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# Coping Strategies against El Nino-induced Climatic Risk: Case of Northeast Thailand

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## Objectives

The objectives of this study are to collect and analyze data and information concerning drought impacts on production, income, labour allocation and food security at the household level; to evaluate farmers' strategies in coping with drought problems, constraints faced by farmers and support requirements; and to evaluate government measures in handling drought problems, which includes concepts, approaches and its implications in the field. Two provinces are purposely selected, namely Lop Buri in the Central Plains and Nakhon Ratchasima on the northeast Plateau of Thailand. One hundred and twenty samples in each province were randomly selected and face-to-face interviews were conducted in early 2002 after the end of the crop season. The data was based on crop year 2001/02.

## Upland agriculture and El Nino effects in Thailand

Upland agriculture in Thailand relies mainly on rainfall and its distribution. Although the influence of the southwest wind brings heavy rains or extremely wet weather throughout the country for six months during May to October every year, Thailand temporarily faces abnormal droughts. The impacts of the so-called El Nino droughts in 1992 and 1997 especially, were significant. Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines were also affected. The droughts were linked to decreases in the average amount of rainfall in each region and over the main river basins, including the Chao Praya and the Mune-Shi river basin in the northeast. These evidently caused a decline in the yields of the major crops, including rice, maize, sorghum and sugarcane, especially in 1997.

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Although it is forecast that El Nino will affect the region in 2002, in 2001 abnormal weather approached Thailand. According to the records of the Meteorological Department, the annual rainfall in Lop Buri and Nakhon Ratchasima (the study areas in this phase) dropped from 1,170.8 and 1,141.8 mm per year of the three-year average of 1998–2000, to 890 and 880 mm in 2001 respectively. The temperature also increased significantly. Even though the amount of rain was still enough for upland crop production, in practice some losses may have occurred. The loss to major crops may have also affected the socio-economic situations of the people in vulnerable areas. It is certain that these people have extensive experience of drought and their existing measures to mitigate the losses are proposed. Finally, measures and mechanisms to cope with the El Nino phenomenon are investigated at the farm level.

### Profile of sample farms

The study found that the average number of males and females in the household were four. The male to female ratio was close to one to one. There was no change in these numbers between 2001 and 1996. Average farm size in Lop Buri (nearly 12 hectares) is

twice as large as in Nakhon Ratchasima.

The major crops grown in 2001 were upland rainfed rice in Nakhon Ratchasima and maize in Lop Buri. There were many kinds of crop diversified in both provinces, including mungbean, groundnut, cassava, sugarcane, sesame, chili, fruit trees and trees. Animals were raised on some farms, including milk cows, cattle, poultry, local chicken, duck and buffalo. Cropping patterns in 2001/02 were upland rice, maize, cassava, sugarcane, maize-sorghum and maize-sunflower.

### Villagers' experiences of the 2001 drought and their responses

This study selects 2001 as representative of an abnormal year because the rainfall was less than normal and the temperature was higher. Moreover, the Government of Thailand had launched a campaign to warn the people, countrywide, about the abnormal weather approaching Thailand. There were many media used, such as radio and television broadcasting, newspaper and government services. The following section focuses on the response of villagers to that warning and their preparation to deal with the drought's effects.

When asking the villagers about the news of El Nino and abnormal weather (drought), the majority of the respondents in both provinces received that information (Table 1).

Of the respondents who received the warning news, 51 per cent in Lop Buri made adjustments to their production plan while only 35 per cent in Nakhon Ratchasima did (Table 2). The villagers in Lop Buri are better able to revise their production plan than those in Nakhon Ratchasima.

After receiving the warning, only 29 per cent of the informed villagers in Lop Buri prepared water for drinking and home use, compared to 63 per cent in Nakhon Ratchasima (Table 3). A smaller percentage of respondents prepared water in Lop Buri because they had all done it before and it was now commonplace. Since the villagers in both areas are living in upland areas where water is not sufficient for using the whole year round, all have purchased big jars for storing rain water for drinking for decades. Moreover, in the areas where the ground water table is not so deep and the water quality is good for consumption, government agencies have already constructed shallow tube wells to supply water to the villagers. The heightened alert of villagers in Nakhon Ratchasima may be due to the saline ground water.

