

The SEARCA DIARY



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FOR GRADUATE STUDY AND RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURE

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PASSING ON THE KEY

A leader in due time needs to pass on his responsibilities and his legacy to a new set of hands in order to further the quest for excellence. That time has come to SEARCA... a new leader has been chosen to take on the great task of leading SEARCA to new heights.



Dr. Balisacan Completes SEARCA Directorship

Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan completed his directorship of SEARCA on 13 July 2009 after being at the helm of the Center for six years. He is succeeded by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., the Center's Deputy Director for Administration prior to his new appointment as SEARCA Director (*see related story on page 2*).

At a simple farewell program tendered by the Center on 13 July 2009 (*see photo gallery on page 4*), Dr. Balisacan delivered his exit report to the SEARCA staff. The report highlighted the progress made by SEARCA toward the direction of mainstreaming agriculture in the development agenda.

Starting with the challenges of making reforms -- some innocuous, others radical — in the Center back in July 2003 following the results of a comprehensive program and financial review conducted by the SEARCA Governing Board, Dr. Balisacan presented the accomplishments of the Center's core programs, namely: Graduate Scholarship, Research and Development, and Knowledge Management.

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SEARCA welcomes its ninth director

DR. GIL C. SAGUIGUIT, JR. SUCCEEDS THE HEADSHIP OF SEARCA FROM DR. ARSENIO M. BALISACAN WHO COMPLETED HIS SECOND TERM ON 13 JULY 2009.



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr.

Dr. Saguiguit carries with him more than three decades of experience and institutional memory of SEARCA's operations and programs. He began his career at SEARCA 35 years ago, first as a student assistant of the SEARCA-Harvard 928-B Corn Commodity Systems project in 1974. He rose through the ranks, occupying various technical and administrative positions in the Center. Most

of his career in the Center has been spent developing and implementing collaborations in research and development with foreign and international partners and donors. He was appointed Head of the Environment and Rural Development Unit in 1991, Manager of the Research and Development Office in 1995, and Deputy Director for Administration in 2002, a position he held until his recent selection as SEARCA Director. As researcher and research manager, Dr. Saguiguit had worked mostly on community-based natural resource management, north-south collaborative research, and agricultural and rural development.

Dr. Saguiguit has a number of published works and has presented papers in national and international forums and scientific conferences. He has also received recognition and awards for his management and leadership of agricultural development projects. Currently, he is a member of the National Technical Panel on Agricultural Education of the Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines; he has served on numerous advisory, management, and implementation bodies of development programs in the Philippines and multi-country programs in Southeast Asia.

As Deputy Director for Administration of SEARCA, Dr. Saguiguit was at the forefront of efforts to improve the Center's operations, including the computerization of its financial management system as and the maintenance and renovation of SEARCA's physical structures. It was also during his watch as deputy that the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) renewed its agreement with SEARCA to host the Center for another 25 years. As the Center's Treasurer the past six years, he has contributed to SEARCA's financial stability.

Dr. Saguiguit holds a doctorate in rural economics from the University of Montpellier in France, obtained through a French Government scholarship. His MS and BS degrees in agricultural economics and agriculture, respectively, are from UPLB. He obtained his master's degree under a scholarship provided by the Fellowship in the Region Program of the Netherlands Government. He has participated and attended many special training courses, among them an agribusiness training from a Harvard University program and the Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program carried out by the University of California-Berkeley.

Dr. Saguiguit is the only son and namesake of the late Dr. Gil F. Saguiguit, Sr., renowned professor of agricultural education, institution builder, and one of the founding fathers of SEARCA. (MAFAbad)

Dr. Balisacan/ from page 1

His report tracked the Center's progress from fiscal year 2001/2002 to fiscal year 2008/2009 using standardized key performance indicators. It showed an increasing performance trend across the core programs and activities of the Center. Dr. Balisacan said that he hoped what would be appreciated is that "during our term, we managed to etch SEARCA's place in the global community of influential development institutions. Our international conferences and meetings, including publications, albeit not many, have helped cement SEARCA's place in this community," he added. Dr. Balisacan leaves the Center in a healthy financial state also.

Noting the achievements notched by SEARCA in the past six years, Mr. K Kesavapany, Director of Singapore's Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, complimented Dr. Balisacan on "the outstanding leadership you have provided to SEARCA. Under your charge, the institution has gained stature in the academic world." Likewise, Dr. Kejiro Otsuka, former Chair of the Board of Trustees of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and currently the President of the International Association of Agricultural Economists, lauded Dr. Balisacan's efforts in leading SEARCA, saying "You did a superb job. I really respect your great leadership." Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, former Director General of IRRI, said Dr. Balisacan can "look back with pride and satisfaction on your monumental contributions to the development of SEARCA."

said SEARCA should continue to ensure that its programs and activities are value-adding and address social objectives, particularly poverty reduction and food security, and that the Center should deepen its "presence and relevance in addressing agricultural and rural development issues of regional significance."

A leading development economist in Asia, with particular research interests on poverty, inequality, agricultural and regional development, sustainable development, and political economy of policy reforms, Dr. Balisacan is a professor at the School of Economics of the University of the Philippines Diliman. He is also currently serving in various technical and policy advisory councils, including those of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Philippine Congress Commission on Science & Technology and Engineering. He is also a Member of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) of the Philippines, and chair of the NAST Task Force on Climate Change. Moreover, he is the President-elect of the Asian Society of Agricultural Economists.

Prior to his SEARCA directorship, Dr. Balisacan served as Agriculture Undersecretary in the

Having led the crafting of two five-year plans of the Center (i.e., Eighth Five-Year Plan covering FYs 2004/2005-2008/2009 and Ninth Five-Year Plan covering FYs 2009/2010-2013/2014), Dr. Balisacan urged SEARCA to gear up as it faces additional challenges brought about by the slow recovery of the global economy; the problems posed by climate change particularly to the vulnerable sectors, among them the agriculture and rural sector; and the economic transformation of Southeast Asian countries; and the trend toward integration internationally and intra-nationally. He

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Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan (left), outgoing Director, turns over to Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., incoming Director, the SEARCA glass key symbolizing authority and responsibility over the Center during the Center's farewell program for Dr. Balisacan on 13 July 2009.

Philippine Government, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Agribusiness Corporation, and Member of the Board of Directors of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation. He has also served as adviser and expert in poverty and rural development issues to government chief executives and legislators and to bilateral and multilateral development institutions, including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and various United Nations agencies.

Dr. Balisacan is well-published, with at least 7 books and more than 100 journal articles and book chapters to his name. His more recent book titles include *The Dynamics of Regional Development: The Philippines in East Asia* (Edward Elgar, UK, with H. Hill), *Reasserting the*

Rural Development Agenda: Lessons Learned and Emerging Challenges in Asia (ISEAS, Singapore, and SEARCA, with N. Fuwa), and *The Philippine Economy: Development, Policies, and Challenges* (Oxford University Press, with H. Hill). He is the founding Editor of the *Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development*, SEARCA's international refereed journal.

Dr. Balisacan holds a PhD (Economics) from the University of Hawaii, a Master's degree (Agricultural Economics) from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (obtained through a full graduate scholarship from SEARCA), and a Bachelor's degree (Agriculture, magna cum laude) from Mariano Marcos State University, Philippines. (LLTallafer)

Farewell Letter

... These past six years of serving at SEARCA's helm have been both challenging and worthwhile. Indeed, in this period, much has happened not just in Southeast Asia but the rest of the world. Several phenomena have forever changed the way we think of our world and our work as development practitioners.

I credit your partnership for much of what SEARCA has done during my leadership since July 2003. I sincerely thank you for the unstinting and encouraging support and cooperation you have extended to SEARCA and to me. It has been an honor and privilege to have worked with you. Our interactions have enabled me to grow both professionally and personally. ...

I leave SEARCA in the experienced hands of Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., currently our Deputy Director for Administration. He will assume the leadership of the Center on 14 July 2009. I trust that you will extend to him the generous and dynamic support I enjoyed from you and your organization during my term.

Feedback from some partners and stakeholders

Thank you ... for the six years of fruitful cooperation between the Department and SEARCA under your leadership. Indeed, SEARCA has been a reliable partner of the Philippine Government in promoting agricultural competitiveness and natural resource management to attain the goals of food security and poverty reduction.

