



Grow Asia Forum 2017

Summary Report

Pathways to Scale

Phnom Penh, Cambodia,
10 May 2017





Grow Asia Singapore

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Grow Asia:

2016 – 2017 Highlights

01



Our ambitious agenda requires alignment and collaboration among all stakeholders. The active contributions and perspectives from our partners allow us to define strategies that will extend the reach of inclusive and sustainable agriculture to more smallholders and create significant impact in the ASEAN region.



Sarita Nayyar,
Managing Director, World Economic Forum, LLC

Grow Asia is a multi-stakeholder partnership platform that convenes South East Asia's governments, multi-national and domestic companies, NGOs, civil societies and other stakeholders to develop **inclusive and sustainable value chains** that benefit smallholder farmers. Established in 2015 by the World Economic Forum in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat, the partnership draws from the experience of the Forum's New Vision for Agriculture initiative which facilitates partnerships across the world to deliver food security, environmental sustainability, and economic opportunity through agriculture.

By 2020, Grow Asia aims to reach 10 million smallholder farmers, helping them increase their productivity, profitability,

02



Over the last 12 months, we have seen tremendous progress in terms of the capabilities and capacities of the Country Partnership Secretariats. Going forward Grow Asia will focus more on field results, and achieving impact at scale.



Grahame Dixie,
Executive Director, Grow Asia

and environmental sustainability by 20% - the **10-20-20 goal**. Grow Asia cultivates an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder value chain projects to flourish. Over the past 12 months, Grow Asia has deepened its regional network and provides a platform for **over 300 partners** across **five Country Partnerships** to come together and leverage their experiences.

Grow Asia's strong and diverse network of leaders and practitioners have also co-developed innovative digital, knowledge sharing and performance measurement solutions to help meet farmer needs.

Today, the partnership reaches **more than 500,000 smallholders** in South East Asia.

01: Sarita Nayyar,
Managing Director,
World Economic
Forum, LLC

02: Grahame Dixie,
Executive Director,
Grow Asia

Grow Asia Forum 2017

Wednesday 10 May,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

In a world of mounting issues around food security, rural poverty and increasing demand for food, how can South East Asia address the uncertainties and challenges facing the agriculture sector? What decisions can be made today to enable greater inclusivity and sustainability for ASEAN and its 100 million smallholder farmers? An important part of the solution will be working in partnership with agribusinesses and smallholders - an approach exemplified by the Grow Asia initiative.

The fourth annual Grow Asia Forum brought together over 120 senior leaders¹ from ASEAN governments, global and regional companies, civil societies and farmers' organizations to address these questions and make strategic decisions and commitments that will strengthen outreach to smallholder farmers and help ensure the sustainability of food systems. The high-level event focused on advancing opportunities for collaboration which will enable scaling strategies to be implemented.

This year's Grow Asia Forum was co-hosted by the Grow Asia partnership and the Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum. The event took place alongside the World Economic Forum on ASEAN Summit 2017.

Key highlights from the Grow Asia Forum 2017 included:

- **Participation from over 120 ASEAN and international leaders** including government ministers, business leaders, farmers and civil society and other organizations to discuss actions required to scale sustainable agricultural value chains in the region
- Launch of Grow Asia's **Report on Progress 2017**, detailing achievements and highlights from Grow Asia's second year
- Commitment to developing **digital interventions**, which will provide farmers with access to good agricultural practices and market information
- Identifying key areas of focus, including **exploring and implementing pathways to scale**
- Commitment to further **strengthen in-country secretariat support**, review opportunities to support **additional country partnerships**, and act as an **engagement platform** around key issues such as women in agriculture and access to finance

An overview of next steps can be found on page 15 of this report.