**Table 1** Abnormal weather warning news perception

Response	Drought warning news		Total
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	
Yes	63.3	54.8	70.0
No	36.7	23.3	30.0
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	120	240

Chi-Square = 5.079, df = 1, Significant = 0.024  
Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

## *Message from the Director*

The CGPRT Centre has been implementing a three-year research project, "Stabilization of Upland Agriculture and Rural Development in El Nino Vulnerable Countries" since April 2000, funded by the Government of Japan. The project is now in its final stage of completing various reports, such as country reports, an integrated report, and proceedings of the workshop.

However, the ultimate objective of the Centre's activities is not only to publish reports alone but also to disseminate the findings of research more widely and provide relevant information and policy recommendations to the policy makers to address the problems of each country.

The magnitude and effect of El Nino-induced abnormal weather and its affect on agriculture varies from country to country and location to location. Technical and institutional coping strategies also vary depending on the country. Therefore, in depth discussion among various stakeholders in each country would be preferable for better understanding the research findings and for the identification of relevant counter measures to predict, avoid or minimize and recover from the damage caused by the abnormal weather, drought in particular.

For this purpose, the Centre organized an international joint workshop "Coping against El Nino for Sustainable Rainfed Agriculture: Lessons from Asia and the Pacific" in Cebu, the Philippines, last September. The workshop was originally planned as a regional workshop to discuss and disseminate major findings of the project mentioned above. However, in the course of implementing the project, we learned that several international and national institutes have been approaching the common issue, agricultural climatic risk, from various

points of view and ways. Through close communication with them, we recognized that we could benefit each other and agreed to organize a joint workshop to exchange our findings and to establish synergy for further collaboration. Therefore, eventually, the workshop was co-organized by the Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and the CGPRT Centre.

Further, the Centre organized in-country seminars in the five participating countries of the project, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and Thailand from last January to March.

In each seminar, many participants, including researchers, extension officers and policy makers, attended and active discussions were made among them. In the case of Malaysia, for example, the research findings of the project were referred to the Action Plan, which will be adopted by the Government of Malaysia.

In the 20th Governing Board Meeting, the Centre was recommended and suggested by the Board that the dissemination of research results be expanded into other forms, such as targeted policy discussions, not only in the conventional ways such as seminars and publications. I do believe that the Centre's activities, such as the international joint workshops and in-country seminars mentioned above could be one of the ways to respond to the suggestion of the Board.

The CGPRT Centre wishes to enhance these kinds of activities as a measure of effective dissemination of research findings and proper adoption of them by the member countries.

**NOBUYOSHI MAENO**

**Table 2 Adjustments to production planning after having received the warning news**

Response	Production planning when drought approaches		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Yes	48.6	65.2	57.8
No	51.4	34.8	42.2
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	74	92	166

Chi-Square = 4.617, df = 1, Significant = 0.032

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 3 Water preparation for drinking and using**

Response	Water preparation		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Yes	71.1	37.0	52.4
No	28.9	63.0	47.6
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	76	92	168

Chi-Square = 19.398, df = 1, Significant = 0.000

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

In general, when abnormal weather approached, 50 per cent of the respondents in Lop Buri sought additional income to compensate the loss of their produce, while this figure was 62 per cent in Nakhon Ratchasima (Table 4). This implies that the abnormal weather may affect the villagers' income in both provinces but in Nakhon Ratchasima it was stronger than in Lop Buri.

After receiving the information of abnormal weather in 2001, only 26.3 per cent of villagers in Lop Buri stocked rice for family

consumption compared to 65 per cent from Nakhon Ratchasima (Table 5). The low percentage in Lop Buri was due to the insignificant effects of drought in the past and numerous options to find additional income to compensate the loss from abnormal weather. Moreover, the farm size in Lop Buri was larger than those in Nakhon Ratchasima. Compared to Lop Buri, villagers in Nakhon Ratchasima were a lot more aware of the hazardous effects of the drought. Rice barns are traditionally established within

households in upland areas and villagers keep their rice until the new product has already been harvested to make certain that their family members have enough rice for the coming year.

The effects of drought may force villagers from upland areas to move out of their village to find a new job or additional income. The survey found that the majority of the villagers in Lop Buri still lived in their village while some of the villagers in Nakhon Ratchasima temporarily moved out (Table 6).