— Hon. Alberto G. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Philippines

(We) wish to congratulate you for your excellent work leading SEARCA during these past six years. (We) would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for the excellent opportunities for collaboration between the EC-assisted projects and SEARCA that you have facilitated over these years...

— Mr. Alistair Macdonald, Ambassador/Head, and Mr. Juan Echanove, Environment, Sustainable Development and Food Security Programme Officer, Delegation of the European Commission to the Philippines

My colleagues and I wish to compliment you on the outstanding leadership you have provided to SEARCA. Under your charge, the institution has gained stature in the academic world.

— Mr. K Kesavapany, Director, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore

You did a superb job. I really respect your great leadership.

— Dr. Kejiro Otsuka, GRIPS/FASID, Japan, and President, International Association of Agricultural Economists

Congratulations for a job well done!

— Dr. Emerlinda Roman, President, University of the Philippines System

I would like to thank you very, very much for the excellent work you have so dedicatedly done for SEARCA!

— Dr. Uwe Muuss, Director, International Office, Georg-August-University Goettingen, Germany

I congratulate you for successfully managing SEARCA. Under your towering leadership, SEARCA reached to newer heights. Your untiring and sincere efforts took SEARCA in the world map. You organized several activities successfully... There is no exaggeration that SEARCA will miss you and we shall also miss you there.

— PK Joshi, Director, National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research (NCAP), India

Congratulations for the achievements during your term, and the many discussions that were made possible between SEARCA and WorldFish during that time.

— Dr. Nicolas Bailly, The WorldFish Center, Philippines

It was a privilege and pleasure to work with you as Director of SEARCA... Through your support

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Vignettes of the Farewell Program



Dr. Balisacan presents his exit report to the staff.



Dr. Balisacan holds up a gift from the staff – a caricature of him.

DR. BALISACAN POSES WITH SOME OF THE STAFF



The SEARCA Executive Committee hands to Dr. Balisacan an institutional farewell gift.



Dr. Balisacan gleefully receives a present from Dr. Saguiguit -- running shoes for the marathon enthusiast!



Ms. Maria Lourdes Clariño, Head of the Accounting Unit, belts out a tune.



Ms. Lily L. Tallafér, Senior Executive Assistant of the Director, leads the toast. Best of luck to you, Sir AMB!



A former SEARCA staff, Dr. Mariliza Ticsay, surprises Dr. Balisacan with an ala Tina Turner special number.

SEARCA, PCARRD ink agreement on socioeconomics climate change study



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (right), new SEARCA Director and Dr. Patricio S. Faylon, PCARRD Executive Director, sign on 21 July 2009 the memorandum of agreement on a study on the socioeconomics of climate change while their respective witnesses look on.

SEARCA and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) have agreed to collaborate in the conduct of a study on the socioeconomics of climate change in the Philippines.

They signed on 21 July 2009 the memorandum of agreement for the project titled *State of the Art on the Socioeconomics of Climate Change in the Philippines: Expert Synthesis and Benchmarking*. Signatories were Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director, and Dr. Patricio S. Faylon, PCARRD Executive Director. Signing as witnesses were Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla,

SEARCA Research and Development Manager, and Dr. Danilo Cardenas, PCARRD Deputy Director for Research and Development.

The project is expected to provide science-based information to aid the Philippines in policy formulation related to climate change. It will consolidate existing literature to identify research gaps on the socioeconomic implications of climate change as well as the socio-economic benefits of mitigation measures. It will also benchmark the Philippines' socioeconomic research on climate change vis-à-vis those of neighboring countries.

Looking at the socioeconomics of climate change gives a human development perspective to climate change as a global problem. It will demonstrate how critical climate change is in addressing development goals.

"The impacts of climate change on the way we live are already felt and have been discussed in various activities. However, climate change also affects the way we do development. This project will hopefully help to shape the future direction of development policies and research," said Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director.

Dr. Faylon noted that this collaboration between SEARCA and PCARRD will benefit not only the Philippines, but the Southeast Asian region as well. Moreover, he said the results of the project will benefit not only researchers, development planners, and policymakers as well as the farmers who are greatly affected by climate change. (MAFABad)

SEARCA and CHED beef up research productivity of Philippine higher education institutions



Participants, resource persons, and organizers of the training course titled *Enhancing Research Capacity in Higher Education Institutions: A Forum-Workshop for Regional Executives of the Commission on Higher Education* held on 7-11 September 2009 at Quezon City, Philippines, pose for a souvenir photo.

Recognizing the crucial role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in providing education, research, and extension services, SEARCA and the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) organized two learning events on HEIs' research productivity in August and September 2009.

The first one was an eight-day training titled *Research Management Course for Executives (RMEx) of Higher Education Institutions* held on 16-23 August 2009. The other was a five-day workshop titled *Enhancing Research Capacity in Higher Education Institutions: A Forum-Workshop for Regional Executives of the Commission on Higher Education* held on 7-11 September 2009. Both activities were implemented under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between CHED and SEARCA.

The two events were borne of the recognition by CHED and SEARCA of the need to beef up research productivity and quality in HEIs in the Philippines. During the first event's opening program, Atty. Julito D. Vitriolo, CHED Executive Director, stressed the course's relevance to CHED's goal of building the research capacities of HEIs. On the other hand, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, explained that RMEx is one of SEARCA's ways of pursuing its mission to support universities and faculties in Southeast Asian nations, starting with the Philippines, to attain excellence. He also recognized that the job of HEI managers transcends scientific and technical expertise.

"The course is offered on the premise that beyond disciplinary expertise, success as academic managers requires strategic thinking and competencies on dealing with people, issues, organizational structural complexities, institutional interrelationship, and resource generation and mobilization," he further said.

Under the same MOA, the regional executives of CHED are also expected to promote, coordinate, and assess research endeavors of the various HEIs in regions. In this regard, a five-day forum-workshop for CHED Regional Executives/Administrators was conducted the following month. It aimed to update participants' knowledge of leadership and planning, as well as managerial perspectives, principles, and concepts as they are applied to research. It aimed to contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of HEIs in the country and to strengthen the role of CHED regional offices in facilitating research relevance, excellence, and productivity in the HEIs.

In both learning events, the participants presented reports on their respective organizations' mandates, structures, and impact assessment vis-à-vis the national development goals. This served as benchmark in which the participants' development of action plans to strengthen R&D in HEIs. The most common research gaps identified included lack of research funding, time constraint, lack of research skills, and overloading of teaching units.

RMEx was divided into four modules, namely: 1) Leadership and Management of Research in HEIs; 2) Frameworks and Impact Indicators of Research; 3) Research Management; and 4) Research Proposal Writing and Evaluation and the CHED Research Award. The second activity retained RMEx' first two modules and focused its third module on the CHED Research Award. In addition, a workshop on issues and concerns for policy recommendations on enhancing HEI research capacity was conducted.

Nine resource persons from the academe and research institutions shared their expertise on the subject matter, as follows:

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IFAD expert discusses microfinance role in financial crisis

Dr. Ganesh Thapa, Senior Economist of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), predicts a greater leverage for microfinance institutions (MFIs) despite financial crisis. How will this leverage be secured? Dr. Thapa recognizes the important role of MFIs to rural households including farmers, landless people, and small entrepreneurs. MFIs provide small loans to the poor, allowing them to protect, diversify, and increase their sources of income. By increasing household income, poverty is reduced. MFIs also have positive effects on nutrition and women empowerment. In South Asia (i.e., Bangladesh and Nepal), MFIs have made women important decision-makers both at the household and community levels.

MFIs are relatively more resilient than with established banks. However, they are now more linked to domestic and international markets, which means that microfinance's effects are greater, more complex, and unpredictable during a crisis. As household incomes suffer, MFIs can experience difficulty in loan repayment. In the long run, this translates to a poorer loan portfolio and inability to lend, which will have major implications on the poor.

Dr. Thapa noted that the financial crisis had caused a significant decline in economic growth in Asia, even in big countries such as China and India. The crisis had manifested differently in each country: China and India experienced slowing exports and weakening investments, respectively. On the other hand, Southeast Asian countries showed declining economic activity driven by food and fuel crises.

