



Success Stories and Lessons Learned



Since its implementation in October 2015, ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP) has begun the process of strengthening and supporting Farmers' Organisations across the ASEAN region. With every twist, turn and change in the programme comes a range of successes to be celebrated and lessons to be drawn upon for future programme activities.

Overview

Since its implementation in October 2015, AFOSP has begun the process of strengthening and supporting Farmers' Organisations across the ASEAN region through capacity building, engagement in policy process, and services to agriculture development. The ASEAN Foundation's role in this programme, even during its early stages, has been integral to supporting and sustaining the overall outcomes and impacts envisaged by AFOSP and all of its stakeholders. While the process of such a programme can be somewhat protracted and littered with a range of expected and unexpected obstacles, the ASEAN

Foundation has taken on the variety of challenges with positivity, achieving some key results along the way. In its strategic role to bridge the gap between agricultural cooperatives and higher-level ASEAN bodies, the work of the ASEAN Foundation has become the building block for the future success of AFOSP. By recognising successes, and learning from issues, the longevity of the programme and the impacts it creates will only increase in value for primary programme benefactors – the members of Farmers' Organisations at a local level.

Successful Activities



Under its role to increase and promote the participation local Farmers' Organisations within regional policies-making processes, the ASEAN Foundation has implemented a range of successful activities, grouped within 3 key thematic areas:

- ASEAN Agricultural Cooperatives;
- ASEAN Learning Series; and
- Value Chains.

Specific activities implemented within each of the three key thematic areas include:

ASEAN Agricultural Cooperatives

- 13th SOM RDPE Meeting, 10-13 October 2016, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia;
- 24th ACEDAC and 19th ASWGAC Meeting, 16-19 May 2017, in Vientiane, Laos, which included the formulation of the ASEAN Roadmap on Agricultural Cooperatives; and
- 14th SOM RDPE, 3 October 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

ASEAN Learning Series

- ASEAN EU RTD in 2016;
- North-South Learning Exchange, which took place during May 2017 in Belgium and France; and
- ASEAN Learning Route on Agricultural Cooperatives (ALRAC) and ASEAN Learning Series and Policy Engagement on Agricultural Cooperatives (ALSPEAC) events during 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Value Chains

ASEAN coffee value chains, as the focus of the 2017 ALSPEAC event.





Lessons Learned

While the successful engagement and efforts of the ASEAN Foundation, and ASOFP as a whole are numerous, there are a range of key lessons and improvements that must be recognised and built in to all working aspects as the program continues. Some key learning outcomes identified include:

- There must be a stronger understanding and efforts between the Food, Agriculture, and Forestry (FAF) and Medium Term Cooperation Programme Phase II (MTCP-2) activities, to ensure stronger and more efficient outcomes within the AFOSP;
- The importance of establishing strong policy dialogue that engages all elements of farming cooperatives, government and the private sector, to ensure the full participation of agricultural cooperatives in the overall value chain;
- The need to ensure that cooperatives themselves are connected and communicating, to ensure shared learning and ideas for future engagement;
- Cooperatives must be supported to connect with the market to improve their own performance, perhaps through the use of standards, and engagement by the private sector to support implementation and awareness of such standards;
- While communication is imperative to the program's success, AFOSP must still strive to improve and strengthen its communication

processes, particularly in an environment with multiple stakeholders yet limited resources, to ensure clear and effective implementation and engagement in the programme;

- AFOSP, while inviting input from a global list of parties, must ensure it remains 'ASEAN' at the core, as the issues, methods and opportunities within the programme are in many cases unique only to the ASEAN region itself – this includes ASEAN 'ownership' of all activities implemented within AFOSP;

- The ASEAN Foundation, alongside the programme as a whole, should afford more time and resources to developing its activities, efforts that must be supported by the programme leaders, with clear and efficient engagement mechanisms supported by the Asean Farmers' Association (AFA);
- Developments such as the ASEAN 101 Manual are beneficial not only as awareness material for farmers, but can also provide guidance to partners on working with ASEAN – therefore such ideas and innovations must be supported as the programme continues.



ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme

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