**Table 4 Seeking additional income when facing abnormal weather in 2001**

Response	Seeking additional income		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Yes	50.0	61.7	55.8
No	50.0	38.3	44.0
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	120	240

Chi-Square = 3.312, df = 1, Significant = 0.069

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 5 Rice storage preparation for household consumption**

Response	Rice storage		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Yes	73.7	34.8	52.4
No	26.3	65.2	47.6
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	76	92	168

Chi-Square = 25.251, df = 1, Significant = 0.000

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 6 Temporary movement of household members**

Response	Temporary movement		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Some members	15.3	41.7	28.6
All members	1.7	0.0	0.8
No members	83.1	58.3	70.6
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	118	120	238

Chi-Square = 21.710, df = 2, Significant = 0.000

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

The effects of abnormal weather in 1997 and 2001 forced some household members to find new careers out of the villages. From Lop Buri, 20 per cent of respondents stated that members of their households had found permanent careers outside of agriculture. Compared to Lop Buri, 40 per cent of villagers in Nakhon Ratchasima had family members

find permanent jobs out of the village (Table 7).

One effect of the drought in 2001 was a failure in production, which increased the debt of the households that had borrowed money from the bank. The survey found that the debt of the majority of villagers in both provinces increased (Table 8). The comparison also indicated that this

problem was stronger in Lop Buri than in Nakhon Ratchasima. This may be due to the high value of the debt borrowed from the bank.

When the debts increased, loan repayments followed. The survey found that although the majority were able to pay back the loan as normal, 46 per cent of villagers in Lop Buri deferred payment (Table 9).

**Table 7 The number of respondents leaving the village to seek alternative careers**

Response	New career		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Temporary	5.0	1.7	3.4
Permanent	20.0	40.7	30.3
Stay in village	75.0	57.6	66.4
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	118	238

Chi-Square = 13.047, df = 2, Significant = 0.001

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 8 The increase in debt due to the drought in 2001**

Response	Debt increase		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Increase	56.7	45.0	50.8
No Debt	1.7	13.3	7.5
Unchanged	35.0	38.3	36.7
Decrease	6.7	3.3	5.0
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	120	240

Chi-Square = 14.011, df = 3, Significant = 0.003

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 9 Loan repayments affected by abnormal weather**

Response	Loan repayment		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Normal	48.3	74.5	60.9
Deferred	46.7	20.0	33.9
Loanless	5.0	5.5	5.2
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	110	230

Chi-Square = 18.535, df = 2, Significant = 0.000

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

## Government measures to mitigate the drought effects

In practice, when abnormal weather occurs, government services from the Department of Agricultural Extension will survey the loss and required help of the villagers and then report to the central government with recommendations for mitigating measures. Furthermore, the

central government will annually allocate some budget for this purpose, including flooding and other natural disasters. In 2002, the government established a permanent office to cope with natural disasters. Of the proposed measures, the effective ones are as follows:

### *Seed provision*

This measure is proposed when drought destroys the crop

after having been planted. Almost 60 per cent of respondents in both provinces accepted that the seed provision measure was very useful. Just over 20 per cent of villagers, however, described it as useless because they had experienced delay in its delivery and quality was not satisfactory (Table 10).

**Table 10 Seed provision measure**

Response	Seed provision		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Very useful	58.3	60.0	59.2
Useful	16.7	20.0	18.3
Useless	25.0	20.0	22.5
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	120	240

Chi-Square = 1.058, df = , Significant = 0.589  
Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

### *Village fund establishment*

This transfer policy was implemented in 2001 with the villagers' self operation. The government deposits the one-million-baht fund for villages and city communities through the Bank of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives and the Governmental Saving Bank. The villagers set the members, committee and regulation for using and the return of the loan. They have to maintain and increase the fund permanently.

The village fund has been apart of Thai rural development for a long time. In upland areas during the Fifth and Sixth National Plan (1982–1986 and 1987–1991), the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives provided cash crop seeds to the villages. Farmers borrowed the seeds and then

returned the value in cash or in kind. The villagers had to form the village fund or seed bank to support their production in the following season. In rice areas, rice seed and seed barns were subsidized. The villagers could borrow the seeds and the returns could form the rice bank.