He recommended that in order to gain financial growth, countries need to maintain export growth, invest in education, and improve on the government's economic stimulus factor. Expansion of the domestic demand by building roads, irrigation canals, and other infrastructure that can potentially create more employment will allow more people to spend, thereby impacting on aggregate growth and income distribution.

Dr. Thapa said that the financial crisis is a challenge; however, it should also be viewed as an opportunity to design new financial products and devise better risk management strategies.

He delivered his talk titled *The Impact of Financial Crisis on Growth, Poverty, and Hunger in Asia and the Pacific Region at the SEARCA Agriculture and Development Seminar Series held on 25 August 2009*. (RMMDedicatoria)

SEARCA, DA, and three universities gear up for five-year capacity development program

The Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA) and SEARCA, with the Ateneo de Manila University School of Government (ASoG), University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) School of Management (SMN), and UPecon Foundation, Inc. inked an agreement to implement an *Umbrella Capacity Development Program on Strategic Management and Policy for Agriculture Professionals and Executives*.

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing took place at the DA Office of the Secretary on 10 July 2009. Signatories include Hon. Arthur C. Yap, DA Secretary; Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director; Dr. Antonio G.M. La Viña, ASoG Dean; Dr. Rolando T. Dy, UA&P SMN Dean; and Dr. Emmanuel S. de Dios, UPEcon Foundation, Inc. Chairman and Dean of the University of the Philippines School of Economics.

This five-year initiative (2009-2014) recognizes that excellence and relevance in government service, particularly at DA, requires a strong work force equipped by a proactive professional development program. Continuing education at DA becomes even more imperative where turnover at the senior and mid-level managerial levels tends to be high. Towards excellence in leadership and management at DA, the Department needs to deliberately strengthen its pool of professionals who can competently backstop on a sustained basis whoever steers the Philippine agriculture program.



The Honorable Arthur C. Yap, Secretary of Agriculture of the Philippines (fourth from left), and Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director (fifth from left), lead the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement on a capacity-building program for the Philippine Department of Agriculture on 10 July 2009.

The program aims to provide DA executives and professionals with a global, 21st century perspective attuned to contemporary challenges in food security and rural poverty alleviation. It focuses on equipping and reinforcing participants with proactive leadership frameworks and mindsets informed by contemporary worldviews and theories, substantiated by real cases and science-based evidence.

A total of 51 (48 MS and 3 PhD) scholarships will be given to junior and mid-level professional staff of the DA. They can enroll in degree program offerings and certificate executive courses of the three participating higher education institutions (HEIs). Program thrusts and corresponding academic institutions include:

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Korea FAO, SEARCA hold workshop on agribusiness development, supply chain management

Major transformations are reshaping food and agricultural systems. Factors such as income growth, climate change, costly energy prices, globalization, and urbanization are rapidly transforming food consumption, production, and markets. These structural changes have great social, political, and economic impacts on farmers and consumers alike. They present various opportunities for the agribusiness sector.

However, the benefits that have accrued from these structural changes are not immediate and have been shared by only a few. Small-scale farmers, traders, processors, and wholesale retailers have been especially vulnerable, as they have to deal with increasingly strict industry standards and contractual arrangements while competing with large and better-financed suppliers and manufacturers.

Cognizant of these concerns, SEARCA's Sixth and Seventh Policy Roundtable Series on Building Capacities for Agricultural Competitiveness of Transition Countries in Southeast Asia held in April and June 2009, respectively, recommended the conduct of a technical workshop to address common needs and concerns particularly regarding to the changing structure of the global food system. In response, SEARCA and the Korea FAO Association organized a technical workshop entitled *Navigating the Rapidly Changing Structure of Global Food Systems*, which was held on 16-17 September 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Ortigas Center, Philippines. It aimed to identify appropriate models and tools to establish a stronger and more competitive agribusiness sector.



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director, welcomes the participants of the technical workshop on agribusiness development and supply chain management on 16 September 2009.

Dr. Rolando T. Dy, Dean, School of Management, and Executive Director, Center for Food and Agribusiness, University of Asia and the Pacific, and Dr. Flordeliza A. Lantican, Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of the Philippines Los Baños, served as resource persons.

The workshop reviewed and reflected on the challenges of agribusiness and economic development in the region, supply chain management, and agro-industrial competitiveness. Participants from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam and the Philippines presented supply chain analyses of the agribusiness scenarios applied to selected crops in their respective countries. From the presentations, rice remains an important crop to analyze, along with specific crops with potential as market niches for the countries involved. Participants identified common constraints like rising

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Bt eggplant researchers and local collaborators gain knowledge on biosafety and risk comm'n

A training-workshop on *Biosafety Regulations and Risk Communication for Researchers and Collaborators of Fruit and Shoot Borer-Resistant (FSBR) Biotechnology Eggplant Project* was conducted on 14-16 September 2009 at SEARCA. This was an initial activity toward capacity-building and technology acceptance of the Bt eggplant in the proposed eight multi-location field trial sites in the Philippines, namely: Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija, Laguna, Camarines Sur, Iloilo, Leyte, Davao City and North Cotabato.

FSBR eggplant is an insect resistant eggplant developed with the help of biotechnology. Also called Bt eggplant, it has the Bt protein making it resistant to FSB pests. The development of the Bt eggplant variety is being undertaken by the Institute of Plant Breeding, University of the Philippines Los Baños (IPB-UPLB) through a licensing agreement provided by the Indian Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company Limited (Mahyco). Mahyco, with the help of Monsanto Company, has developed a highly-resistant biotech eggplant. These eggplant lines have been used as source of the Bt protection of biotech eggplants in India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines.

Forty-five participants composed of scientists, researchers, technical collaborators, and members of institutional biosafety committees were updated on the developments in global and Philippine biotechnology research and development and adoption, status of the FSBR-biotech research project, and guidelines and roles of an institutional biosafety committee under the Philippine Biosafety Framework. Key information on the food and environmental safety concerns, risk assessment, and risk management during field trials in relation to product development of the FSBR-biotech

eggplant was also shared to the participants. Further, skills and strategies to better communicate technical research results and development to the general public were gained through the lectures and exercises on the theories and principles of risk communication.

The results of ex-ante studies on the socioeconomic impact of FSBR-biotech eggplant and the emerging concerns on the commercialization of FSBR-eggplant in India were also shared for the participants' better appreciation of the possible economic and environmental benefits that can be derived from adoption of the technology once approved for commercialization.

The Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II, International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications, and SEARCA's Biotechnology Information Center co-organized this training-workshop. Additional support was provided by the Program for Biosafety Systems Southeast Asia Center, Philippine Council for Advanced Science and Technology Research and Development, IPB-UPLB, Biotechnology Coalition of the Philippines, and United States Agency for International Development. (JAPanopio)



Participants of the training-workshop on Biosafety Regulations and Risk Communication for Researchers and Collaborators of Fruit and Shoot Borer-Resistant (FSBR) Biotechnology Eggplant Project held on 14-16 September 2009 at SEARCA pose with Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director (first row, center).

Opportunities

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

SEARCA invites applications for its full graduate scholarship (MS and PhD) for School Year 2011-2012 in agriculture and related fields (including biological sciences, social sciences, economics and statistics, forestry and fisheries, environmental sciences, agro-industrial technology and engineering, biochemistry, and development management).

The scholarship is open to nationals of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. Applicants must be regular employees of academic/research institutions or government agencies and not older than 35 years old.

The application requirements and forms for graduate study may be downloaded from the SEARCA website at <http://www.searca.org/web/scholarship/>

Interested parties may contact the Graduate Scholarship Department of SEARCA via email at gSD@agri.searca.org.

TRAVEL GRANTS

To reinforce the Center's efforts and resources in the promotion of agricultural competitiveness and natural resource management toward food security and poverty reduction in the region, SEARCA provides Travel Grants to qualified agriculture and agriculture-related professionals and social scientists, including graduate students.

This Travel Grant provides limited financial support of up to a maximum of **US\$1,200** to qualified applicants who will present scientific papers in international or local scientific forums.

General Schedule of Evaluation

Activity	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar)	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun)	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep)	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec)
Committee Evaluation	2nd week of December	2nd week of March	2nd week of June	2nd week of September
Issuance of Notification to Applicants on Outcome of Applications	3rd week of December	3rd week of March	3rd week of June	3rd week of September

For inquiries, please email travelgrants@agri.searca.org.