01: Lisa Dreier, Head of Agriculture and Food Security, World Economic Forum LLC; H. E. U Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce, Myanmar; Dr. Mat Syukur, Advisor to the Minister on International Trade and Relations Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia; H. E. Ty Sokhun, Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia; Evelyn G. Lavina, Undersecretary for High Value Crops and Rural Credit, Department of Agriculture, Philippines; Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia

¹ Including 6 Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture and 17 CEOs of private sector companies.

² Feedback from an anonymous post-event survey.

2017: The Current Situation and Challenges



High-Level Opening Panel: Taking ASEAN From Build to Scale

The focus of Grow Asia in the upcoming year will be on convening partners to learn from one another, and using the country Secretariats to engage with governments and leverage positive policy changes. Grow Asia will also focus on new pathways to scale so that our individual projects spread their positive influence beyond their initial area of action. Grow Asia will also focus on looking for interventions that can extend the program's reach, for example, finding new ways to provide finance to smaller scale producers.

In the welcome remarks by this year's host country, **H.E. Veng Sakhon**, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, affirmed his appreciation of Grow Asia promoting and institutionalizing a multi-stakeholder partnership approach to ensure truly inclusive agricultural development in South East Asia.

Commenting on the agricultural challenges his country faces, the minister recognized low productivity, poor infrastructure, high transaction costs, a lack of technology adoption and

financing for farmers as key issues. The minister highlighted the need for a holistic approach and called for productive engagement from all sectors to develop agricultural practices in Cambodia.



To effectively sustain food production to meet the ever-increasing demand, it requires the utmost attention by world leaders, policy makers, planners, managers, and the community of experts and farmers. It needs mobilizing of targeted investments and making concerted efforts to develop strong value chains for agricultural development.



H.E. Veng Sakhon,
Minister of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia

01: H.E. Veng Sakhon, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia

2017: The Current Situation and Challenges



H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN, acknowledged the significant contribution of Grow Asia towards the realization of strategic goals of the ASEAN community and its member states in relation to food security, nutrition, and agriculture. He stressed the importance of capacity building, the role of farming in human nutrition, and human resources development to enhance agricultural cooperation, noting that the roles of the private sector in advancing food security objectives are clear and multifold.

H.E. Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR, agreed that partnership beyond sector and country borders will be critical to addressing the region's challenges. Both Grow Asia and Lao PDR committed to exploring opportunities to collaborate, particularly to support cross-border value chains.

Estrella Penunia, Secretary-General, Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), emphasized the need to consider the "fourth P" when thinking of public-private partnerships (PPP) – the "Producer". The farmer may appear forgotten, and we must integrate them more during the decision-making process to strengthen supply chains and outcomes.



There was consensus among all panelists that:

- Grow Asia can enable accessibility and capacity building, through dialogues with producers, academia, government, and the private sector;
- There is a need to help farmers increase their "market power" and mobilization of funding resources;
- The demographic challenge is crucially important in ASEAN. Grow Asia partners can contribute by finding solutions to overcome the challenge of losing young farmers to urbanization; and
- Policies and programs to encourage women and youth in agriculture are important points of consideration for the year ahead.

01: Estrella Penunia, Secretary-General, Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)

02: H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN

03: H.E. Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR

04: Panelists in the Opening Plenary

2017: The Current Situation and Challenges



The Role of Digital Innovation

Grow Asia announced commitment to advancing digital solutions for agriculture in ASEAN.

Grow Asia shared predictions for how mobile applications may be used in the future; from satellite imagery to improve crop planting, to on-demand cultivation services.

Guest speakers including **Flavio Corsin**, Director, Aquaculture, Agrochemicals, Vietnam, IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, shared views where applications can best deliver value for farmers, such as enabling access to finance.

Panelists agreed that widespread adoption will require applications to deliver value across the whole supply chain and should benefit input providers, traders, buyers, manufacturers, and companies as well as farmers. Through existing Working Group projects, Grow Asia is receiving a clear signal that mobile applications can help stakeholders reduce transaction costs, disseminate information to farmers and provide greater transparency to consumers.