The survey found that most villagers in both provinces accepted that the village fund was very useful (80 per cent in Lop Buri and 76.7 per cent in Nakhon Ratchasima) and useful (16.7 per cent in Lop Buri and 20 per cent in Nakhon Ratchasima). Only a few of the respondents did not agree with this measure (Table 11). The advantages of the village fund are the low interest rates determined by the villagers and it is the villagers' decision how to make use of their loans.

From observing the villagers, some village fund members used the loan to establish a small-scale rice mill in the village, others borrowed it and formed a team seeking construction work in the cities. Other activities included diversifying traditional crops to livestock and poultry and even household consumption.

### *Food supply distribution*

Sometimes drought may cause failure in food production and cash crops which earn cash to buy food. The government may supply food to relieve this problem. There is a sense of community and pulling together to help one another in Thai culture. Dry food in plastic bags is usually prepared and distributed to the sufferers. This measure is very useful to 60

per cent of villagers in both provinces (Table 12).

**Table 11 Village fund establishment**

Response	Village fund establishment		Total
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	
Very useful	80.0	76.7	78.3
Useful	15.0	20.0	17.5
Useless	5.0	3.3	4.2
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	120	240

Chi-Square = 1.342, df = 2, Significant = 0.511  
Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 12 Food supply distribution**

Response	Food supply distribution		Total
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	
Very useful	60.0	60.5	60.5
Useful	25.0	17.6	20.9
Useless	15.0	21.8	18.4
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	119	239

Chi-Square = 3.438, df = 2, Significant = 0.179  
Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

### *Water resource development*

The Government of Thailand has paid attention to this policy. The Irrigation Department has been allocated the largest amount of the government budget under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. Large, medium and small-scale water resource development is under its responsibility. This is to say that all suitable areas for dam and reservoir construction have been surveyed and, where possible, implemented. After consulting the villagers, this measure is regarded as the most important to counter the effects of drought. More than

90 per cent of respondents in both provinces would like the government to allocate budget to villages and develop water resources (Table 13). Water for household consumption that has been developed includes ground water and a plumber. For agricultural purposes, weir construction and small reservoirs are examples of water development. Although demand for water development is very high, suitable sites for construction are limited.

### **Effects of drought on major crop yields in 2001**

Abnormal weather affected Thailand in 2001 although it was not as strong as in 1997. Less rain fell in the study areas and the regional records revealed that the rainfall was less than the three-year average of 1998-2000. It is certain that the rainfall factor will physically influence the efficiency

and ability to produce upland crops under the ceteris paribus assumption. The method applied for this measure is elasticities, which are frequently used for convenience to express the demand and supply response to price. Elasticity ( $\epsilon_p$ ) shows the percentage change in one variable associated with the percentage change in another variable and hence, is independent of the units of measurement. The calculation of the rainfall affect on yield is simply expressed as the percentage change of yield over the percentage change of rainfall. The average yield and rainfall are given in Table 14 and results of the calculation are given in Table 15.

From Table 15, among the considered crops, the less rain in 2001 affected rice the most, followed by maize. Compared to the other crops, the reduced rainfall affected sugarcane the least, followed by cassava.

**Table 13 Water resource development**

Response	Water resource development		
	Lop Buri	Nakhon Ratchasima	Total
Very useful	90.0	91.7	90.8
Useful	3.3	8.3	5.8
Useless	6.7	0.0	3.3
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	120	120	240

Chi-Square = 10.590, df = 2, Significant = 0.005

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 14 Average yield (kg/rai) and rainfall during the growing period (millimeters)**

Crop	Crop year							
	1998-2000				2001			
	Yield		Rainfall		Yield		Rainfall	
	average	stdev.	average	stdev.	average	stdev.	average	stdev.
Rainfed rice	398.64	152.11	683.03	127.25	169.05	75.49	405.76	98.89
Cassava	2,745.25	606.89	1,069.56	98.95	1,951.91	470.51	635.78	47.17
Sugarcane	9,903.46	2,389.18	1,134.58	86.83	8,034.54	1,975.46	655.97	10.17
Maize	610.49	190.03	581.84	48.71	332.61	126.11	342.82	40.16
Sorghum	289.53	63.99	427.38	94.22	165.76	46.34	192.16	44.56
Sunflower	117.54	23.70	328.98	101.22	48.23	22.70	120.15	46.20

