BACKGROUND

Some of the specific pathways through which damage and loss from exposure to extreme hazards such as tropical storms, floods, droughts due to climate variability and change occur in the agricultural sector. Despite this, there is still limited action related to disaster risk reduction and management by various actors which underpins the vulnerability that exists in the sector. The lack of technical capacity, poor government coordination and inadequate financing, for instance, suggest the type of local government policies in place. With the physical changes, these sociopolitical issues and concerns, will slow down economic activities and reduce related production and marketing, particularly affecting the poorer households and smallholder farmers. Unless serious action is taken, more hazards will continuously affect the sector.

Anticipating, planning for and reducing disaster risk in the agricultural sector should be holistic and must consider a multi-hazard whole systems approach to effectively protect communities, livelihoods, health, socioeconomic assets and ecosystems, and eventually build the sector’s resilience. Given this view, there is a need to understand the risks and assess the conditions for setting up a viable disaster risk reduction and management mechanism towards building the resilience of the agricultural sector. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (NDRRMA 2010, Republic Act No. 10121) defines resilience as the “ability of a system, community, or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.” This underscores the complex social, physical, economic, ecological, and institutional systems that exist in agricultural areas.

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) and the Embassy of France in the Philippines, in their interest to support the development of resilient agricultural communities will jointly conduct a forum to tackle the interactions between disaster and the agricultural landscape and see how various stakeholders of the sector cope with the effects of disasters in various stages, from preparation to post disaster recovery. Examining agriculture-disaster interactions will also bring into the picture the link between development and vulnerability of agriculture and rural areas and will assist the deliberation of current programs and activities.

The forum will also serve as a venue to facilitate the discussion of the current pre and post-disaster concerns on agricultural production activities; identify risk and needs of small farm producers to manage the effects brought by changes in climatic conditions; recommend measures and build mechanisms to address these gaps in needs and in managing the risks; and determine further capacity development needs for the stakeholders of the agriculture and rural sector.

OBJECTIVE

To facilitate an evaluative approach of the key requirements in disaster risk reduction in the agricultural sector particularly on:

1) the robustness of policies;
2) adaptive capacity of institutions; and
3) actions and mechanisms to assume the full range of requirements, not just to reduce risks, but to ensure that the sector can rebound from the adverse impacts of shocks and stresses because of the systems available.
EXPECTED OUTPUTS
The Forum will be a venue for participants to:

1) Present and facilitate the discussion of the current post-disaster concerns on agricultural production activities;
2) Identify the risk and needs of small farm producers to manage the effects brought by changes in climatic conditions, their current resources available and the gaps between the needs and available resources, whether locally, or provided by other stakeholders from national government and other organizations and institutions;
3) Recommend measures and build mechanisms to address these gaps, including an effective operation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the actual impacts of the substantial investments on reducing risks, and the ways to strengthening resiliency of the livelihoods of individuals, communities and other assets; and
4) Identify further capacity development needs of the stakeholders of agriculture and rural sector (i.e., LGUs, farm organizations and support institutions), and develop programs for collaboration between French researchers and relevant institutions (i.e., DA and DILG) and other stakeholders (private sectors) based in the Philippines for sharing expertise and sponsorships.

FORUM-AT-A-GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Government Policy Frameworks and Current Programs on Building Disaster Resilient Agricultural Communities</td>
<td>Sharing of Experiences of Farmers’ Associations and NGO working with farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Disaster Governance of the Agriculture Sector</td>
<td>Workshop 1: Gaps Identification, Risk Analysis and Resource Mapping of Agricultural Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology and Research in Support of Resilience Building</td>
<td>Workshop 2: Program Development towards Capacity Building of the Agricultural Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient Strategies and Mechanisms Supported by Development Organizations</td>
<td>Private Enterprises’ Support Platforms for Disaster Preparedness Post Recovery Programs for Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call for Commitment Moving Forward</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHO SHOULD ATTEND
The participants will come from public and private organizations and civil society groups including representatives from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), local government offices from the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (LDRRMO), City or Municipal Agriculture Office (C/MAO), City or Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator C/MPDC, representatives from farmer groups, agri-business and financing sector, academe, and other people engaged in various agricultural activities.

Participation in this forum is by invitation only.

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