All partners have an important role to play in the development of digital solutions. Grow Asia will provide the leadership needed to bring together the various actors and drive adoption. Grow Asia is also well positioned to set up standards and protocols to connect applications with major service providers, such as banks, governments, micro-credit agencies, regulators, weather services and researchers.



A lot of young people are not interested in agriculture anymore. To drive food security for the future, we have to introduce digital solutions to make agriculture attractive to the younger generation.



Jens Hartmann,
Region Head, Asia Pacific,
Bayer

01: Jens Hartmann,
Region Head Asia
Pacific, Bayer

Imagining the Future

Interactive Session: Exploring Pathways to Scale

Participants joined one of four interactive sessions to learn from alternative pathways to scaling value chain projects, discuss challenges, and explore how these strategies can be implemented to scale impact on the ground.

Read Grow Asia's [Pathways to Scale Overview](#) for more information on the framework and examples of scaling on the ground.



It's not always easy aligning different companies' business models, but doing this and replicating is an effective way for us to reach scale.



Imran Nasrullah,
Chief Executive Officer, PT Louis Dreyfus Company Indonesia

Pathway to Scale		How to Action: Results from Discussions
Institutionalizing the Multi-Stakeholder Approach	<i>Working with governments to integrate activities successfully modeled by value chain projects at a national or provincial level. Influencing policies is a powerful way to achieve impact because government has arguably the greatest reach to smallholders.</i>	<p>Participants agreed on the following solutions to overcome the challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on improving existing models - Involve other governmental departments, especially those with experience of similar models. - Build trust, bridge gaps and agree on priorities at all government levels.
Business Mainstreaming	<i>Companies have the potential to take projects to greater scale internally. Grow Asia partners are collaborating on value chain projects to test inclusive business models. Successful projects demonstrate the value of embedding smallholders into a sustainable value chain for all stakeholders, and the financial and economic justification for mainstreaming the approach.</i>	<p>Participants came up with a series of practical tips for implementing this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help businesses understand farmers' needs, and identify or design tailored models for engaging farmers. Stakeholders also have a responsibility to help farmers become more entrepreneurial and business-minded. - Gain commitment from all value chain actors and buy-in from senior leadership with execution at the local level. - Create a robust system for measurement that aligns business performance and smallholder engagement.
Project Replication	<i>Replication of successful projects can happen when new partners are brought in, and when businesses learn from each other. As a neutral platform, Grow Asia facilitates communication and sharing among business competitors, taking a pre-competitive, market-led approach, which can lead to the adoption of successful models.</i>	<p>The challenges of this sharing approach were also discussed, along with solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific activities from a project can be taken and adapted to enable other businesses to incorporate them into their own projects. - There is scope to better educate where partners can unite around standards, and where they can operate competitively. - Strong performance metrics and optimizing digital platforms can help make replication possible.
Catalytic Financing	<i>Aligning donor-funded projects with market-led company initiatives can lead to effective, sustainable systems. Additional funds have the potential to unlock bottlenecks and catalyze greater impact for smallholders.</i>	<p>Participants agreed on necessary tactics and approaches to enable this pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private sector involvement should be considered a business opportunity, not Corporate Social Responsibility. - Blended financing could incentivize local banks to provide smallholders with access to financing.

Grow Asia will help drive change by continuing to collect and share best practice case studies of these pathways in action.



Scenarios for the Future of Food and Agriculture in ASEAN

In a world of accelerating change, a nuanced understanding of the key factors and uncertainties shaping food systems is critical for leaders to make informed, strategic and future-focused decisions today.