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

**Table 15 The ranking effect of drought on major crop yields in 2001**

Major crops	$\epsilon_p$	Std.
Rice	1.66	0.63
Maize	1.19	0.43
Sunflower	0.94	0.30
Sorghum	0.74	0.22
Cassava	0.67	0.17
Sugarcane	0.41	0.12

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

## Recommendations

- (1) Water for drinking and household consumption: The evidence indicates that most villagers have the facilities already and enough water for drinking and household consumption. Moreover, the Thai government has paid attention to water resource development continuously and determined it as a first priority for country development policy. Therefore, this issue is not of interest.
- (2) Water for agriculture: Since both study areas are located in upland areas it is difficult to construct reservoirs. Rain is the only water supply source,

- therefore, rainmaking is the best way to increase the amount of water when drought is approaching.
- (3) Food security: Since Thailand is a food surplus country and most farms in the study areas are self-sufficient in rice, food security measures are not necessary to be implemented. However, one of the most practical policies is to expand the rice mortgage project (with an interest rate of 3 per cent per year) and expand its repayment period to cover upland areas where the villagers store their paddy in their barns and require some money with a low interest loan.
  - (4) Cropping systems:

- Most farms have experience in switching crops from normal ones to crops with a lower water requirement. Kenaf is to replace rice, chili and sugarcane to maize, sunflower and sorghum to second season maize. Trees and fruit trees are less important to both study areas. If trees bring moisture to the environment, the suggestion is to encourage farmers to grow them. Moreover, some land should be allocated to grass land for cattle and cows.
- (5) Drought warning system: The warning system is very effective to warn people and help them prepare and adjust their activities before the losses come. Now, the media, in terms of television and

radio, is widespread throughout the country. The government should utilize this facility as much as possible. Moreover, the ready establishment of a permanent office and staff in 2002 will help mitigate drought effects and provide optional measures to overcome drought.

- (6) Research on drought resistant varieties:  
Some crops, resistant to abnormal weather and some

varieties of traditional crops should be researched and introduced to replace the ones that require a lot of water. However, these projects have been implemented in the past but failed because there was not a market for the new crop. Therefore, both technical and economic (market) feasibility should be undertaken.

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## **CGPRT Centre News and Activities**

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### **Prospects of Feed Crops in Southeast Asian Countries (FEED-SEA)**

The project has been approved by the Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP and the Government of Japan for funding. The project will start in July 2003, lead by Dr. Erna Maria Lokollo, with the participation of four southeast Asian countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The objective of the project is to elucidate and analyze potentials, weaknesses, opportunities, constraints and policy options for the development of feed crop farming with emphasis placed on CGPRT crops in southeast Asian developing countries in balance with the rapid development of livestock and the fish culture industry in Southeast Asia.

The CGPRT Centre has sent letters of invitation to these countries to participate in the project. The Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development has initially expressed interest and has nominated researchers from the Indonesian Center for Agro-Socio Economics Research and Development (ICASERD) to lead as regional advisor and national expert. ■

### **Identification of Pulling Factors for Enhancing Sustainable Development of Diverse Agriculture in Selected Asian Countries (AGRIDIV)**

The project has also been approved by the Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP and the Government of Japan for funding. The project will start in April 2003 with the participation of seven Asian countries: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. The objective of the research project is to investigate the socio-economic impacts of recent developments in the regional and global economic environment, including trade liberalization on upland agriculture at village level and identifying constraints to the sustainable development of diversified agriculture, in particular upland agriculture based on CGPRT crops in the Asian region.

The preparation stage of the AGRIDIV project is taking place at the CGPRT Centre within the next few months. Dr. Tomohide Sugino will be visiting the Centre from April 7 for three weeks before his permanent posting as project leader to start in June 2003. We welcome him to our professional staff to strengthen CGPRT Centre capacity in meeting and serving the needs of CGPRT producing countries. ■

### **ELNINO**

A series of in-country seminars were held in each participating country during January and March 2003 as follows: "Stabilization of Upland Agriculture and Rural Development in El Nino Vulnerable Countries: Thailand's Case," Bangkok, 25 January with 157 participants from Thailand, Japan and the Philippines. "Malaysian Seminar on El Nino Action Plan Committee and Stakeholders," Kuala Lumpur, 27 January with 54 participants from Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines. "Philippines Seminar on El Nino Impacts and Coping Strategies," Manila, 7 February with 139 participants from the Philippines, Japan and Papua New Guinea. "Indonesian Seminar on El Nino and Its Implication Towards Agricultural Development," Bogor, 6 March with 94 participants from Indonesia, Thailand, France and Japan. "Papua New Guinean Seminar on El Nino Impacts and Coping Strategies," Lae, 11 March with 40 participants from PNG, Malaysia, the Philippines and Japan. At each seminar, in addition to the research results and policy implications derived from the project,

several practical national policy papers were presented to formalize the mitigation policies appropriate to each country's unique conditions and were actively discussed.