Annual Report FY 2008/2009

Executive Summary



The period July 2008 to June 2009 is the final year of SEARCA's Eighth Five-Year Plan (FYP). A major influence in this Plan's framework was the conviction that the global community's efforts in fighting poverty must focus on agricultural and rural development (ARD) – the most populous sector in Southeast Asia. That is, ARD is not an end in itself; rather, efforts toward it must be grounded on the bigger context of poverty reduction and food security.

In this Plan, SEARCA clearly indicated poverty reduction and food security as the goals of its

core programs, namely: graduate scholarship and short-term training, research and development, and knowledge management. Agricultural Competitiveness and Natural Resource Management are the channels by which SEARCA intended to contribute to the attainment of these goals.

The focus on agricultural competitiveness essentially meant working for the improvement of areas that have significant bearing on agricultural and rural growth, particularly: (a) quality of human capital, (b) access to productive resources and technology, (c) economic and institutional constraints, and (d) rural support services/systems. The natural resource management theme was to tackle such concerns as: (a) sustainable land use and water management, addressing watershed management, integrated water resources management, and soil conservation/land use management, and (b) biodiversity conservation, covering resource profiling and assessment, resource management and planning, and environmental valuation and modeling.

With the completion of the Eighth FYP, the following have been the accomplishments and progress by SEARCA:

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



This Program, started in 1969, aims to train potential leaders and trailblazers in ARD by providing scholarships leading to master's and doctoral degrees. The past five years saw the enhancement and strengthening of the Program's recruitment

procedure, expanding the reach of the call for application as well as using the World Wide Web to make the application easier and more accessible to potential applicants. These enhancements have resulted in an increase in the pool of candidates. The other enrichments to the program in the past five years include the establishment of the *PhD Research Program* and *Re-entry Program for Graduate Scholars*; and the reinvigoration of the *Academic Bridging Program*, sandwich degree arrangements between the SEARCA scholars' host universities and leading universities in the developed countries such as Canada and France; and the *SEARCA Professorial Chairs Program*. The GS Program also carries out SEARCA's role as secretariat of the *Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources*. In FY 2008/2009, the following were this Program's accomplishments:

- Awarded 22 graduate scholarship grants (12 full scholarships, 10 PhD research only) and saw the completion of 25 scholars (20 full, 5 PhD research). At the end of FY 2008/2009, SEARCA had 120 ongoing graduate scholars (105 full, 15 PhD research). This brings to 1,274 the total number of scholarships awarded by SEARCA (1,250 full, 24 PhD research). SEARCA now counts a cumulative total of 1,064 completed graduate study grants; of these, 1,056 are full grants (448 PhD, 608 master's) and 8 are PhD research grants.
- Awarded Academic Bridging scholarships to five Timorese. Two have started their studies at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).
- Organized an *International Conference cum Homecoming of SEARCA Alumni* on 27-28 November 2008 at SEARCA as one of the major activities in celebration of SEARCA's 42nd anniversary and as one of the Center's contributions to the centennial celebration of the University of the Philippines (UP), where many SEARCA alumni pursued their graduate studies. The conference's theme was *Developing Tomorrow's Leaders: Responding to the Challenges of Globalization*. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) has been SEARCA's long-time partner in the above-mentioned capacity-building endeavors.
- Awarded nine professorial chair grants, bringing to 274 the total number of such grants provided by SEARCA. In the case of UP, SEARCA has increased the grant amount to make it equal to the UP Diliman Centennial Professorial Chair, using similar stringent criteria in the awardees' selection. This is to ensure that the award becomes very honorific.
- Coordinated and monitored the implementation of 2 student exchanges, 1 faculty exchange, and 12 thesis grants under the University Consortium; and organized, together with the University of Queensland, the 21st University Consortium Executive Board Meeting on 2-3 December 2008 in Brisbane, Australia.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



SEARCA's Eighth FYP directed the Center's R&D Program to spearhead ARD initiatives toward articulating policy directions and institutional reforms to address the challenges of poverty, food insecurity, and natural resource management.

A key modality that SEARCA has adopted in the past five years is the conduct of international conferences, workshops, roundtables, and similar scientific meetings that bring together experts and scholars, eliciting from them cutting-edge thinking on various ARD concerns. These activities enable the Center to contribute to mainstream development discussion.

In FY 2008/2009, the R&D Program organized and conducted seven international/regional workshops and roundtable discussions on fisheries, weather-based risk management, biofuels development, agribusiness, global financial crisis, and sustainability science. These topics were discussed in the context of the climate change, food security, and rural poverty. These events had at least 190 participants from Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, USA, and Vietnam.

In addition, SEARCA conducted six research projects titled: (1) *Effects of Biofuels on Agricultural Development, Food Security, Poverty and the Environment in the Philippines*; (2) *Productivity Growth in Philippine Agriculture*; (3) *Exploratory Study on the Selected Philippine Agricultural Commodity Import Statistics vis-à-vis Export Statistics of the Exporting Countries*; (4) *Methodologies to Compute Geographic (Spatial) Price Index for the Poor*; (5) *Sources of Price Integration within and among Markets of Major Aquaculture Species in the Philippines*; and (6) *Characterization of Farm Holdings in the Philippines*. Major partners for some of these projects are the International Fund for Agricultural Development and two agencies of the Philippine Department of Agriculture -- Philippine Rice Research Institute and Bureau of Agricultural Research.

The Center also continued to work on two book writing projects. One is titled *Causes of Poverty: Myths, Facts and Policies (A Philippine Study)* and the other is *Dynamics of Rural Development and Poverty Reduction in the Philippines (formerly Anatomy of Rural Stagnation)*. Both books are expected to be completed in 2010. Further, research, writing, and preparation for publication of four new volumes for the *Southeast Asia Agriculture and Development Primer Series* were started. These are for Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Timor Leste; these four volumes would complete the 11-country Primer series.

Seed Fund for Research and Training (SFRT). This competitive grant (maximum of US\$15,000 per grant) was launched in 2006 to provide assistance to selected promising Southeast Asian researchers whose desire to contribute to the region's development through ARD research and knowledge dissemination initiatives may be hindered by lack of funds. In FY 2008/2009, SEARCA selected eight proposals -- 1 each from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam, and 3 from the Philippines -- to receive the funding grant. The topics were on agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, agricultural extension, chemistry, food industries and biotechnology, plant genetic resources conservation and management, resource economics, and watershed and environmental management. So far, 33 grants have been awarded.

In FY 2008/2009, two in-country seminars were organized -- one each in Lao PDR and Vietnam -- to disseminate the findings of research carried out under the SFRT.

SEARCA Travel Grants. The SEARCA Travel Grant, established effective FY 2006/2007, is another strategy that the Center adopted to help build the capacities of Southeast Asians in ARD. This grant provides limited funding support to qualified Southeast Asians to present papers in scientific conferences, especially international ones. So far, 33 Southeast Asian researchers have benefited from this grant program; 9 of these were given in FY 2008/2009.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Short-term Training and Other Learning Events



Short-term training, a service begun in 1971, is SEARCA's fast lane to capacity-building of the ARD sector in SEAMEO member countries. In carrying out the Eighth FYP, a major reprogramming of the Short-term Training Program had to be done

so that it would be directly supportive of the Center's two new thrusts: agricultural competitiveness and natural resource management. It also meant a reorientation of strategies, catering the Program more to participants who can influence the rural, agriculture, and environment sectors in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the Program was realigned to current thinking in capacity development that emphasizes adaptive, experiential learning using mixed modalities and platforms. Accomplishments in FY 2008/2009 include the following:

- Developed and refined six learning programs/initiatives for capacity-building, including a five-year program for upgrading the governance expertise of the Philippine Department of Agriculture's professional staff and executives.
- Launched two online learning support platforms for its environmental economics/natural resource management and higher education management courses.
- Conducted as well as co-organized nine learning events on agricultural biotechnology, agricultural production risk management, biosafety, environmental economics, higher education management, impact assessment vis-à-vis biofuels development, online learning, proposal writing, and rapid bioassay of pesticide residues. These had 173 participants from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Caledonia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan, and Vietnam.
- Co-organized the *Asia/Pacific Regional Consultation on IFAD's Rural Poverty Report (RPR) 2009*, which had 36 participants from 12 countries. The RPR is IFAD's flagship publication for policymakers and key rural development actors on

key challenges and lessons for overcoming rural poverty today.