To provoke alternative and new thought patterns, participants considered four different scenarios for the future of food systems, based on an analysis conducted by the World Economic Forum and its partners. The analysis highlights two critical uncertainties that will shape food systems by 2030:

- **Demand Shift:** This uncertainty encompasses the nature of future demand for food and agricultural commodities, with particular focus on the environmental impact and health implications of consumers' choices. Demand shift uncertainty is thus focused on whether demand will be relatively more resource-intensive versus resource-efficient.
- **Market Connectivity:** This uncertainty pertains to the openness of trade, trust in and resilience of commodity markets, and inclusivity of technological innovations. The experts found that the relative connectivity of markets presents both significant opportunities and vulnerabilities related to the future of global food systems.

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These scenarios are designed to provoke discussion, highlight the complexity of the issue and trigger the question: how will our current food systems feed everyone in 2030? Our most critical concerns are the two biggest global uncertainties – demand and market. We must consider these when talking about food security.

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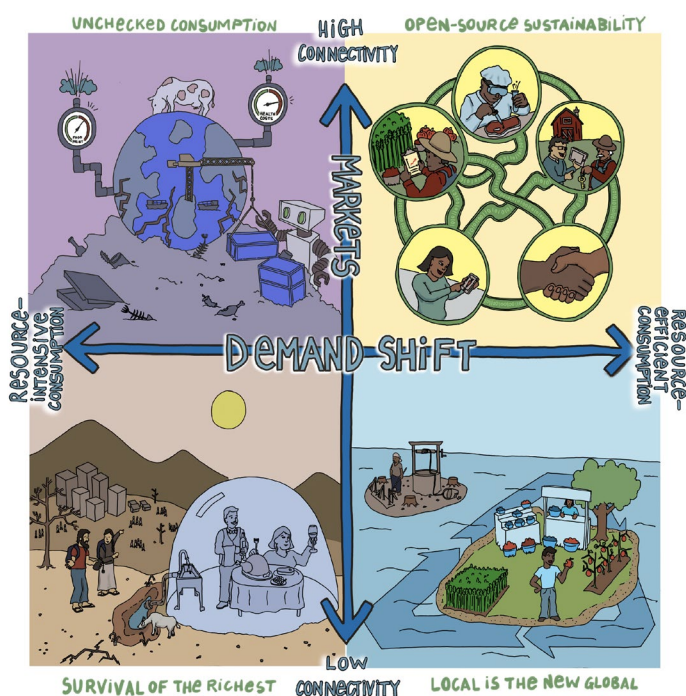
Paul Teng,

Senior Fellow, Food Security, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University

01: Paul Teng, Senior Fellow, Food Security, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University

Interactive Session

Pairing these two critical uncertainties, the matrix below reveals four scenarios for the future of global food systems. Participants discussed the potential implications of any of these four future scenarios for their country programs.



1. Survival of the Richest: In a world of resource-intensive consumption and disconnected markets, there is a sluggish global economy and a stark division between the “haves” and “have-nots”. Participants discussed the following implications for ASEAN:

- The global shift towards less sustainable practices must be addressed at all levels, from policy-making to consumer education
- Governments need to recalibrate policies to accelerate the progress to more open markets, allowing farmers to become more competitive
- There is low investment in research and development of technology that can impact farmers’ ability to produce

Grow Asia is committed to investing in digital platforms to support smallholder farmers as a pre-competitive endeavor that will benefit farmers and partner companies

2. Unchecked Consumption: With strong market connectivity and resource-intensive consumption, this is a world of high GDP growth with high environmental cost. Participants discussed the following implications for ASEAN:

- The strength of the cultural and emotional connections to food creates a huge barrier to progress when considering application of technology to food
- Participants agreed there is a need to consider the environmental externalities of unchecked consumption too, such as the downstream impact on fish or the potential for grain-fed cattle to incubate bacteria such as e-coli
- A question was raised as to whether “unjust consumption” was more relevant, considering the pressing issue of under-nourishment while others are “over-nourished”

There is a need to change human behavior to mitigate the trend of “unchecked consumption”

3. Open-source Sustainability: A future linking highly connected markets and resource-efficient consumption has increased international cooperation and innovation, but may leave some behind. Participants discussed the following implications for ASEAN:

- Smallholders can benefit from changes in the supply chain model, such as commodities traded via alternative platforms (e.g. e-commerce.) Those who cannot adapt to new technology and other changes will be most affected
- Entrepreneurs will be the real winners as this scenario is dynamic and fast paced and will reward innovation
- We must prepare for change and embrace new technology. It is vital that farmers are educated to ensure availability, access, and awareness of opportunities

We need to continue to build trust between stakeholders and policy makers to ensure parties are committed

4. Local Is the New Global: In a world of fragmented local markets with resource-efficient consumption, resource rich countries focus on local foods, whereas import dependent regions become hunger hotspots. Participants discussed the following implications for ASEAN:

- The notion or image of a nation being able to feed and sustain itself is ideal but not realistic for every nation
- Technology will considerably shape the future of food security in a “localized” world, to the point that the availability of land becomes less of an issue than it is today
- Winners and losers should not be delineated based on geopolitical borders. Even if some countries “survive”, consumers as a whole will not benefit

Our future must include global - but sustainable – trade

Country Partnerships – Achievements, Challenges, Future Plans



There is a need to move away from 'business as usual' to smarter food systems, with efficiency being key to success.



H.E. Dr. Ty Sokhun,

Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia

The five Country Partnerships currently supported by Grow Asia have seen tremendous growth over the past 12 months. 37 Working Groups are planning and implementing a total of 46 value chain projects. Of these, approximately 40% are being designed, 40% are at the early stages of implementation and 20% are at the scaling stage. There are established and dedicated local Secretariats in all five countries.

In context of these scenarios and with the insights gained from the preceding discussions, participants split into country-specific groups to explore solutions, decisions, and interventions for their country to ensure sustainable food security for ASEAN.

Cambodia Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (CPSA)

In this session, the discussion covered moving Cambodia's plans from the design stage to implementation, balancing sustainable production with greater productivity and the rapid transition the country is seeing of small farms getting smaller and large farms expanding at great scale. Participants agreed that:

- Farmer cooperatives can help ensure small farms are represented in discussions about agricultural development. Technology could also help connect them with larger farms, and provide a means for gaining vital information that will help them maintain productivity.
- While there are lots of good ideas to progress projects, there is a lack of first movers to get things off the ground, particularly as investors do not typically seek out Cambodia. Grow Asia can convene partners which share the risk and stakeholders can help get projects off the ground together.
- The potential for Cambodia is significant because, while agricultural productivity is currently low, ample land is available. Participants agreed that Cambodia has the opportunity to maintain more traditional farming cultures, and felt that urbanization is not inevitable. Establishing farmer trust will be essential for implementing new approaches and innovations, whether this is technology or sustainable farming methods.

Partnership for Indonesia's Sustainable Agriculture (PISAgro)

In this session, government representatives expressed appreciation of PISAgro and highlighted the partnership's efforts as an important pillar to Indonesia's agriculture.

There was consensus amongst the participants that:

- The multi-stakeholder approach works, even with more than 70 partners, but continued success will require even stronger collaboration and learning. How to scale programs is the most pressing question for PISAgro.
- Greater measurement can ensure stronger impact on policy dialogues, which will be critical to scale. Government engagement should extend beyond the ministries of agriculture and finance to include health and nutrition as part of the discussions.
- Partners must fully consider the impact of digital solutions and who stands to benefit or suffer from greater access to technology. Open platforms should benefit widely.



Scaling up, connectivity, measurement and productivity have been discussed as priorities across the board, and they all come back to the same platform - how we engage with Grow Asia.



