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Grow Asia Forum 2018

Summary Report

Innovations for Results – Exploration and Inspiration

Ha Noi, Viet Nam 11 September 2018



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Key Statistics

Grow Asia Forum 2018 in numbers



59 speakers

speakers and moderators



19 countries represented



Executive Summary

The fifth Grow Asia Forum brought together more than 160 senior leaders and decision-makers in the agriculture industry, including ASEAN governments, global and regional private sector leaders, international civil society, farmers' organizations and other key stakeholders to cross-pollinate ideas, make new contacts and explore scalable solutions in agricultural policy, finance and technology.

This year's Grow Asia Forum was co-hosted by the Grow Asia Partnership and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum. The event took place alongside the World Economic Forum on ASEAN Summit.

Under the theme "Innovations for Results: Exploration and Inspiration", attendees left the event with a strong sense of the purpose, progress and exciting innovations that have been created and are emerging across the whole Grow Asia network. Leaders heard key achievements from the 2018 Grow Asia Report on Progress.

Participants defined strategies for transforming agriculture and food systems in the region anchored around public-private policy dialogue and Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies, with smallholder farmers at the core of profitable, sustainable and inclusive supply chains.

Leaders recommitted to working in partnership with other stakeholders through the Grow Asia platform to scale the impact of their work. They also committed to continue working towards ensuring that Southeast Asia's smallholder farmers are equipped with the right technologies, knowledge and skills to meet the increasing global demand for food, sustainably.

The following pages summarize the key discussion points, agreements and commitments made by leaders at the Grow Asia Forum, which will inform the Grow Asia partnership's focus going forward.

Grow Asia in 2018 and Beyond: Progress and Highlights from the Network

Over the past three years, the Grow Asia partnership has made significant progress. As presented at the Grow Asia Forum, the network of five Country Partnerships now convenes over 500 partners across the public, private and civil society sectors, involving them in 44 locally-led Working Groups.



With Secretariats in each of the five countries, Grow Asia is now placing a greater emphasis on achieving results at scale, guided by a refined twin track strategy. Under Track One, the focus is on creating resilient and sustainable multi-stakeholder partnerships to deliver economic and environmental benefits to smallholder farmers. This includes assisting Country Secretariats to become self-financing, able to engage governments, deliver effective Working Groups, and take on roles in improving food systems and responding to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Track Two aims to build on the unique reach of the network to effect regional change and enable it to operate at scale. This agenda includes policy dialogue and government engagement to create long-term impact, new approaches to agricultural finance and insurance to support smallholders and cross-regional knowledge. Grow Asia's expanding digital program also has the potential to radically improve the relationship between smaller scale producers and agribusinesses.

Grow Asia is thankful for the continued commitment from its partners to promote more inclusive and sustainable value chains that support smallholders. The Grow Asia Secretariat is grateful for the strategic guidance that its governance committees and Working Groups have provided over the past year and the continued support of the World Economic Forum's New Vision for Agriculture and ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture. The network would also like to recognize that this work has been made possible by the Government of Australia and the Government of Canada through continued financial and strategic support, as well as that of the World Bank, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Canada's International Development Research Centre.





Grow Asia is uniquely positioned as a vanguard of turning ideas into action. The network is taking technologies and creating real impact on the ground as it seeks to deliver on its mission to transform agriculture.

Olivier Schwab Head of Business Engagement, World Economic Forum



As we move to implement our twin track strategy of strengthening Country Partnerships while in parallel leveraging the unique reach of the Grow Asia network to effect regional change, we are excited to incorporate the perspectives shared at the Grow Asia Forum into our ongoing work and dialogues.

Grahame Dixie Executive Director, Grow Asia

High-Level Plenary: Innovations, Solutions and Progress in 2018

In the welcome remarks by this year's host country, **H.E. Trinh Dinh Dung**, Deputy Prime Minister of Viet Nam highlighted the importance of strategic cooperation in agriculture. He shared how Viet Nam considers multi-stakeholder partnerships as a mechanism for attracting investments in agriculture and enhancing production along the supply chain.