- Continued to conduct the *Agriculture and Development Seminar Series (ADSS)*, which provides a vibrant forum for exchanging scientific knowledge and insights. The series had 59 seminars, three of which were webcast.



Publications and Websites

Information dissemination of agricultural research findings is SEARCA's third co-equal objective. During the implementation of the Eighth FYP, four new kinds of publications were begun: a journal, a primer series, a discussion paper series and a policy brief series. Moreover, with its long history in digital information management, the

Center recognized the opportunities brought by new information and communication technologies in furthering its impact. As such, the past five years have seen significant efforts given to exploiting and optimizing the use of the SEARCA website as a knowledge management tool for agriculture and rural development. The following were achieved in FY 2008/2009:

- Produced 22 publications: 3 books, 3 journal issues, 2 monographs, 1 proceedings, 10 policy briefs, and 3 discussion papers. Moreover, at least 45 news articles were released to magazines, newspapers, and online.
- Managed 15 websites. The SEARCA website (www.searca.org) had a 94-percent growth in number of visitors (from 71,124 in FY 2007/2008 to 137,737 in FY 2008/2009). The number of page views also increased by about 35 percent (from 317,520 in FY 2007/08 to 427,642 in FY 2008/2009).
- Launched the *Knowledge Center on Climate Change: Adaptations in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (KC3)*, www.climatechange.searca.org, which promotes efficient knowledge sharing and databases on knowledge solutions, climate change experts, R&D initiatives, and relevant learning events and fellowships/grants.
- Continued to operate the Biotechnology Information Center (BIC), a collaborative project with the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications. Accomplishments in FY 2008/2009 include: (1) co-organization/sponsorship of 20 agri-biotechnology seminars, workshops, and conferences; (2) conduct of learning events, including five study visits to confined trials of biotech papaya and eggplant, biotech facilities, and commercial plantings (with participants from Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand, and Vietnam); (3) conduct of two media workshops, resulting in more than 30 news and photo releases published at local and national dailies, and online news sources; (4) hosting of the *Annual Meeting of Biotechnology Information Centers* of the ISAAA's Global Knowledge Center on Crop Biotechnology (covering Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, and Vietnam); (5) co-organization of the *Jose Burgos Award for Biotech Journalism*, which recognizes efforts of Philippine journalists in communicating accurate biotech information.

Moreover, the BIC website visitors reached 77,754 (2% higher than in FY 2007/2008). Also 533 webpages were added; 71 issues of the weekly e-news service were released, and 4,988 members were added to the BIC e-group, which now totals 26,607 subscribers.

FELLOWS PROGRAM

In the past five years, SEARCA expanded its professional staff by establishing the *Adjunct Fellows Program*, *Visiting Research Fellows Program*, and *Senior Fellows Program*. As of 30 June 2009, SEARCA had appointed four adjunct fellows, six visiting research fellows, and five senior fellows.

DIOSCORO L. UMALI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Dioscoro L. Umali Achievement Award in Agricultural Development was launched on 27 November 2007 to promote agriculture by recognizing exemplary individuals who have advanced agricultural development in Southeast Asia. The award is a collaboration among SEARCA, National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines (NAST, Philippines), and Dioscoro L. Umali Foundation (DLUF). It is expected to be given annually and comes with a cash prize of US\$10,000 and a plaque.

The first Umali Award was conferred on 27 November 2008 on Dr. Vo-Tong Xuan of Vietnam. Dr. Xuan has been a scientist, educator, extension worker, administrator, and international servant in rural development, agricultural diversification, and food policies for almost three decades. His dedicated and committed service toward the promotion of diversified and sustainable agriculture, particularly in rice production, through his scientific publications, extension, teaching and inputs to national policies has directly and indirectly impacted the lives of millions of people, especially those in developing countries dependent on agriculture, particularly Vietnam.

LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Linkages and networks are very valuable to the success of SEARCA's ARD endeavors. SEARCA maintains its strong ties with existing networks and continuously establishes new partnerships through regular and special activities. In FY 2008/2009, SEARCA partnered with at least 56 organizations; 22 formal agreements were forged. Foremost of these agreements was the one with the Government



of the Philippines, which renewed its funding commitment to SEARCA for another five years (FY 2009/2010-FY 2013/2014).

FUTURE OUTLOOK



With the expected completion of the Eighth FYP, SEARCA conducted a series of activities to formulate its Ninth FYP. These included strategic planning workshops, key informant survey, and close consultations with

the Center's stakeholders. The draft Plan was endorsed by the SEARCA Governing Board to the SEAMEO High Officials, which in turn submitted it to the SEAMEO Council (SEAMEC), which finally approved it during the 44th SEAMEO Council Conference on 5-8 April 2009 in Phuket, Thailand.

The Ninth FYP essentially continues the work that SEARCA started in its Eighth Plan, and builds on its accomplishments in the past five years. Titled *Enabling Institutions for Agricultural and Rural Development in a Globalizing Southeast Asia*, the Ninth Plan reasserts the agriculture and rural development agenda in efforts to reduce poverty and ensure food security. It reaffirms SEARCA's resolve to be the "lead enabler in the science and practice of agriculture and rural development in Southeast Asia" and its commitment to building the capacities of Southeast Asian institutions working toward ARD. The priority themes remain to be agricultural competitiveness and natural resource management.

SEARCA Director speaks on agrarian reform

Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director and Professor of Economics at the University of the Philippines Diliman School of Economics (UPSE), served as lecturer during the Sixth Ayala Corporation (AC)-UPSE Economic Forum held on 10 July 2009 at the UPSE Auditorium.

Titled *Pathways out of Rural Poverty: Is Agrarian Reform Passé?* the lecture focused on agrarian reform programs, particularly land redistribution, land tenure, and restrictions on land transactions, which have been a popular response to persistent poverty in the rural areas. This response, said Dr. Balisacan, draws in part from a flawed understanding of income dynamics and poverty reduction in rural areas. He added that the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) has blunted initiatives, stifling productivity, and rural income growth. Getting the expanded CARP to help pave pathways out of rural poverty poses a key implementation challenge.

Dr. Balisacan showed that CARP hardly made an impact on poverty reduction. He noted that CARP's impact has been constrained due to the following factors: (1) restrictions on the transferability and disposition of awarded lands; (2) incomplete assignment of individual rights; and (3) weak support services. Overall, Dr. Balisacan found CARP a mute and very costly instrument for rural

poverty reduction. "Agrarian reform should not continue being regarded as a panacea for rural development," Dr. Balisacan argued.

Lessons from Asia's leading performers in poverty reduction show that there are alternative pathways out of rural poverty, including: (1) creating productive employment opportunities; (2) facilitating diversification of economic activities; (3) raising agricultural productivity; and (4) expanding access of the poor to productive assets and social services.

Dr. Cielito F. Habito, Director, Ateneo Center for Economic Research & Development, and Prof. Marvic M.V.F. Leonen, Dean and Professor of Law, UP College of Law, served as discussants.

Dr. Habito zeroed in on the observation that the failure of CARP is also a result of poor governance and corruption. He said weak access to credit and costly technological solutions are poverty traps that reduce CARP's delivery of its intended goals. Dr. Habito said agriculture is still an answer to poverty; it provides a major source of income to rural communities.

Prof. Leonen said that the Philippines' laws on land ownership do not capture the spirit of what agrarian reform must be. He said agrarian reform



Dr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, SEARCA Director, discusses the impact of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program on rural poverty at the Sixth AC-UPSE Economic Forum held on 10 July 2009.

must not be viewed as just a means for financial gain but also as an avenue for providing other opportunities and better access to social services. He added that CARP should be re-organized but not abandoned.

