

Asia & the Pacific Regional Food Security Partnership Framework

by and among

Asian Development Bank,

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

and

International Fund for Agricultural Development

I. Context

1. The global food and energy price surge in 2007–2008 exposed the vulnerabilities of national and international systems to issues relating to food and nutrition insecurity. While food prices came down in 2009, they remain high in several countries in the region relative to 2006 levels and the elements that were responsible for the past food price crisis are still present. Accordingly, concerns over sustainable food security remain high. Issues and strategies to deal with food security challenges have been discussed at the global level, culminating to the 2008 Comprehensive Framework of Action (CFA) developed by the UN Secretary-General's High Level Task Force, and is being updated at present. The challenges of addressing the specific regional food security issues in Asia and Pacific region, however, have not been adequately dealt with.

2. Asia is home to the largest number of poor and undernourished, whose vulnerability to food insecurity is compounded by the impacts of climate change and economic shocks. Many countries in Asia suffer from the rapid depletion of land, water and other natural resources, which impose serious constraints on productivity. The declining trend in productivity growth in agriculture is a major concern as it is a critical factor in raising incomes and job opportunities for small farmers and in ensuring affordable and adequate food for the poor and vulnerable groups. Just as Asia faces a number of challenges, however, it also has a range of promising opportunities. In many countries in the region, dynamic private sector investments are leading the development of agro-based industries that provides important linkages between small producers and markets and off-farm employment. Changing dietary patterns due to increasingly affluent urban consumers also offer important opportunities for crop diversification and nonfarm rural employment.

3. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) share a common conviction that progress towards sustainable food security through better access to, and availability of, adequate food for the poor and vulnerable is crucial for the region's sustainable and equitable growth. To this end, they have agreed to forge a three-year partnership that is consistent with CFA but with specific focus to support the countries of the Asia and Pacific region in achieving sustainable food security. The partnership will be evaluated jointly after three years with the opportunity to renew ties.

II. Objective

4. The objective of the partnership is to support the countries of the Asia and Pacific region in their efforts to achieve food security through increased availability of, access to and utilization of adequate, safe and nutritious food by the poor and vulnerable. The three organizations will provide coordinated and multi-sectoral support to the region's governments, taking account of their specific priorities and constraints.

5. The partnership will seek the cooperation and collaboration of governments in the region, development partners, the private sector, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, academia, media and other interested regional and national organizations and associations under the country-led, focused and prioritized food security engagement. It will also collectively seek and promote innovative financing modalities and other implementation tool kits for food security, including adoption and wider dissemination of innovations and good private sector business practices.

III. Commitment

6. The partners to this Asia & the Pacific Regional Food Security Partnership Framework (Framework) are committed to:

- Work on the basis of the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security, endorsed by the World Summit on Food Security, 16-18 November 2009. These include (i) stress on plans that are nationally articulated, designed, owned and led; (ii) strategic coordination at all levels; (iii) comprehensive twin track approach to food security (iv) commitment to multilateralism; and (v) sustained and substantial commitment by all partners to investment in food security and nutrition.
- Maximize synergies by aligning, harmonizing and coordinating their regional and country operations, with specific focus on creating concrete value addition from the partnership;
- Promote, and help develop, the governments' leadership in coordinating the multi-pronged food security engagement of the partners;
- Facilitate increased private sector participation in developing and strengthening food value chains;
- Strengthening governments' and private sector capacity to plan and implement effective food security strategies and related investment programmes;
- Expand and deepen the partnerships contemplated hereunder with other agencies and entities to promote food security investments; and
- Make arrangements with the relevant government agencies and regional organizations to coordinate and monitor the partnership's performance in achieving the desired outcomes and impacts.