The Deputy Prime Minister called for better international integration through the active participation of the private sector and the use of 4IR technologies to make agriculture more modern, effective, inclusive and sustainable.

A panel of senior leaders from governments and leading agribusinesses subsequently discussed innovations, solutions and progress being made in the agriculture sector, and how to effectively build and scale multi-stakeholder value chain initiatives.



Grow Asia Forum Ha Noi, 11 September 2018





Franky Oesman Widjaja, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Sinar Mas Agribusiness & Food, and Co-Chair of the Grow Asia Business Council opened discussions with the positive recognition that technologies available today have the potential to improve how farmers access information, finance and cultivate their crops, and can help meet the growing global demand for food. The challenge, he said, is providing smallholders with access to these solutions.

Michaelia Cash, Australian Minister for Small and Family Business, Skills and Vocational Education of Australia also acknowledged the potential of 4IR technologies to uplift small businesses. Observing similarities between Australia and ASEAN countries, the minister said that technology has become a basic infrastructure and will be key to businesses prospering in the future. She highlighted the role of governments in creating enabling environments and policies which can help farmers access technologies and grow their businesses.

Nguyen Xuan Cuong, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam agreed that the government plays a vital role in facilitating successful supply chains and multi-sector cooperation has helped elevate Viet Nam's agriculture industry. Describing the work of the Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture in Viet Nam (PSAV), the minister highlighted how the different knowledge and experiences of its stakeholders has helped to improve cultivation techniques, yields and quality of priority crops in Viet Nam, strengthening the country's export market and increasing the incomes of farmers. Marion Martinez, Managing Director, Yara Viet Nam Ltd and Co-Chair of the Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture in Viet Nam, said that collaboration, leadership and alignment of measurement frameworks is essential for successful partnerships. To see changes in the market, fast action is needed – and this requires regular dialogue, leadership and a shared understanding of goals. She also highlighted the need for agriculture stakeholders to understand the end user, and how technologies can be the answer. Consumers are more alert to the environmental impact of farming and the quality of produce, and technology can help farmers to achieve traceability. Educating them on the possibilities that technologies can provide is essential.

Mary Ann Sayoc, Public Affairs Lead, East-West Seed Group agreed that to see success on the ground, farmers must be provided with the fundamental technological and business knowledge and empowered to become entrepreneurs. She also acknowledged that digital solutions are only one aspect of the picture – access to finance and markets and basic infrastructure must be in place to uplift farmers and create sustainable, inclusive value chains. Partnership platforms can connect these dots, and partners must leverage each other's strengths.



There was consensus among all panelists that:

- Partnership models are an effective way to scale up the impact of individual projects and solutions.
 Linking partners together through the Grow Asia platform can improve connectivity and encourage cross-sector sharing of information and best practices;
- Technology has the potential to transform existing agriculture systems at multiple levels and make the sector an appealing business opportunity for future generations, but technology is only one aspect;
- Supporting infrastructure and policies must be in place to connect smallholder farmers to markets.



Public-private partnership is important if our vision for sustainable agriculture is to materialize.

Nguyen Xuan Cuong

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam



As leaders, our focus must be on sharing learnings and experiences on the solutions that can benefit smallholder farmers in Asia. Digitalization and working in close partnership can take our work to the next level.

Franky Oesman Widjaja

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Sinar Mas Agribusiness & Food, and Co-Chair of the Grow Asia Business Council

Interactive Sessions in Parallel: Multi-stakeholder Partnerships in Action

Sustainable Development Goal 17 recognizes partnerships as important vehicles for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

During a series of parallel breakout discussions, participants tackled the challenges and opportunities of working in multi-stakeholder partnerships, highlighting case studies from the Grow Asia network. Participants also discussed success factors, enabling conditions, and implications for countries and businesses.