In August 2009, H.E. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Philippine President, signed into law the consolidated version of the CARP extension with reform bill which extends the program for another five years. A Php100-billion (~US\$2 billion) allocation for land acquisition and distribution, support services, agrarian justice delivery and other funding requirements during the extension period has been made for the extension. (LLTallafer/MAFABad)

Taiwan hosts two capacity-building activities on agri-biotechnology



Participants of the training-workshop pose for posterity during the Third Agricultural Biotechnology Training-Workshop held in National Taiwan University on 31 August – 11 September 2009.

Taiwan, a recognized industry leader in agricultural biotechnology, collaborated with SEARCA in the conduct of two training activities on agri-biotechnology for Southeast Asians. One was the *Third Agricultural Biotechnology Training-Workshop* held on 31 August to 11 September 2009; and the other was a *Study Tour on Agricultural Biotechnology for Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Member Countries* held on 21-25 September 2009. Both were held in National Taiwan University (NTU), Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China.

THIRD AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY TRAINING-WORKSHOP

This learning event had 30 participants from Cambodia (3), Indonesia (2), Malaysia (1), Philippines (11), Taiwan (6), Thailand (3), and Vietnam (4). The participants were mostly research professors from the academe, researchers and research managers from national research and development agencies, and regulators from agricultural government institutions.

This activity was aimed at improving agricultural biotechnology manpower in Southeast Asian countries. It was also envisioned to pave the way for the development and enhancement of the biotechnology industry in the participants' respective countries. Further, these capacity-building initiatives allowed for the creation of cooperation and partnership in agricultural biotechnology among countries in the region.

The program integrated training in basic technologies and strategy for industry development. It consisted of lectures, laboratory exercises, and study visits to laboratory facilities, research stations, and private biotech companies. Topics include cloning tools, transformation, protein expression systems, molecular detection of plant pathogens, transgenic fish and aquaculture applications, molecular genetic markers and marker-assisted breeding, and genetic transformation of plants and animals. Case studies on commercialization of agricultural biotechnologies, technology transfer and GM product development, and biotechnological interventions for improving crop production and protection were also discussed.

Several institutions played key roles in organizing this training-workshop. These were NTU's College of Bio-resources and Agriculture and Center for Biotechnology, Food and Fertilizer Technology Center for the Asian and Pacific Region (FFTC/ASPAC), and SEARCA.

The training-workshop also received support from the National Science Council, Executive Yuan; Council of Agriculture (COA), Executive Yuan; and American Institute in Taiwan.

STUDY TOUR ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATION (SEAMEO) MEMBER COUNTRIES

Twelve participants from Cambodia (4), Myanmar (3), Philippines (1), Thailand (1), and Vietnam (3) participated in this activity. A joint collaboration among the Korea FAO Association, NTU, FFTC/ASPAC, and SEARCA, the study tour was designed for policy implementers at the senior management level, as well as senior scientists and researchers involved in biotechnology and biosafety policy formulation and implementation.

The study tour, which was supported by Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and COA, consisted of lecture presentations and institutional/field visits. Topics covered include potential application of genetic engineering and cloning tools; strategies, regulations, and priorities of agricultural biotechnology in Taiwan; NTU's agricultural biotechnology program on capacity-building and human resource building; and applications of biotechnology in animal, food, and plant industries.

The participants visited the following institutions: Animal Technology Institute of Taiwan, Food Industry Research and Development Institute, Taiwan Agricultural Institute, World Vegetable Center, Ping-Tung Agricultural Biotechnology Park, Advanced Green Biotechnology, Inc., Tungkang Biotechnology Research Center, and the Taiwan Orchid Plantation.

Drawing from the knowledge and exposure they have gained from the study tour, the participants crafted action plans relevant to their respective countries.

In behalf of the group, Dr. Hishammudin Koh, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Advisor of the Agribusiness and Rural Development Consultants based in Yangon, Myanmar, expressed his appreciation of the study tour program. He said "the tour is a fruitful learning opportunity and an eye opener – that even a small country like Taiwan can accomplish big things."

Dr. Koh added that the new knowledge and skills they have learned from the program combined with the vast natural resources of his country would hopefully contribute to food security and bring about powerful change.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director, through Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, Manager of SEARCA's Knowledge Management Department, expressed the Center's hope that the gains acquired by participants in the study tour would redound to 'enhanced regional cooperation' that advances human well-being via agricultural biotechnology. (JAPanopio/MAFABad)



Participants of the Study Tour on Agricultural Biotechnology for SEAMEO Member Countries held on 21-25 September 2009 in Taiwan visit the Food Industry Research and Development Institute (FIRDI). FIRDI is the most comprehensive bioresource center in Asia. It preserves microbial and cell resources of more than 30,000 strains and gene resources of more than 800,000 clones.

Thesis Abstracts

ANALYSIS OF RICE CONSUMPTION AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL IN YOGYAKARTA SPECIAL PROVINCE, INDONESIA



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Timorese
MS in Agricultural Economics
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The objectives of the study were: (1) to determine the factors influencing rice consumption in urban and rural areas of Yogyakarta Special Province, and (2) to determine the own price, cross price and income elasticity of rice consumption at different income levels in rural and urban areas.

National Socioeconomic Survey (SUSENAS) data of 2005 Yogyakarta Special Province on rice consumption were used. Total respondents were 1990 households. The analysis used was OLS regression model.

The result showed that rice consumption is influenced by the price of the rice itself, price of the related household goods, income level, education of the mother, number of family members, and location.

Because the demand of rice is inelastic, a change in price did not significantly influence rice demand. Generally, rice is a normal good at low income household level in the rural and urban areas. For the middle income in the rural, and the middle and high income in the urban, rice is an inferior good. On the other hand, rice is substituted by cassava and sweet potato. It is complement with catfish, fermented soybean cake, cassava, egg, and tofu.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF WATER ALLOCATION IN HUAY SONE IRRIGATION PROJECT, NAXAITHONG DISTRICT, VIENTIANE CAPITAL, LAO PDR



Sengmouang Sithivohan
Lao
MS in Irrigation Engineering
Kasetsart University

The objective of this study was to use WASAM 3.0 program to monitor and evaluate water allocation in Huay Sone Irrigation Project using data of dry and wet seasons in 2005-2006. The following were analyzed: monitoring of crop cultivation on weekly basis and calculation of irrigation efficiency and delivery performance ratio.

Huay Sone irrigation Project supplied water to 3,000 rais (1 ha = 6.25 rais) in the wet season and 1,200 rais in the dry season. The monthly averages of ETO were between 116-183 mm. Three crops were considered in the cropping patterns: dry season rice, wet season rice, and others crops.

Weekly weighted crop coefficients for rice in the dry and wet seasons were between 0.10-1.21 and 0.09-1.10; the monthly weighted crop coefficient for the other crops was 0.8.

The water use recommended by the WASAM 3.0 were close to the average actual delivery discharge since water supply from the storage reservoir was sufficient for the crop's requirement. A review of water allocation in 2005-2006 indicated that the average irrigation efficiency of the project was 58 and 57 percent in the dry season and 48 and 49 percent in the wet season, respectively. The delivery performance ratios (DPR) of the project were 1.49 and 1.25 in the dry season and 1.25 and 1.3 in the wet season, respectively. This irrigation efficiency was fair when compared with the Irrigation Project in Lao PDR and Irrigation Project in the Northeast of Thailand. However, water management should be improved for more precise water delivery considering the crop's water requirement, effective rainfall, and planting area.

3 Filipino alumni shine

Three Filipino graduate alumni of SEARCA were recognized recently for their scientific and academic achievements. They are Dr. Eufemio T. Rasco, Jr., Dr. Mary Ann O. Torio, and Dr. Inocencio E. Buot, Jr.



Dr. Eufemio T. Rasco is donned the academic gown and cap during his investiture as a new Academician of NAST Philippines on 9 July 2009.

Dr. Rasco was named as one of the new Academicians of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Philippines. The conferment ceremony was held during the

culmination of NAST's 31st Annual Scientific Meeting held on 8-9 July 2009 in Manila. Dr. Rasco was recognized for his pioneering contributions in breeding tropical white potato and for his collaborative research work with the private sector on biotech corn hybrids, which has led to the commercial approval and expansion of the biotech corn market in the Philippines. Moreover, he has vastly contributed to agri-biotechnology education in the country; he spearheaded the development of a general education course on biotechnology (the first in the Philippines), which has been adopted by four universities so far. Last year, his book titled "The Unfolding Gene Revolution" (co-published by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications and SEARCA) received NAST's Outstanding Book award. Dr. Rasco was a SEARCA scholar from 1972-1974 when he pursued his MS in agriculture at the University of the Philippines (UP) Los Baños. He got his PhD, also in agriculture, from Cornell University, USA, in 1979. He is currently Dean of the College of Sciences and Math, UP Mindanao.