IV. Implementation

7. The partnership recognizes the four key areas that Asia needs to act to respond to the increasing food security challenges:

- 1) Addressing the need to increase and enhance impacts of investments in food security and agriculture, covering the multi-pronged needs of Asia's "food chains" from production, to processing, marketing, and distribution, in an inclusive and sustainable

manner, cognizant of the specific development requirements and constraints of individual countries;

- 2) Supporting the development and dissemination of crucial knowledge by the international, regional and national agricultural research centers on improving agriculture productivity, especially of smallholder farmers, and strengthening resilience of the sector against climate change impacts and other natural/economic shocks;
- 3) Facilitating expanded and more structured agriculture trade, particularly of food grains and food value chains, through greater collaboration among countries in the region; and
- 4) Promoting the development of enabling policies, strategies and plans, investments and institutional strengthening to improve household food and nutrition security.

8. Guided by the objectives and commitments described above, and by focusing on the four key areas identified, the partnership will collectively implement measures that bolster synergy in harmonized actions of the partners and significantly contribute to achieving the goal of increased availability of and access to safe and adequate food for the poor and vulnerable groups in Asia and the Pacific at the regional and country levels.

9. At the regional level, the partnership will focus its collective and collaborative efforts in enhancing the regional public goods that are needed to address the region's systemic issues related to food security. These include the harmonization of cross-border and regional investments (Pillar 1), promotion of stronger collaboration in the prioritized agricultural research (Pillar 2), support to enhance intra and inter-regional food trade (Pillar 3), and facilitation of sharing of lessons and good practices in the policy and institutional response to improve household food security (Pillar 4). In undertaking these tasks, the partnership will closely collaborate with, and support the existing regional organizations, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and burgeoning regional economic cooperation, such as, but not limited to the Greater Mekong Subregion, South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation, the Pacific Islands Forum, Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle, and the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippine East ASEAN Growth Area.

10. At the country level, the partners will jointly develop country food security partnership frameworks, initially covering four countries, namely, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the People's Republic of China, India, and Lao People's Democratic Republic, and one subregion, the Pacific, all of which have indicated their interest and commitment to lead the country process with the partners to this Framework at the Food Security Investment Forum to be held in ADB headquarters on 7 to 9 July 2010.

11. Development of the country/sub-region food security partnership framework will be a country-led process, focusing on the specific and prioritized food security goals through interventions in all four key areas identified above, with particular attention on enhancing food security investments¹. Such enhancement may be made possible through increased

¹ The country food security partnership is expected to include the following elements:

- (i) The government's existing food security strategy and plan;
- (ii) The priority areas where the partnership will focus on when delivering the convergence of both existing and planned three-year lending and nonlending investments, and the convergence of future investments that can be developed to leverage additional investments within the partnership, or from other sources outside the partnership.
- (iii) The measurable indicators of the effectiveness and impacts of the partnership engagement; and

harmonization and synergy leveraging additional investments within and from outside the partnership. The partners will collectively review their ongoing and planned investment/development assistance portfolio to harmonize operations and seek opportunities to leverage additional investments within and from outside the partnership, particularly including the private sector.

12. Aside from the implementation of the country food security partnership frameworks, the partners to this Framework agree to regularly hold dialogues on the progress and performance of the overall Framework on an annual basis, with the chairmanship of such dialogues rotating among the partners.

13. The participation of other development agencies as partners is welcome and highly encouraged. A new partner may choose to participate selectively in specific country partnership frameworks. New partners would be expected to indicate their respective commitment to this Framework through the signature of a duly authorized representative. The three current partners would pursue their own internal policies and procedures to integrate new partners in the partnership when that opportunity arises

14. For close and continuous dialogue among partners to this Framework, the following officials (or such others as may be nominated by their respective institutions) will act as focal points representing their respective institutions.

For ADB: Katsuji Matsunami, Advisor cum Practice Leader (Agriculture, Food Security & Rural Development)

For FAO: Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

For IFAD: Thomas Elhaut, Director, Asia and the Pacific

15. Other partners which participate in this partnership after this Framework has been signed by ADB, FAO and IFAD are required to nominate their respective focal points upon executing a counterpart of this Framework .

16. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in this Framework, this Framework is not intended to create legal binding obligations or relations between the partners hereto.

Haruhiko Kuroda
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Asian Development Bank

Jacques Diouf
Director General
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Kanayo Nwanize
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- (iv) The mechanisms by which the government will coordinate, lead, monitor, and evaluate the implementation and review of the country partnership framework.