"Coping against El Nino for Stabilizing Rainfed Agriculture: Lessons from Asia and the Pacific: Proceedings of a joint workshop held in Cebu, the Philippines September 17-19, 2002" CGPRT Monograph No. 43 was published in February 2003.

As the project will terminate at the end of March, several reports, as final outputs, are to be published as follows. The first country report of the Philippines and the second country reports of Malaysia and Thailand are under final editing to be published in April. The first country report of PNG and the second country reports of Indonesia, the Philippines and PNG are under revision and planned to be published in May. The integrated report is planned to be published in June. ■

## MAPSuD

The MAPSuD project supported by the CIRAD Amis Ecolpol programme aims at strengthening the capacity of research and development organizations working in Asia and the Pacific on socio-economic and policy analysis for the development of CGPRT crops. It includes an inventory of the needs and proposals for training activities, network development and specific field studies.

For 2003, the activities of the MAPSuD project will focus on strengthening the capacity of the CGPRT Centre in its main functions, that is: a) provide support to the development of an agricultural research network, b) prepare social and agro economic studies, c) train scientists and extension workers and, d) collect, process and disseminate information.

Since high quality and up-to-date information becomes everyday more a key element in the institutional recognition of any regional organization, the generation of such information is the focus of the MAPSuD project in association with the AGRIDIV project. The CGPRT Centre has long experience in disseminating raw data from statistical census, as well as news about its own activities. It is felt that today a more extraverted strategy towards information is the most appropriate strategy to respond to the needs of the Asian and Pacific community of professionals working on the CGPRT crops.

**The purpose** of MAPSuD projected activities starting in 2003 is to establish within two years a permanent capacity within the CGPRT Centre to monitor and analyze the situation and prospects of the CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific, and share this information with its partner centres in Asia and the Pacific.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objective, the following outputs are expected:

- A qualitative database enabling to store, process and retrieve information on CGPRT crops
- Processed information that is relevant to the needs of partner centres
- A dissemination system combining hard copies distribution and electronic access
- An operational network of corresponding analysts located in strategic countries and organisations.

**Direct beneficiaries** of these activities are scientists, analysts, and in general, research and development institutions working on CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific. Through contact with more accurate, updated, and relevant information, the quality of research, analysis and results of these partners will be enhanced.

Tentatively, the following countries would be included from the start of the project according to their responses to Centre's activities in the past:

Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

**Indirect beneficiaries** are i) people (farmers, policy makers) who may benefit from better informed specialists involved in the development of CGPRT crops and ii) the CGPRT Centre itself becoming more visible and recognised as a nodal point for CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific.

On a long-term basis, it is expected that a network of scientists, extension workers, and policy makers involved in CGPRT crop research and/or development builds through the CGPRT Centre. This network would then strengthen the position of the Centre and make it an attractive place to develop research and to invest for member countries.

Establishing a permanent capacity within the CGPRT Centre to monitor and analyze the situation and prospects of CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific and sharing this information implies that different ways of collecting and organising relevant and updated information must be sought after, as well as a consistent way to organise ourselves in order to perform this activity. Three **key activities** are concerned: acquisition of information, production of information, and dissemination of information.

### *Acquisition of information*

Besides the already existing system for raw data acquisition, we would like to collect information about the most recent evolutions and news that may affect the future of CGPRT crops in the region and also the daily work activities of scientists, developers or analysts. The purpose is not only to compile data but also to be able to elaborate regular analyses based on the most recent evolutions.

### *Production of information*

Several types of information to be produced have been identified. These are:

- Breaking News: Instant information on any important event that might have bearing on the future of CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific (for instance a technical breakthrough, a climatic hazard...)
- Briefs: Short paragraphs relating facts on CGPRT crops (for instance, the launching of a new research program, changes in international prices, yields of a new variety...)
- Short articles: One-page synthesis on a specific topic related to the situation and prospects of CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific
- Information on workshops/seminars/  
conferences/training/publications

### *Dissemination of information*

The dissemination strategy relies on three specific outputs: an on-line database for contributing partners, the publication of a monthly media to broadcast information, both through regular mail and electronic access, and the development of an exchange network with partner institutions.