Dharnesh Gordhon,

President Nestle Indonesia,
Nestlé SA

01: Dharnesh Gordhon,
President Nestle Indonesia,
Nestlé SA

Country Partnerships – Achievements, Challenges, Future Plans

Myanmar Agriculture Network (MAN)

Over the past year, MAN has been establishing and scaling crop-focused value chain projects and supporting capacity building through Working Groups focused on cross-cutting issues. The main messages arising from the discussion were:

- Given Myanmar's current stage of economic development, participants agreed that physical and political infrastructure will be the basis of success. Emphasis should be placed on post-harvest issues.
- Representatives from other countries felt that the Myanmar government cannot tackle the lack of technology and infrastructure along with high production and logistics costs alone, and called upon international organizations and each other to support the development of Myanmar's agriculture sector. Greater commitment from investors will also help get projects off the ground.
- Grow Asia provides the platform for dialogues on development.
- Participants would like to see MAN drive dialogues on domestic and international market connectivity; facilitate farmer education and encourage learning from best practices.

Philippines Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (PPSA)

Participants in this session agreed on the significant progress the partnership has made, discussed methods for scaling up and explored critical issues the country is facing.

- Food security and food nutrition were discussed as twin goals for the Philippines' agriculture sector. Participants felt they should be addressed hand-in-hand—tackling not only food sufficiency but also the quality of food.
- Affordability was also discussed as a key constraint, and participants would like to see a shift from social responsibility to “shared value” and encouraging the growth of the middle class.
- Considering its large population of young people, participants agreed that it is crucial the country establishes policies and technology which can inform consumer behavior and engage young people in the agriculture sector.
- The government has a role to play in encouraging bottom-up development and locally-driven production, not just national planning.
- Participants agreed to continue collaborating together, sharing models that work, and maintaining tri-sector dialogue across government, private sector and civil society.

Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture in Vietnam (PSAV)

Vietnam faces three key challenges: scope of production of smallholders is limited; climate change and risk of natural disasters; pressures of competition and global trade. This discussion largely focused on two critical factors which can begin to address these challenges and enable scale in Vietnam - digital and finance.

- Digital solutions can enhance knowledge exchange, training and education of farmers and provide a means for monitoring and evaluation of projects.
- Government representatives in the discussion supported the role of digital in agriculture and highlighted opportunities to align PSAV plans with their existing projects, such as the national ID system.
- A discussion on the competitive nature of digital raised the challenge of sharing data, particularly considering PSAV's pre-competitive approach. It was agreed that there is a need for open communications and technology platforms which benefit widely.
- Smallholder financing - an established priority for PSAV - is an avenue where digital can be used effectively, through providing farmers with easy access to formal, affordable credit.



PSAV's value chain projects have great potential for creating a model for sustainable agriculture in Vietnam, especially coffee and tea. The plan now is to review the coffee and tea value chains and scale up production models for 10 strategic commodities in Vietnam, with a view to target international markets.



H.E. Nguyen Xuan Cuong,
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam

01: Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia and H.E. Nguyen Xuan Cuong, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam

Actions for a Reimagined Future



Leadership Commitment to Supporting the ASEAN Food Security Agenda

A panel of high-level leaders closed the event by reflecting on insights from the day and summarizing key commitments that will facilitate new partnership opportunities and allow scaling strategies to occur.

There was consensus among the panelists that the day's discussions were fruitful and that all participants brought forward ideas which can help drive value chain projects forward. Further, participants agreed that they must continue these commitments once the event is over. Participants must continue to engage their organisations and Grow Asia through the application of these ideas and commitments.

The innovative approaches, connections and practical ideas emerging from the Forum demonstrated that partnerships are an important part of the solution. Partnerships will create value chain projects that can meet the demands of the market, region and world, to achieve the wider Sustainable Development Goals. These conversations demonstrate that it cannot be done alone. Trust, shared learnings and expansion of existing partnerships is crucial.

The following section represents a summary of the key themes and ideas captured from the day which will help Grow Asia partners expand their reach, scale value chain projects and support more smallholders in South East Asia to be more effective, sustainable farmers.



We share a common understanding of the challenge and the importance of the challenge.