From Voluntary Initiatives to National Standards



Grow Asia Working Groups have typically started as value chain projects focused on expanding smallholder farmer participation and productivity. However, to reach a higher scale of impact, some Working Groups have broadened their agenda to sectoral coordination such as implementation of industry roadmaps and harmonization of standards.

Moderator Elvin Uy Director for Operations, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)

Speakers

Do Ngoc Sy Sustainability Manager Asia Pacific, Jacobs Douwe Egberts (JDE)

Tran Thi Quynh Chi

Program Manager, IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative

Wisman Djaja

Director of Sustainability, Agriculture Development and Procurement, Nestlé Indonesia

- Providing access to the right networks is key to successfully achieving scale. Voluntary programs should aim to evolve into national standards. All initiatives can be strengthened by being aligned with government initiatives and roadmaps.
- To develop robust programs involving both government and private sector initiatives, stakeholders must collaborate in a pre-competitive, long-term setting.
- Voluntary initiatives and individual company programs must align and pool their resources before approaching governments. As an example, in Viet Nam, since all private sector companies have pooled their standards to develop the common National Sustainability Curriculum under the Viet Nam Coffee Coordination Board, there is a single manual and areas are delegated to ensure even remote areas gain support.
- Farmers must also be involved in the early mapping stages to ensure they understand the benefit of programs.
- Processes are crucial setting clear targets, measurement systems, digital tools and a well-coordinated, professional Secretariat to lead the initiative are essential to development, tracking and enhancing impact.



Farmer Aggregation: Sharing Best Practices



Aggregation is an effective means of increasing smallholder capacity for and access to technical know-how, inputs, credit, market linkages and government schemes for rural development. Whether aggregation is done by farmer groups or through other intermediaries, bringing together smallholders can help them attain economies of scale, risk reduction, and a sense of community empowerment.

Moderator

Harm Haverkort Country Director Viet Nam, Agriterra

Speakers Connie Kang

Global Smallholder Farming Manager for Southeast Asia, Bayer Crop Science

Sanjay Sethi

Director Sustainability, Phoenix Group

Chhoun Sochenda

Agriculture Co-operative Coordinator, Agriculture Co-operatives Cambodia

- The key to farmer aggregation is finding a common value proposition and building trust among the stakeholders involved.
- Farmer cooperatives should ideally be led by a democratic leader, who is equipped to manage multiple stakeholders from both the private and public sectors.
- Farmer groups should not be formed by donors or governments. We must incentivize the private sector to lead groups to avoid them being politicized.
- When developing infrastructure in rural areas, governments need to account for the implications of wholesale markets and smallholder farmers – and how we could use that infrastructure to support the process of farmer aggregation at scale.



Taking Digital Innovations to Scale



Digitalization has the potential to dramatically change the way millions of smallholders in Southeast Asia manage their plots and crops. This breakout group explored how agribusinesses can collaborate with start-ups, entrepreneurs and innovators to embrace new technologies and respond quickly to emerging digital opportunities.

Moderator

Adam Lyle Executive Chairman, Padang & Co Pte Ltd

Speakers

Alison Eskesen Regional Director, Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth

Adrian Teo

CTO and Co-Founder, On9 Commerce

- To take digital solutions to scale, agribusinesses should think about innovation as a process not a project.
- Effective innovation starts with an understanding of the challenges faced by farmers as well as other stakeholders.
- Externalizing innovation can get things moving faster: by being open to working with start-ups and innovators.
- Creating the right environment is essential companies must have the right culture and internal processes in place so that they can respond to external innovations.
- Digital solutions should not be overly complicated. Sometimes the simplest solutions such as WhatsApp and Facebook work best.

Initiatives for Agriculture Finance



Smallholder agricultural finance is an established topic in the development agenda, yet current efforts to expand financial inclusion are insufficient to meet smallholder demand. Concerted efforts around customer centricity, progressive partnerships, and smart subsidy have the potential to change the sector's growth trajectory to best serve smallholder farmers.