The main media selected to disseminate information is under discussion at the Centre. It will probably be a periodical, called "CGPRT Flash", to be sent through the CGPRT mailing list and made available on the CGPRT Web Site. This media will group Breaking News, Briefs, Articles and the other items mentioned above into an attractive easy-to-read document. The quality and relevance of this periodical will rely on the collaboration of corresponding partners from Asia and Pacific countries, with whom the Centre will seek agreements.

These activities are expected to start in June. ■

## **The Training-of-trainer Seminar on “The Role of Agricultural Policy Analysis in a Market Economy”**

This three-week course was organized by CIRAD Amis Ecopol with the collaboration of the UNESCAP CGPRT Centre and supported by the French Cooperation Support Project in Cambodia and by ICASERD in Indonesia.

Twenty-one participants from Cambodia and Indonesia were provided up-to-date theoretical background, concepts, tools and methods in the field of policy analysis and implementation. They are now expected to organize training sessions for their colleagues on the indicated topic in their own countries. The course combines lectures and exercises, and provides enough time for the participants to produce their own pedagogic material.



Front Row:

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Nur K. Agustin (Ms)  
Juni Hestina (Ms)  
Sri Nuryanti (Mrs)  
Chuop Paris (Mr)  
Chan Sipana (Mrs)  
So Sreymom (Mrs)  
Helena J. Purba (Ms)  
Mak Mony (Mr)  
Uy Sambath (Mr)  
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Ashari (Mr)  
Lim Saody (Mr)  
Tith Bone (Mr)  
Moch Chantha (Mr)  
Hem Socheath (Mr)  
Keo Cheany (Mr)  
Tancredi Voituriez (Mr)  
Prum Sethy (Mr)  
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<http://www.cgprtstat.org>

BY AIRMAIL

## New Publications

The CGPRT Feed Crops Supply/Demand and Potential/Constraint for Their Expansion in South Asia  
Budiman Hutabarat  
CGPRT Monograph No. 42, 2003, 176 pp.  
ISBN 979-9317-24-X

Coping against El Nino for Stabilizing Rainfed Agriculture: Lessons from Asia and the Pacific  
Shigeki Yokoyama and Rogelio N. Concepcion  
CGPRT Monograph No. 43, 2003, 224 pp.  
ISBN 979-9317-23-1

Prospects of Feed Crops in Nepal: the Role of CGPRT Crops  
Bekha Lal Maharjan  
CGPRT Working Paper No. 65, 2003, 54 pp.  
ISBN 979-9317-25-8

Coping Strategies against El Nino-induced Climatic Risk: Case of Northeast Thailand  
Thamrong Mekhora  
CGPRT Working Paper No. 69, 2003, 52 pp.  
ISBN 979-9317-26-6

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### **CGPRT Centre**

The Regional Co-ordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific (CGPRT Centre) was established in 1981 as a subsidiary body of UN/ESCAP.

### **Objective**

In co-operation with ESCAP member countries, the Centre will initiate and promote research, training and dissemination of information on socio-economic and related aspects of CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific. In its activities, the Centre aims to serve the needs of institutions concerned with planning, research, extension and development in relation to CGPRT crop production, marketing and use.

### **Programmes**

1. Research, which entails the preparation and implementation of studies covering production, utilization and trade of CGPRT crops in the countries of Asia and the Pacific.
2. Training of national research and extension workers.
3. Information and documentation which encompasses the collection, processing and dissemination of relevant information for use by researchers, policy makers, and extension workers.

### **Palawija News**

Contributors are invited to submit concise summaries of significant social research related to CGPRT crops for publication. Figures (graphs or tables) may accompany the article. All articles are subject to editing to meet space limitations.

Please send all queries relating to articles in *Palawija News* to Publications Section, CGPRT Centre, Jalan Merdeka 145, Bogor 16111, INDONESIA.

*Palawija News* is distributed free of charge to interested individuals and institutions. Please send address corrections and additions to the Distribution Officer, Publications Section.

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