFA maintained communications with some international organizations such as WOCAN (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management), IATP (Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy), GGCA (Global Gender Climate Alliance). As a member we continued to receive information about the various issues we are concerned with (ASEAN, free trade agreements, climate change, etc); these information guided us in our advocacy work as well. Also, we passed to members what we thought were relevant information for them.

Aside from these regional formations, AFA is an active member of a national formation called Trade Advocates Group (TAG), whose basis of unity is the advocacy for a National Trade Agenda, formulated in 2008. The membership in TAG has helped AFA secretariat understand ASEAN trade policies as it affects a member country.



Information materials produced

Video Production on Food Security Amidst Climate Change.

A video on food security and climate change was produced. It features interviews with women and men farmers who share their views and experiences. The video shows the important role that women play in food security and climate change adaptation. It also shows that they are the ones who are most heavily affected by climate change. Finally, it calls on governments and other actors to ensure support to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in smallholder agriculture. It runs for 11 minutes, with shorter versions: A 3-minute teaser on CC; and a 6-minute video was made for the Copenhagen meetings. All these were uploaded in the website and presented in conferences.

Issue papers.

Four issue papers were made:

"The Global Financial Crisis: What it is and How it Affects Small-scale Men and Women Farmers in the ASEAN Region," Volume 2, Number 1, August 2009.

"Critical Issues on the Growing Market Power of Transnational Agribusiness," Volume 2, Number 2, September 2009.

"Farmers' Regional Trade Agenda: Farmers' Collective Voice on Trade in the ASEAN Region," Volume 2, Number 3, October 2009, with translations in Indonesian, Cambodian, Thai, and Vietnamese languages.

"International Climate Change Negotiations: Ensuring Support for Adaptation and Mitigation Measures in Smallholder Agriculture," Volume 2, number 4, December 2009, with translations in Indonesian, Cambodian, Thai, Taiwanese and Vietnamese languages.

Poster Featuring AFA Women Leaders on Climate Change. June 2009.

Women farmer-leaders belonging to the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) were featured in a poster produced by the CGIAR on the theme women and climate change, published in June. Ms. Sudaporn Sittisathapornkul of SorKorPor (Thailand), Ms. Luisita Esmao of LAKAMBINI-PAKISAMA (Philippines), Ms. Jang of WAFF (Korea), and Ms. Esther Penunia (AFA) were among those interviewed for the poster. Their photos appeared in the poster together with their sharing on the impact of climate change on women farmers.



Contribution to Climate Change Issue of WIA.

AFA contributed an article to Women in Action (WIA) magazine's issue entitled "Women in a Weary World: Climate Change and Women in the Global South". The article "Gender Links in Agriculture and Climate Change" was authored by Ma. Dolores Bernabe, AFA researcher, and Ma. Estrella Penunia, AFA Sec Gen. Hard copies of the publication were given to the AFA secretariat and were distributed during the COP-15 in December.



Major Challenges and Recommendations

AFA faces the challenge of continuing to advance its agenda in various regional and international venues. It must continue to build the capacity of its members in advocacy, as well as in sustainable agricultural production and marketing. It has to find ways of maximizing the various opportunities presented by its rich networks and linkages.

It also faces the challenge of sustaining its operations in the midst of limited funding. It has to find ways of leveraging the social capital and knowledge base that it has in order to get support from partners. It has to build its own capacity to generate funds internally.