Moderator

Mark Matthews Chief Operations Officer, Business for Development

Speakers Dan Songco President and CEO, PinoyME Foundation, Inc

Sudhakar Maddila CEO, NaanDanJain Irrigation Ltd

Herve Thieblemont Southeast Asia Regional Director, Syngenta Foundation

Curtis Henry Slover

Program Officer for Rural Finance and Agriculture Value Chains, Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT)

- Access to finance cannot be addressed as a stand-alone – an ecosystem is required to support it.
- Brokering and facilitating partnerships will be essential in the ecosystem building to enable mutual understanding and trust among the different stakeholders.
- Smallholder farmers must have the capacity to self-manage savings and conduct their own enterprise and business planning. We need to provide them with this knowledge and skills.





Fostering Policy Dialogue



Policy processes that yield good outcomes are inherently complex, requiring interactions of stakeholders in problem identification, generation of political will and selection of practical solutions. Policy dialogues are increasingly being used as a policy-making tool. This session focused on how Grow Asia, the ASEAN Secretariat and Country Partnerships are working with policy-makers to influence impact.

Moderator Bruce Blakeman Vice President, Cargill

Speakers Tran Dong Phuong

Director Sectoral Development Directorate, ASEAN Economic Community Department, ASEAN Secretariat

San Vanty

Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Cambodia

Devi Kusumaningtyas

Head of Government and Industry Affairs for Southeast Asia, Corteva Agriscience

Stephen Krecik

Senior Manager, Palm Oil, Rainforest Alliance

- Governance is key in dealing with special interest groups you can have all the consultative processes, but the key is in finding the right checkpoints.
- Stakeholders can have different interests. It is important to find common ground.
- Realizing change takes time and it takes contributions from everyone, not just one policy change.
- Grow Asia's contribution to facilitating meaningful dialogue with government, to the benefit of multiple stakeholders, was recognized on several occasions. There was agreement between the participants that Grow Asia has been effective in creating important linkages as a facilitator of policy dialogue.



Knowledge Marketplace



For the first time, Grow Asia facilitated an interactive marketplace featuring case studies in agricultural innovations, creative solutions and resources. Participants visited curated booths to hear about new breakthroughs and draw inspiration for their own work.

Working with Smallholders



Presenters Colin Taylor Agribusiness Advisory Services Regional Lead EAP, International Finance Corporation

Ernest Bethe Principal Operations Officer, International Finance Corporation The International Finance Corporation shared highlights from a new <u>handbook</u> of best practices for agribusinesses working with smallholders. This included farmer aggregation, training and communication strategies, standards and certification, access to inputs, farm management, and the role of women in supply chains.



Carbon Neutral Sustainable Agriculture



Presenter Nicholas Goh Director, TWIN Agri Tech Co Ltd

The production, transport, and use of traditional fertilizers produces significant amounts of greenhouse gases. To make fertilizers in Cambodia more sustainable, TwinAgri converts waste products that would otherwise have entered landfill into organic compost. Participants heard how the technology provides a platform for the company to work in partnership with farmers to scale up sustainable farming.

Technology Transfer to Smallholders within Value Chains



Presenter Mary Ann Sayoc Public Affairs Lead, East-West Seed Group

In collaboration with the Myanmar Vegetables Working Group, East-West Seed shared how they provide technical and knowledge support to new and existing vegetable growers, such as modular transplant systems, mulching and raised bed production techniques.





Fourth Industrial Revolution Technologies



Presenter James Riordan Head – Compliance & Risk Management, Center for Global Public Goods, World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum has published a <u>report</u> outlining 12 emerging technological innovations that have the potential to drive rapid progress in the sustainability, inclusivity, efficiency, and health impacts of food systems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants heard how the report findings can support their work.