We all recognize that agriculture is essential for the region's development. We mustn't be afraid of how complex and difficult the situation is.



Tristan Armstrong,

Sector Specialist, Agriculture Productivity & Food Security, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



01: Tristan Armstrong, Sector Specialist, Agriculture Productivity & Food Security, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

02: Michel Gagnon, Director, Food Security Division, Global Issues and Development Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada



We must focus on inclusion, work together and help to develop projects and policies that align with our goals. Grow Asia can provide a solid foundation for all of our work.



Michel Gagnon,

Director, Food Security Division, Global Issues and Development Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada

Grow Asia Themes for Action



“

Finding answers requires all of us to commit - we must all play our role in value chains that benefit farmers. Scaling up has to be done so we need to come up with a concrete action plan to maximize our resources and expertise and meet farmers' needs.

”

Mat Syukur,

Advisor to the Minister on International Trade and Relations,
Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia

01

1. Digital

Digital solutions have the potential to become a game changer in reaching a vast number of smallholders in South East Asia and transforming the way they operate through improving information flow, traceability, and procurement transactions. This can lead to increased productivity, profitability, and sustainability.

All actors will be required to help drive widespread adoption and shape platforms that will benefit stakeholders across the value chain. Over the coming year, Grow Asia will proactively consult and involve its partners to shape the protocols, tools and systems needed to innovate, build, and distribute effective digital platforms to farmers.

01: Mat Syukur, Advisor to the Minister on International Trade and Relations, Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia

2. Measurement

Participants agreed that demonstrating impact needs to be a priority and having metrics that work for both government and the private sector is essential. Thus, all stakeholders must share a clear alignment on terminology for measurement and their definition of success.

Grow Asia will continue to facilitate the discussion by creating frameworks to align stakeholders and introduce new approaches and terminology to demonstrate the full breadth of impact. An example is the newly formed Farmer Engagement Funnel, which highlights the different levels of engagement projects can have with smallholders, including reach, engagement, adoption, and sustained activity. This is now being shared with Working Groups and will help them add context and detail to their reported results. Grow Asia will continue to commission case studies to map how projects are evolving and encourage learning exchange and adoption of successful models.



3. In-Country Support

The expanding Grow Asia Secretariat will continue to use its expertise, networks, and resource to deepen country-level engagement. Grow Asia will support existing Country Partnerships to become more resilient and sustainable, allowing focus to move towards strengthening the projects themselves through increased government and stakeholder engagement, further diversification of partners, measurement and scaling of existing projects.

Grow Asia will also explore opportunities to support or collaborate with Lao PDR to improve smallholder livelihoods.

4. Farmer Representation

As the backbone of agriculture, ensuring farmers are represented in project and value chain design should remain a priority for all stakeholders. Grow Asia will expand its role of providing a platform for farmers to have an important voice in the multi-stakeholder partnerships. It will do so by organizing events and bringing partners together to encourage sharing of experience and knowledge. Networking, training and peer-to-peer learning will also help facilitate a broad understanding among the Grow Asia network of farmers' challenges, needs and opportunities.

Within the agricultural community, Grow Asia sees a group of young people interested in becoming farmers provided it can generate the income and interest they need. Over time we will seek to encourage the emergence of a cadre of skilled, business-minded, and digital-savvy farmers. There is great opportunity for this group to inform a positive evolution of agriculture in the region. Grow Asia will ensure the needs of this group are represented in the development of scaling solutions and innovation programs.

Participant Commitments

The below section highlights commitments made from participants as a result of the Grow Asia Forum:

- *"This will inform our capacity-building programs and initiatives toward inclusive and sustainable agricultural and rural development in South East Asia"*
- *"We will be more proactive in reaching out to other industry stakeholders to discuss project experiences to avoid similar mistakes"*
- *"Scaling up projects focused on smallholders and rural development is an important theme we will be using to communicate and to cooperate with other sectors over the coming year(s)"*
- *"We will more proactively participate in country activities"*

01: Panelists in the
Closing Plenary

Panel on Agriculture in the Official Programme at the World Economic Forum on ASEAN

11-12 May 2017

The Future of Food Systems in ASEAN



How can food systems sustainably feed a growing ASEAN population?