NAST Philippines recognizes Dr. Mary Ann O. Torio (center) as one of the awardees of the NAST Talent Search for Young Scientists. In photo are Dr. Emil Q. Javier (right), NAST President, and Dr. Mercedes B. Concepcion, NAST Executive Council Member.

At the same NAST event, Dr. Torio, Assistant Professor at UP Los Baños, was one of the NAST Talent Search for Young Scientists awardees. Dr. Torio, who obtained her PhD in biochemistry from UPLB in 2008 through a SEARCA scholarship, was recognized discovering a way of increasing the protein content of mungbean. Her research is titled "Protein engineering of sulfhydryl groups

3 Filipino alumni/ to page 13

New SEARCA scholars association officers inducted



Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director, delivers an inspirational talk to the scholars.

The SEARCA Scholars Association (SSA) has a new set of officers for School Year 2009/2010. They are Ms. Bhakti Etza Setiani of Indonesia, President; Mr. Nguon Samnang of Cambodia, Vice President; Ms. Yoeu Asikin of Cambodia, Secretary; Ms. Siwi Gayatri of Indonesia; Treasurer; Mr. Avakat Touy Phasouysaingam of Lao PDR, Auditor; and Ms. Gay D. Defiesta of the Philippines, Coordinator; and Mr. Tho Kim Eang of Cambodia; Mr. Daud Samsudewa of Indonesia; Mr. Dethsackda Toun Manikham of Lao PDR; Ms. Yin Yin Nwet of Myanmar; Ms. Gay Therese M. Bucol of the Philippines; Ms. Wilaiwun Intarachaimas of Thailand; Mr. Mateus D.J. Gomes of Timor-Leste; and Mr. Tran Duc Tri of Vietnam, country representatives.

They were inducted on 24 July 2009 at the SEARCA Residence Hotel in Los Baños, Laguna,

Philippines at a simple ceremony led by Dr. Editha C. Cedicol, Manager, Graduate Scholarship Department, SEARCA, who also serves as the Association's adviser.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director, imparted an inspirational message during the induction ceremony. He encouraged the scholars to learn how to balance their studies with socials and to participate in SEARCA activities.

Dr. Cedicol also gave a message of encouragement to the scholars. She emphasized the importance of having the right attitude toward study, work, and their fellowmen. "Your attitude determines your altitude, ... how one conducts oneself determines how high one goes up or how low one falls down," she stressed. She urged the scholars to "study hard, make full and productive use of their time, make new friends, plan well, socialize,

have fun, but keep track of the time and exert effort to finish on time."

Mr. Artemio A. Martin, Jr. of the Philippines, outgoing SSA President, reported the Association's activities during his term.

The induction ceremony was followed by a dinner hosted by the Association and an acquaintance party to welcome the new scholars pursuing their graduate programs at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), which was also attended by the GSD staff.

The SSA is based at UPLB where the majority of SEARCA scholars are pursuing their graduate programs. This school year, 77 of the 105 ongoing SEARCA scholars are studying at UPLB. (LLDDomingo)



Dr. Edith Cedicol (far left) leads the new officers of the SEARCA Scholars Association in the oath-taking ceremony during their induction on 24 July 2009.

3 Filipino alumni/ from page 12



Dr. Inocencio E. Buot, Jr. holds his award certificate as UP Scientist 1 during the UP Scientific Productivity Awarding Ceremony on 11 August 2009. With him is Dr. Emerlinda Roman, UP President.

and methionine in mungbean (*Vigna radiata*) visilin effects on its nutritional and functional properties."

On the other hand, Dr. Buot has joined the elite *UP Scientists* group. He was recently given the appointment of UP Scientist 1 for the period 2009-2011. Currently, the UP Scientist appointment is the top recognition and reward for scientific productivity in the University. UP began to confer the award only in 2006. Scientific productivity is evaluated based on scientific publications in reputable refereed scientific journals and books, peer-reviewed technological outputs, and scientific and professional standing in the international science community. Dr. Buot holds a PhD in ecology from the University of Chiba, Japan, in 1998. He obtained his MS in Botany from UP Los Baños in 1984 through a SEARCA scholarship. (LLTallafer)

STAFF MOVEMENTS AND OTHER CHANGES AT SEARCA (as of 1 July 2009)

- Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla has been appointed Manager of the Research and Development Department. She took over from Dr. Arnulfo G. Garcia.
- Ms. Lily L. Tallafer has been appointed Special Projects Coordinator for Networks and Linkages, a newly created section of the Center.
- The *Knowledge Management Unit* is now called **Knowledge Resources Unit (KRU)**. KRU and the Training Unit (TU) compose the new Knowledge Management Department. KMD is headed by Dr. Maria Celeste H. Gadiz.
- The *Consulting Services Department* is now known as **Project Development and Management Department (ProDev)**.

Snapshots

SEARCA conducted a preliminary activity as part of the preparatory phase of proposal writing for a project under the European Union's Food Facility Programme. Joining this activity were officials of the various provincial governments, including Hon. Josephine Ramirez-Sato (seated fourth from right), Governor of Occidental Mindoro.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. (seated center), new SEARCA Director, also attended the event. This preliminary activity was held on 12 August 2009 at SEARCA.



SEARCA PARTICIPATES IN THE 2009 BAÑAMOS FESTIVAL (16-19 September 2009)



The Hon. Caesar Perez, Mayor of Los Baños, poses in front of a used coaster donated by SEARCA to the local government unit. The Los Baños government gratefully acknowledged the donation during the 2009 Bañamos Festival.



The Honorable Loren Legarda (center), Philippine Senator, was received by Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA's new Director, during her visit to the University of the Philippines Los Baños on 20 July 2009. Also at the short reception were UPLB officials, Timorese students enrolled in UPLB, and representatives from the Timor Leste embassy in the Philippines.



SEARCA puts up an exhibit in the municipal plaza. In photo are: (L-R) Dr. Lorna M. Calumpang, Head of SEARCA's Knowledge Resources Unit (KRU); Ms. Arlene A. Nadres, also of KRU; and Ms. Maria Angela F. Abad, Public Relations Specialist.



Fifteen delegates from the Water Efficient Maize for Africa Project paid a courtesy call on Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., new SEARCA Director (front row, third from left) on 14 September 2009. The visitors were briefed on SEARCA's programs and activities. Joining Dr. Saguiguit in the briefing were: Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz (front row, second from right), Manager of SEARCA's Knowledge Management Department, and Ms. Jenny A. Panopio (front row, rightmost), Network Administrator of the SEARCA Biotechnology Information Center.



SEARCA joins in the foot parade, one of the culminating activities of the Bañamos Festival.



Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla (inset), Manager of SEARCA's Research and Development Department, leads the briefing of agricultural extension workers of the National Irrigation Authority (Division III, Isabela) who visited SEARCA on 25 August 2009 as part of their educational field trip.

Feedback/ from page 3

and initiative, we have been able to establish important institutional links with SEARCA, which we would like to continue in the future.

— Dr. Ganesh Thapa, Regional Economist, Asia and Pacific, IFAD

It has also been a great pleasure and privilege to have worked with you and your staff at SEARCA during the period of your Directorship. You have been an inspiration to me, our landcare project team, and the Philippines development movement...

— Dr. Noel Vock, DEEDI, Queensland, Australia

Congratulations! You have steered SEARCA to new heights and our science community has been privileged to grow together with SEARCA under your leadership...

— Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs, University of the Philippines Los Baños

Congratulations on all the great work you accomplished with SEARCA...

— Dr. Nancy D. Lewis, Director, Research Program, East-West Center, USA

I have been a living witness of your outstanding accomplishments in SEARCA. Indeed, your contributions are worth reckoning and worthy of emulation by SEARCA's future leaders... Thanks a lot for giving individual researchers the opportunity to carry out research and training projects through the SFRT (SEARCA's Seed Fund for Research and Training).