Mobile Wallets for Agriculture



Presenter Jojo Malolos Chief Executive Officer, Wing (Cambodia) Limited Specialised Bank

The digitization of payments in agriculture is emerging as a new opportunity for mobile money service providers to drive rural growth, as they seek to expand the service beyond urban regions and into new segments. Participants heard how digital payments into the mobile wallets of smallholder farmers can reduce the time and cost associated with traditional cash disbursements. For example, digital payments can eliminate the need to travel long distances to receive and pay cash, which also results in improved security and transparency.

Digital Credit Scoring



Presenter Lynley Mannell Team Leader, SAFIRA, Palladium

Digital credit scoring has the potential to reduce the cost of assessing risk as well as making more accurate scoring. Lenders can use various types of digital data to assess the creditworthiness of smallholders. Participants were introduced to Grow Asia's <u>Digital</u> <u>Credit Scoring Guide</u> and explored what is needed – from the data itself, loan product design, potential risks and data privacy concerns – to use data in credit scoring tools and identify credit-worthy farmers.

Digital Extension



Presenter To Duc Hai Chief Executive Officer, AgriMedia

The expansion of digital infrastructure and mobile technologies is vital for reaching agricultural development goals. Participants heard how mobile technologies can allow farmers to make and receive payments, access loans, obtain information on seeds and input availability, receive weather forecasts, learn optimum farming practices and improve their negotiations.



Scenarios in Southeast Asia

With the insights gained from the day's discussions, participants split into breakout sessions to take a deep-dive into solutions and interventions for current issues faced in the region. Participants identified gaps and challenges, and how collective action can address the topic. Each session contextualized the topic to specific countries, crops or organizations for framing purposes, although the learnings can be applied broadly.



Cocoa: Prospects for Southeast Asia

Chocolate consumption is increasing globally, yet cocoa farmers, most of them smallholders, must cope with aging plantations, decreasing soil fertility, increasing rates of pests and diseases, and the consequences of climate change. There is a projected long-term shortfall of global cocoa supplies, particularly those defined as sustainable, i.e. not grown in land cleared of tropical forest. In a region that includes well-established cocoa producers such as Indonesia, and emerging producers such as Viet Nam, Philippines and Malaysia, participants explored whether Southeast Asia is poised to address these challenges and meet the cocoa gap.

Moderator

Grahame Dixie Executive Director, Grow Asia

Speakers Simon Bakker President, Kennemer Foods International Inc.

Fay Fay Choo Asia Cocoa Director, Mars Inc.

Bruce Blakeman Vice President, Cargill

Tiffany Talsma Climate Strategy Specialist, International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)

Samuel Maruta Co-Founder, Marou

- There are sufficient opportunities for Southeast Asia to develop competitive cocoa industries.
- Holistic solutions such as initiating finance schemes, embedding Good Agricultural Practices and providing colonial plant material could help create a higher quality market for cocoa.
- There is enough potential to explore integrated project for cocoa in Viet Nam.
- This could initially involve convening a meeting, based on research papers exploring long-term market prospects, production possibilities developed in conjunction with Grow Asia and other stakeholders, and identifying locations where plantings should take place.



Realizing the Promise of Mobile Services

The importance of digitizing smallholder supply chains is widely recognised by governments, businesses and NGOs. However, it is hard to provide a digital service without having access to data on each farmer. This includes digital finance, training and traceability service. This discussion explored how incentives can be created for farmers share data with service providers.

Moderator

Erwin Sikma Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Impact Terra

Speakers Quyen McGrath

Head of Project - Partnership, Village Link Co Ltd

Fay Fay Choo

Asia Cocoa Director, Mars Inc.

Tal Brod

Managing Director, Netafim

- There are huge opportunities for sharing farmer data between various actors; buyers, input manufactures and lenders as they require similar data.
- Incentives are hard to provide to farmers and a lot of work goes into finding the data. The best incentives are short term, and reflect what farmers value.
- Data can come from other third-party sources, such as satellites and drones, rather than directly from the farmers.