A high-level panel of leaders addressed this question by focusing on strategies, policies and new approaches needed for food systems to sustainably feed a growing ASEAN population. Lisa Dreier, the Head of Food Security and Agriculture Initiatives of the World Economic Forum, highlighted the 40% increase in food demand in ASEAN by 2050 which will put increasing pressure on already scarce land and water resources. While more than half of ASEAN's population are under the age of 30, the farming system is characterized by an older population with more and more youth leaving agriculture. To feed a growing population, there is a need to make agriculture attractive to youth as well as use technology as a lever for food systems transformation. All this has to be done while ensuring sustainability of the region's natural resources including its rich biodiversity.

H.E. **Veng Sakhon**, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, addressed the rapid changes to the labor market in Cambodia. In 1993, 80% of Cambodians worked in agriculture, but now there are only 40%. This is due to young people leaving rural areas to continue their education and get better jobs in cities. To ensure sustainable production, new technology needs to be introduced in order to allow elder people to produce food and be productive. As a solution, the Minister also posited that Governments need to include agriculture in education curriculums to promote farming as a profitable career.

Estrella Penunia, Secretary-General of Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), supported the Minister's statement by emphasizing the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships to address the needs of women farmers and rural youth including in ensuring access to healthcare and education. She highlighted the role of farmer organizations in consolidating knowledge, developing policies and raising the voices of local people.

Jens Hartmann, Head of the Asia-Pacific Region for Bayer, highlighted the demographic challenge in the region with an ageing population and youth leaving agriculture. He highlighted the role of technology, especially digital, to attract youth and deliver customized solutions to the farming community. Cambodia is at a stage where the younger generation is aware of global challenges as well as the potential of new technologies in bringing a better future, said **Peter Sok Puthyuth**, Chief Executive Officer of SOMA Group. While the Fourth Industrial Revolution has not come to ASEAN yet, **Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury**, Vice-Chairperson of BRAC highlighted initiatives that can provide assets to the rural poor that can improve their productivity and bring them out of poverty.

In summary, the panel agreed that partnership platforms like Grow Asia, which can engage diverse stakeholders through a shared vision and action, has the potential to address ASEAN's food systems challenges, particularly through the potential for leveraging technology and innovations.

Appendix

Resources

[Grow Asia 2016-2017 Report on Progress](#)

Country Partnerships Overviews:

[Cambodia](#), [Indonesia](#), [Myanmar](#), [Philippines](#), [Vietnam](#)

Research Overview:

[Pathways to Scale](#)

World Economic Forum Report:

[Shaping the Future of Global Food Systems: A Scenarios Analysis](#)

Selected Grow Asia Forum Media Coverage

Press Release:

[Leaders Call for Innovation and Partnership to Strengthen ASEAN Food Systems](#)

Blogs and Articles:

[Q&A: What will food systems look like in Southeast Asia in 2030?](#)

[How Will Southeast Asia Feed its People in 2030?](#)

Videos

[CGTN – Youth, food security dominate talks at ASEAN Economic Forum in Cambodia](#)



List of Participants

In Channy	President and Group Managing Director	ACLEDA Bank Plc	Cambodia
Ian Pinner	President, South East Asia, Australia and New Zealand and Global Destination Marketing	ADM Asia Pacific Trading Pte Ltd	Singapore
Htay Lwin	Assistant Secretary	Agriculture and Farmers Federation of Myanmar (AFFM)	Myanmar
Harm Haverkort	Country Director Vietnam	Agriterra	Vietnam
Saran Song	Chief Executive Officer and President	Amura Rice (Cambodia) Co., Ltd	Cambodia
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