— Dr. Cely S. Binoya, Executive Director, APEAEN, and Director, Extension Services Division and GAD, Camarines Sur State Agricultural College, Philippines

You can look back with pride and satisfaction on your monumental contributions to the development of SEARCA.

— Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, former Director General, International Rice Research Institute

... Thank you... for the excellent cooperation our institutions have been able to develop during your six years' mandate...

— Dr. Jean-Guy Bertault, Resident Regional Director for Insular Southeast Asia, CIRAD, France

... Our heartfelt gratitude on your excellent leadership, commitment and contribution to SEAMEO SEARCA. We believe throughout your tenure as the Director of SEARCA from July 2003 to July 2009, the Centre has achieved its best in providing services and training to the region...

— Dato' Dr Ahmad bin Sipon, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat

... Our sincere appreciation for your kind assistance in strengthening our academic cooperation and relationship during your term as Director of SEARCA...

— Dr. Vudtechai Kapilakanchana, President, Kasetsart University, Thailand

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- Dr. Melinda F. Lumanta, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Management, University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) (Lead Resource Person and Technical Coordinator)
- Dr. Erlinda B. Aromin, Co-Director, CHED-UPLB Zonal Research Center, Region IV and V (Assistant Coordinator)
- Prof. Mario Antonio G. Lopez, Associate Professor, Asian Institute of Management
- Dr. Primo G. Garcia, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Management and Development Studies, UPOU
- Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas, Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)
- Dr. Ma. Victoria O. Espaldon, Dean, School of Environmental Science and Management, UPLB
- Dr. Tirso B. Paris, Professor of Economics, College of Economics and Management, UPLB
- Dr. Jaine C. Reyes, University Researcher and Affiliate Associate Professor, College of Public Affairs, UPLB
- Dr. Fernando A. Bernardo, Consultant, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)
- Dr. William G. Padolina, Deputy Director General for Operations and Support Services, IRRI

Equipping key incumbent and second-in-line research managers in the HEIs along with CHED regional executives with know-how and do-how in research management is hoped to promote research productivity, quality, and relevance of research at HEIs toward overall national development in the long run. (RMMDedicatoria)

SEARCA, DA/ from page 6

1. Strategic leadership and public management (ASoG);
2. Agricultural business, trade and investment (UA&P School of Management);
3. Development economics and agricultural policy (UPecon through the UP School of Economics)

Aside from graduate scholarships, another program modality is an executive program comprising 20 two-hour lecture forums, eight three-day learning forums, and certificate executive courses or visits to institutions, industries, or private sector initiatives. These learning events will focus on policy issues, agricultural development challenges, and science-based solutions aimed to equip DA participants to stay on top of new developments and issues for planning and decision-making.

By the end of the program, it is hoped that a cadre of homegrown, world-class career bureaucrats will steer the government's agriculture program in synergy with local governments, the private sector and external markets, civil society, small producers and their communities, and other national and international partners through the years.

SEARCA will administer the proposed umbrella program and provide a virtual program base for the collaborative undertakings with the participating HEIs. SEARCA will further take lead in providing Southeast Asian regional perspectives and linkages. (RMMDedicatoria)

Korea FAO/ from page 6

costs of inputs, specifically of fertilizers, in the supply chain for rice; bulk of the profit going to collectors and middlemen instead of the producers; and lack of access to technology in various points of the supply chain. The drive to apply good and sustainable agricultural practices in the countries involved is significant, along with efforts to advance supply chain management wholly or in stages.

Participants developed concept notes on particular aspects of the supply chain of a crop or product important to their economy, which would later be consolidated into a relevant proposal. This would then be followed through as a regional collaborative study and initiative.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit Jr., new SEARCA Director, articulated the importance of initiatives like policy roundtables in providing inputs for the development of policies that could strengthen institutional capacities for agricultural and rural development in the region. Furthermore, he highlighted the important roles of agribusiness and agro-industry in a country's socioeconomic development.

Mr. Yong-Kyu Choi, Vice Chair of the Korea FAO Association, echoed this sentiment and affirmed commitment to support institutional capacity building in agriculture and rural development in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam. (RCDikitanan)

Impact assessment of biotech crops, subject of international conference



Participants discuss emerging issues, gaps, and capacity-building options in relation to biotechnology crops during the breakout session of the international conference held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 29-30 September 2009.

The adoption of biotech crops remains the fastest in history, with global area planted to biotech crops alone posting a 60-fold increase in a decade, reaching 102 million hectares in 2006 and 114.3 million ha in 2007. In addition, farmers – 12 million as of 2007, most of whom are resource poor - are quickly adopting varieties with more than one biotech trait. In fact, the number of developing countries (12) planting biotech crops surpassed the number of industrialized countries (11), and the growth rate in the developing world was three times that of industrialized nations (21 percent vs. 6 percent), according to the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) in a 2008 report.

Given the above trends, biotechnology is touted to 'feed the world' and advances in crop biotechnology are widely recognized as tools for promoting agricultural productivity and improved environmental management. Yet, after a decade of global adoption of biotech crops, issues on sustainability, equitable access and benefits, environmental and socioeconomic impacts, among others, linger. The concerns are not so much to deter the development of biotechnology as to ensure that what it promises are delivered.

With the diversity of issues at hand, SEARCA, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), ISAAA, the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program II of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Monsanto Singapore, supported by Thailand Development Research Institute, assessed the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of biotech crops in an international conference held on 29-30 September 2009 at Rama Gardens Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. The conference was a key step in looking at the results of technological change toward strengthening public policy

in agricultural biotechnology in developing countries. It was designed to better understand the methodologies, tools, insights, and experiences in examining the impacts of adopting biotech crops on socioeconomic variables such as income, employment, and potential substitution of goods, as well as on environmental variables such as biodiversity and sustainability.

Dr. Mark W. Rosegrant, Director, Environment and Production Technology Division at IFPRI and Dr. Julian Adams of USAID delivered the keynote papers of the conference. Dr. Rosegrant gave an overview of the role of biotech crops in future global supply, demand, and prices of food, and provided the broad context for the two-day conference. Dr. Adams talked about the regional harmonization of biosafety regulations in Southeast Asia, the key issues and challenges, and the potential economic benefits of harmonization through reduction of regulatory costs and earlier adoption of beneficial varieties of biotech crops, among others.

The thematic sessions of the conference featured topnotch speakers and discussants. Dr. Jose Falck-Zepeda of IFPRI presented his paper lead-authored by Dr. Melinda Smale of Oxfam USA on different methodological impact assessment tools and approaches deployed so far, evaluating their respective applicability, advantages, and disadvantages. Dr. Carl Pray of Rutgers University and Dr. Jose M. Yorobe Jr. of the University of the Philippines Los Baños discussed impact assessment studies on biotech crops, highlighting those with China, India, the Philippines, and South Africa perspectives.

Dr. Harvey Glick of Monsanto Singapore talked about the impacts of biotech crops on agricultural

sustainability as it refers to the efficient production of food while using less. He noted that biotech crops are deemed to make significant impact on sustainable resource management and future food production, particularly in developing countries where input constraints are severe. Dr. Sergio R. Francisco of Philippine Rice Research Institute delivered a paper on the potential health and nutrition impact of Bt eggplants in the Philippines. The other two thematic sessions zeroed in on the cost of compliance with biosafety regulations in developing countries (Dr. Jose Falck-Zepeda, IFPRI) and the integration of socioeconomic considerations in regulating biotech crops (Dr. C.D. Mayee, Ministry of Agriculture, India).

In the latter part of the conference, the participants broke out into several groups to discuss priority areas in socioeconomic, and environmental and health impact assessment research and development, respectively, and identify feasible policy options that will help strengthen public policy on agricultural biotechnology, particularly those concerning genetically modified crops. Each group identified and discussed emerging issues and gaps, capacity-building options, and came up with mitigating measures to address existing concerns related to biotech crops.

Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, said, "Advances in biotechnology have been helping promote agricultural productivity and better environmental management. Yet despite the notable growth in adoption of biotech crops, still other aspects need to be closely examined. Positive socioeconomic and environmental impacts of biotech crops thus ensure its valuable contribution not only to agricultural productivity but also to the society and economy as a whole." (RVGerpacio)