Connecting Fruit & Vegetable Growers to Markets

Traditional marketing channels with ad hoc sales are being replaced by coordinated links between farmers, processors, retailers and others. Smallholders, particularly those located further from major urban centers, face high barriers to entering lucrative and stable buyer-driven chains. This session explored the relative merits of intermediaries, wholesale markets and cooperative-to-retailer arrangements in the context of the growing urban centers.

Moderator Tin Htut Oo

Chairman, Agriculture Group, Yoma Strategic Holdings Ltd

Speakers

Thlang Sovann Pisey Executive Director, Khmer Organic Cooperative

Tin Aung

Executive Committee Member, Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter association (MFVP)

Min Heekyung

Executive Vice President, CJ Cheiljedang

- Getting farmers to understand their export markets

 technically and taste-wise, will help them to
 become more entrepreneurial and capitalize on
 higher margin opportunities.
- Building trust is important when working with farmers and helping to change their mindsets.
- It is important for intermediaries to play this bridging role of providing information as no amount of work at a grass-roots level will be sufficient on its own.





Upscaling and Transforming Agriculture Labor

The Fourth Industrial Revolution will bring technological changes to agriculture that promise higher yields and fewer workers. This discussion explored how governments can cushion the impact of the labor displacement, and what it might take to transform the next generation of farmworkers.

Moderator

Nguyen Do Anh Tuan

Director General, Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development

Speakers

San Vanty Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Kingdom of Cambodia

Nguyen Minh Tien

Director General, Department of National Target Program on New Rural Development (Viet Nam)

Ernest Bethe

Principal Operations Officer, International Finance Corporation (IFC)

Nadia Adjani Soerjanto

Associate, Knowledge and Innovation, Grow Asia

- We are witnessing an era of a lost middle generation, whereby many farmers left the industry to go to other labor intensive sectors, but found that automation has taken those jobs.
- An opportunity exists in revitalizing the rural space, offering training and incentives for farmers both young and old. This can be achieved by governments and the private sector working together.
- Governments need to establish clear regional policies that support job creation, while simultaneously creating more incentives for the private sector to participate in revitalizing rural economies at the local level.
- There is an increasing need to adopt a more gender-inclusive approach in policy-making, to ensure that women are included in this technological revolution.

Promoting Premium Products and High Value Crops



Moderator Boreth Sun Country Director, Cambodia Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture

Speakers

Robert Esposito Chief Executive Officer, Coco Khmer International Pte Ltd

Vincent Mourou

Co-Founder, Marou

Aaron Fishman

Chief Executive Officer, East Bali Cashews

An important strategy for increasing incomes of smallholders is to help them diversify from low-value staple food commodities into higher-value commodities. Nonetheless, certain conditions must be in place to fully tap their economic potential. This session examined bottlenecks to participation and explored policies, investments, and institutional arrangements that can alleviate these constraints.

- Access to finance, technical expertise, talent, uncertainty of supply and bureaucracy are some of the key challenges that companies face when developing premium products.
- Establishing trust is essential, not only with farmers and their communities but with consumers as well. Companies must be focused when making high quality products and not cut corners. Local consumers are always the hardest group to capture and have high standards, especially in markets where imported goods are valued over domestically produced goods. The perception of being artisanal is not enough on its own if the product is not high quality.
- Consumers are more conscious and want traceability

 they want to know where their products come from.
- Companies that have found success have done so often by paying farmers higher than market price so that farmers can see a future and are willing to sell their produce to them.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships are important in attracting public, private and civil society sectors to educate future generations, creating ideal policy frameworks and supporting smallholder farmers.



Side Meeting: Biomass and Wood Pellets

Viet Nam exports around US\$300 million wood pellets per year. 90% of this currently goes to Korea, and 10% to Japan. The total market size is guaranteed to grow as both governments have mandated their power generation companies to increasingly substitute coal for biomass. The export sales are projected to reach US\$600-700 million in around four years' time. Most of the wood pellets are produced by one million smallholders over 2.5 million hectares, who grow acacia as an agroforestry crop in five-year cycles.

