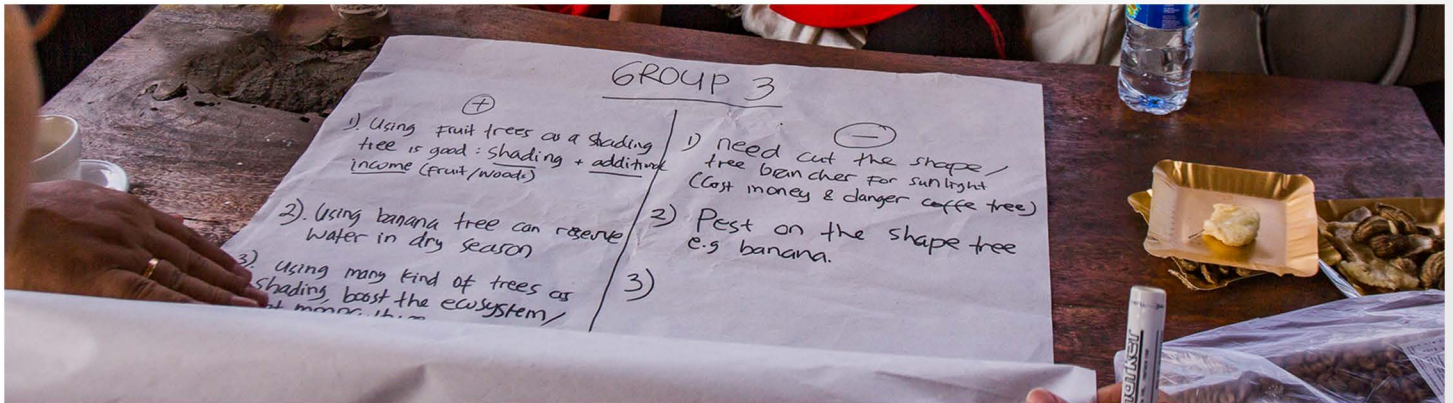


ASEAN Learning Series



As the key stakeholder tasked with linking ASEAN bodies and Farmers' Organisations across the region, the ASEAN Foundation is central to the development, implementation and support of a range of learning and information sharing activities within ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP).

Overview

As the key stakeholder tasked with linking ASEAN bodies and Farmers' Organisations across the region, the ASEAN Foundation is central to the development, implementation and support of a range of learning and information sharing activities within AFOSP. These activities, implemented through a number of learning series, support the ASEAN Foundation's efforts to increase and promote the participation of local Farmers' Organisations within regional policy-making and programmatic processes. During 2016 and 2017, two key annual events were held under

this working area; namely the *2016 ASEAN Learning Route on Agricultural Cooperatives (ALRAC)*, and the *2017 ASEAN Learning Series and Policy Engagement on Agricultural Cooperatives (ALSPEAC)*. The events primarily aimed to promote sharing and participation between members of ASEAN agricultural cooperatives and representatives of ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Agricultural Cooperative (ASWGAC), regarding challenges and opportunities within the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

Such Learning Series form part of a continuous process that seeks to broaden and diversify the markets of rural technical services, placing special value on the experiences and knowledge of institutions, associations, communities and rural families. By engaging in such efforts, the capacity of all parties can be increased to confront the challenges and address opportunities experienced by smallholder farmers within the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) policy environment.

2016 ALRAC

The ASEAN Learning Route on Agricultural Cooperation (ALRAC), organised by the ASEAN Foundation and PROCASUR, through AFOSP, was held in The Philippines and Thailand during March and April 2016. The participants, including leaders of the farmers' organisations and members of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Agricultural Cooperatives (ASWGAC), engaged in a series of field visits and discussion sessions to learn from agricultural cooperative best practices undertaken across various locations.

Activities

The ALRAC activity began in Thailand, where after the opening, there were a series of roundtable discussions regarding topics related to agriculture cooperatives. Following this, participants undertook a field visit to *Khao Khitchakood Agricultural Cooperative Ltd.* based in Chanthaburi. Departing from Thailand, participants then continued to The Philippines, and began working sessions with a review of learnings from the field visit in Thailand. This was

followed by roundtable discussions regarding the context for agricultural cooperatives in The Philippines.

A range of presentations and discussions were provided by stakeholders within the agriculture cooperative environment, before participants embarked on a field visit to the *Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC)*. The ALRAC activity was finalised after 7 days with a workshop and feedback session.

Outcomes

A key outcome was for participants to amalgamate the lessons learned from the study tour, and provide inputs into the development of a draft roadmap for ASEAN agricultural cooperatives. Participants were divided into country-based groups, resulting in the development of the following focus areas for each nation:



Country	Goal for Draft Roadmap
Cambodia	To improve the management the agricultural cooperative and the rice value chain.
Indonesia	To increase economic opportunities and benefit for agricultural cooperatives.
Lao PDR	To count with an effective commercial agriculture handled by the cooperatives.
Myanmar	To build an agricultural economy with cooperatives, which promote social and economic justice and progress for the wellbeing of the community and living standards of the farmers.
The Philippines	To strengthen the Filipino Cooperatives preparedness to be engaged in the ASEAN Community and to establish a relationship based advocacy on mutual interests, fair economic cooperation and strategic inter-agri coop partnerships.
Thailand	To empower farmers and enhance cooperative management.
Viet Nam	To expand production based on organic standards; to improve relationship of cooperatives and enterprises; to enhance effectiveness of cooperatives; and to mobilise farmers to take part on new model of cooperatives like in Thailand and the Philippines.

Focusing towards the ASEAN regional level, the ALRAC activity provided a number of key recommendations for consideration by ASWGAC, primarily being:

1. To design and formulate an ASEAN Roadmap 2025 on Agricultural Cooperatives to harmonise the different states and progress of agricultural cooperatives movement in the region;
2. The organisation of the 6th ASEAN Cooperative Business Forum (ACBF) by the office of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) of The Philippines to look at the market access issues and to promote inter-cooperatives cooperation; and
3. To continue the learning exchange programme to learn from the other regions such as East Asia and the EU.

As AFOSP's first engagement on the ASEAN level, ALRAC also provided a great opportunity to begin facilitating and promoting the link between ASEAN Farmers' Organisations and ASEAN national focal points responsible for agricultural cooperatives (ASWGAC).



2017 ALSPEAC

Continuing on from 2016's ALRAC event, the ASEAN Foundation, through the AFOSP, organised and implemented the 2017 Learning Series and Policy Engagement on Agricultural Cooperatives (ALSPEAC), which was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, during July 2017. The event was attended by over 60 participants from a range of stakeholders in the ASEAN region agricultural cooperative scope, including representatives of Farmers' Organisations, ASEAN bodies (in particular ASWGAC), development practitioners and the private sector. The focus of the event was engaging agricultural cooperatives within the value chain,

through the specific theme of coffee farming, with participants sharing learning and knowledge on each of their roles within the overall coffee value chain. A key outcome of the event, and other future planned events, is to create partnerships and strategic alliances between the range of stakeholders within value chains, with resulting positive economic impacts for smallholder communities and members of agricultural cooperatives across the region. With such increased engagement, more meaningful and direct activities can be developed to positively impact economic development and outcomes for a wide range of Farmers' Organisations across a variety of agricultural sub-sectors.



Activities

On the first day, after initial openings and introductions, participants were engaged in a range of panel discussions, focused on sharing insights and challenges related to agricultural cooperatives engaging in the overall ASEAN coffee trade. Specific discussion topics included *“Exchanging Information on Agricultural Cooperatives in ASEAN”*, *“Coffee Cooperatives and market access”*, and *Coffee Supply Chain at the national level: the role of cooperative and support from the government*. On the second day, participants undertook a field visit to *Petung Village*, with a discussion regarding required improvements in coffee production and processing, before visiting *Pentingsari Agro Village*, and taking in an analysis

of coffee value chains and market access from an Indonesian perspective. The third and final day saw a further panel discussion regarding *“Coffee Collective Marketing and Participation of Cooperative at the Policy Level”*, as well as a group discussion related to developing a common vision for the year 2020, in which participants identified ways forward for the coordination of a common vision for the coffee value chain.

Outcomes

Amongst a range of outcomes, lessons learned and networking undertaken, the ALSPEAC workshop sessions tabled key future plans for each of the three major stakeholders in the coffee value chain. In general,

participants found the event to be highly beneficial across all of the designed outcomes. Participants were able to engage in networking, share knowledge regarding coffee cooperatives, begin developing their own strategies and plans regarding their own cooperatives, and obtain relevant and useful information to be shared within the farming communities in their location. All activities within the workshop were generally found to be relevant and applicable to participants' work, with requests that such events expand even further on detail and information in the future.

■ Key Outcomes

The three key stakeholder groups from the event developed their own distinct plans:

Farmers Organisations – Aim to establish Coffee Farmers/Cooperatives Forum, leading to a Coffee Farmer Cooperative Federation at National and ASEAN levels. This forum would focus on the production, processing and marketing of sustainably grown or organic coffee. The forum would be organised at a National level, with a variety of aims including techniques and best practice training, capacity building, inter-cooperative trading, and outward-focusing promotion and marketing.

ASEAN Bodies – Plan to further engage in learning and understanding related to the coffee industry in the region. Such efforts would include learning exchange visits, increased focus to ASEAN coffee trade within higher-level policy and decision-making forums, and engagement of more coffee-related activities within wider ASEAN agricultural cooperative events. It was also recommended that an ASGWAC coffee group be formed within the ASGWAC forum.

Private Sector – Private sector plans for the future centred around increasing engagement and understanding with agricultural cooperatives, with the aim to form stronger links within the coffee value chain. A temporary committee is to be formed to oversee such efforts, with a focus towards learning and innovation through links fostered through trade, events and trainings.





Key Outcomes

1. A regional knowledge sharing platform of coffee cooperatives under the ASEAN Centre for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives (ACEDAC) flagship to engage, dialogue and work with ASEAN, regional inter-government bodies, and other public/private stakeholders;
2. Enhanced capacity of the farmers' organisations to identify and design their strategies and programs in the agricultural value chain that will benefit their communities and families;
3. Improved access to market opportunities (in particular for coffee) through an inclusive ASEAN Business Model (e.g. contract farming);
4. Increased collaboration to provide affordable agri-financial and agri-investment services for smallholder farmers and agricultural cooperatives.



ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme

(AFOSP) – Engaging With ASEAN,
Asian Farmer Association (AFA),
La Via Campesina (LVC)

The ASEAN Foundation
Jl. Sam Ratulangi No.2, Menteng,
Jakarta - 10350, INDONESIA

Phone : +62-21-3192 4828

Fax : +62-21-3192-6078

Email: secretariat@aseanfoundation.org

yacinta.jati@aseanfoundation.org

Website : www.aseanfoundation.org