The challenge facing Viet Nam's acacia farmers is that the Korean government is planning to implement a green power generation policy, which will require all imported wood pellets to have sustainability certification. This change is putting the livelihoods of Viet Nam's farmers at risk, along with Viet Nam's export growth potential. While there is expertise in Viet Nam, certifying one million smallholders is described by the Viet Nam's Timber and Forest Product Association (VIFORES) as a major problem due to the scale and cost. Putting in place a certification scheme which can prove sustainable supplies at a relatively low cost would help secure the existing Korean market, and also open the larger Japanese market. At the Grow Asia Forum, Grow Asia facilitated a side meeting between KOICA, VIFORES and landscape certification agencies to open the conversation on how Viet Nam's smallholder acacia growers can be accredited as sustainable at scale and low cost.

The outcomes of this meeting were that the KOICA team in Viet Nam will link VIFORES with a Korean agency which can provide details on the new sustainability requirements for bio-mass. Given sufficient interest Grow Asia will support the establishment of a Working Group, drawing together key stakeholders to exchange progress and developments, and long-term the group will explore a coordinated approach to address the problem of certifying large numbers of small holder producers.



High-Level Closing Plenary: Leadership Commitment to Supporting the ASEAN Food Security Agenda

The Grow Asia Forum Closing Plenary engaged leaders from governments, international organizations, the private sector, and farmer organizations to reflect on takeaways and agreements from the day's discussions, and how these learnings and commitments should impact the Grow Asia network going forward.

Moderator



Jennifer Bielman Country Director, Indonesia, Mercy Corps

Panelists



Fiona Lynn Director, Agriculture and Food Security, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia



Jose Gabriel La Viña Undersecretary, Department of Agriculture of the Philippines



Akmal Siddiq

Chief of Rural Development and Food Security Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank



Tin Htut Oo Chairman, Agriculture Group, Yoma Strategic Holdings Ltd



Marlene Ramirez Secretary General, AsiaDHRRA

There was agreement among all panelists that the conversations which took place at the 2018 Grow Asia Forum demonstrated cohesion among Southeast Asia's agriculture sector, and a clear commitment to collaboration for the benefit of smallholders. Strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships at a regional and national level will be essential to elevate programs and link smallholders to market opportunities.

Panelists reflected on key themes that emerged from the day's discussions. A repeated message was the need to change the mindset of farmers and the way that they are viewed by the industry. Equipping them with business knowledge and an understanding of farm economics will allow farmers to consider themselves as entrepreneurs and view farming as a business choice, rather than an inevitable livelihood for poorer communities. This switch in mindset will benefit productivity levels, allow farmers to make more informed decisions and strengthen value chains.

Reflecting on the overarching event theme of innovation, panelists discussed solutions for transferring technologies and new knowledge to farmers in a cohesive way. Currently, with multiple players providing services and digital solutions, there is a pluralistic approach to offering farmers extension services. To advance the use of applications and Information Technology in agriculture – from digital products, to technologies which facilitate food safety and traceability – a clear, shared roadmap is required. The industry must also work with governments to advise on the frameworks required to enable a technology revolution in agriculture, and also provide them with digital tools which can help them forecast commodity costs and the impact on economies.

Interventions at a policy level repeatedly emerged as an area the Grow Asia network should continue to advance. Panelists referenced Grow Asia's work with the ASEAN Secretariat to develop guidelines for responsible investment in agriculture, which all agreed will safeguard smallholders, can help to attract reputable investors to the sector, and will stabilize food supplies. There is significant backing for the guidelines from all stakeholders, and the next step will be championing them at the national level.

To take the ideas generated at the Grow Asia Forum to the ground level, panelists discussed other major activities where Working Groups can help smallholders and uplift agricultural productivity at national levels. Engaging farmer cooperatives in multi-stakeholder partnerships and understanding their needs is one way that Working Groups can strengthen value chains, improve productivity at a larger scale and help farmers move into higher value crops. Educating farmers on food safety will also be an important focus area to ensure that products are acceptable for global consumer markets.

High-Level Closing Plenary: Leadership Commitment to Supporting the ASEAN Food Security Agenda

Another area where panelists agreed that the Grow Asia network could champion is data systems and measurement of impact. With the 2020 deadline for the global Sustainable Development Goals approaching, there is a need to localize the goals and identify data systems, tools and initiatives which will help Grow Asia to track its outcomes and input over the next few years.



ASEAN's story is one of smallholders. We need to direct our support to alleviating poverty through economic growth and sector-wide change. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical to this as no single stakeholder has all the pieces of the puzzle.

Fiona Lynn

Director, Agriculture and Food Security, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia



 With strong participation and commitment, we can strengthen agriculture development.

Mat Syukur

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



Scaling up, supporting policy and development and forging new partnerships are our priorities and we would like to continue working together with Grow Asia to drive these programs forward.

Anindya Chatterjee Asia Regional Director, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Appendix

Resources

Grow Asia 2018 Report on Progress

Country Partnership brochures

- <u>Cambodia</u>
- Indonesia
- <u>Myanmar</u>
- <u>Philippines</u>
- <u>Viet Nam</u>

World Economic Forum Report

Innovation with a Purpose: The role of technology innovation in accelerating food systems transformation

Other Reports

Digital Credit Scoring in Agriculture: Best Practices of Assessing Credit Risks in Value Chains

Working with Smallholders: A Handbook for Firms Building Sustainable Supply Chains

Other useful resources shared at the Grow Asia Forum can be found at growasiaknowledge.info

Media Coverage

Press Release

Agriculture Leaders Call for ASEAN Food Systems to Embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution to Benefit Smallholder Farmers

Blogs

The Fourth Industrial Revolution must not leave farming behind

News Articles

Over 90 media outlets reported on the Grow Asia Forum. Selected coverage:

Grow Asia And The Application Of Technology In Agriculture

Leaders Pledge to Assist Small Farmers: Grow Asia Forum

WEF ASEAN: Grow Asia Forum Talks Innovation in Agriculture

Vietnamese Agriculture 4.0 Harbours Great Potential

ASEAN Eyes Strong Digital Growth Amid New Industrial Revolution



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List of Participants

Deepak Baldwa	Regional Finance Lead – ASEAN	Advanta Seed / Pacific Seeds (Thai) Ltd	Thailand
Sochenda Chhoun	Agriculture Cooperative Coordinator	Agriculture Cooperatives	Cambodia
To Duc Hai	Chief Executive Officer	AgriMedia	Viet Nam
Harm Haverkort	Country Director, Viet Nam	Agriterra	Viet Nam
Donald Chen	President, Asia Pacific	Archer Daniels Midland (ADM)	China
Huong Truong	Senior Manager	Archer Daniels Midland – BGA	Viet Nam
Marlene Ramirez	Secretary General	AsiaDHRRA	Philippines
Akmal Siddiq	Chief of Rural Development and Food Security Thematic Group	Asian Development Bank	Philippines
Jose Romeo Ebron	Cooperative Development Program Manager	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development	Philippines
Tran Dong Phuong	Director Sectoral Development Directorate, ASEAN Economic Community Development	ASEAN Secretariat	Indonesia
Le Thi Minh Trang	Quality Director	Auchan Viet Nam Retailer	Viet Nam
Craig Chittick	Australian Ambassador to Vietnam	Australian Embassy, Ha Noi	Viet Nam
Amy Guihot	Counsellor (Agriculture)	Australian Embassy, Ha Noi	Viet Nam
Justin Baguley	Counsellor Economic and Development Cooperation	Australian Embassy, Ha Noi	Viet Nam
Lynn Ong	Head of Communications Asia Pacific	Bayer (SEA) Pte Ltd	Singapore
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