



Enhancing Sustainable Development of Diverse Agriculture in Viet Nam

*Dao The Anh**

Introduction

Since de-collectivization in 1988, peasant household surveys in North Viet Nam have shown that different types of households exist according to their relation with the market. A high percentage of households, especially the poor, are still at the stage of subsistence farming, they do not produce for the market. Another category of peasants sells some products at the market, not for commercial purposes but for the exchange of other products for consumption that they cannot produce themselves. This is still subsistence farming. The percentage of these households is still high, especially in North Viet Nam. For these types of households, constraints are not only the lack of market access but also the lack of services helping them to change from subsistence to commercial production. A study of the relationships between households and the market showed that the strategy of poor households is diversification while that of the rich is specialization. Specialized households have good co-ordination with marketing channels conducted by private actors, while the diversified households have an unstable connection with the market. The major constraint is the high transaction cost due to the small-scale of the farms, therefore the farm gate price is low.

Besides CGPRT crop diversification, agricultural diversification in general is the main issue of poverty reduction. Different policy analyses show that, in the context of agricultural diversification, the government should support only the main products to ensure food security and create a favourable socio-economic environment in order to stimulate the farmer dynamic. In the context of WTO, with the reduction of production costs in different commodity chains, agricultural policy should focus on better services for production and commercialization, and establish institutions for farmer co-operation.

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The agricultural policy recommendation framework has to follow the priorities of pro-poor diversification policy and institutional development. The state extension service, the most important institution for the realization of these policy initiatives, needs to be enhanced.

A study was undertaken in 2003 as a country study of the research project "Identification of Pulling Factors for Enhancing the Sustainable Development of Diverse Agriculture in Selected Asian Countries (AGRIDIV)". The study was sponsored by UNESCAP-CAPSA and was implemented by the author and a study team in Viet Nam.

The principal objective of the study is to investigate the socio-economic impacts of recent developments in the regional and global economic environment, including trade liberalization on upland agriculture at a village level and identifying constraints to the sustainable development of diversified agriculture, in particular upland agriculture based on CGPRT crops in Viet Nam. In this paper, policy recommendations which were formulated based on the study results are presented.

Policy recommendations for agricultural commodity diversification, promotion and poverty reduction

1. Rice intensification is still a major strategy in Viet Nam because the priority is food security. Agricultural diversification through hybrid rice use receives only modest promotion due to the low quality

of the product, an important state programme focuses on the introduction of hybrid rice. The prospect of hybrid rice depends on the quality of this rice because of the increasing demand for high quality rice. The capacity of hybrid rice seed production of Viet Nam will also be a determinant factor in the future.

2. A strategy for the development of whole commodity chains is necessary. With this approach, the technical aspect is one side. Social and economic problems, on the other hand, concerning product production and trading are crucial. A global value chain approach with emphasis on the emergence of market institutions is necessary for each agricultural commodity chain.

3. The reduction of production costs by developing input services to increase competitiveness will be crucial for the diversification of some crops. The case of soybean shows that the high cost of production makes domestic soybean cultivation unviable as imported produce is cheap.

4. Agro-processing is a key sector for intra-branch diversification of the raw material commodity chain. This sector will create employment in rural areas in the context that labour absorption in industry is still low. The introduction of varieties adapted for processing and for the export market is important to increase the efficiency of agro-processing. The case of potato shows the lack of varieties adapted for processing. There is also high demand for the

improvement of equipment and institutions for better quality management in the agro-processing chain in line with the high standards of the markets.

5. Cassava and maize grown on sloping land needs to be more intensive, implying that the relevant cropping systems will be important aspects of the sustainability of the production system.

6. The diversification strategy should promote alternative growing seasons in order to respond to the diverse demand. An example of this is the diversification of the peanut sector to become a winter-autumn crop too.

7. Soil evaluation in the agro-ecological zones of Viet Nam is proposed for planning crop diversification at the national level and serve as advisory for the local level through the extension system.

8. For some crops, such as potato, the potential in terms of both the area cultivated as well as the productivity per hectare could be greatly improved if more investment was available for improved seed quality and the application of advanced agronomic practices. A set of good practices should be built using a participative method to ensure adaptability and a high level of adoption.

9. The strategy for animal husbandry needs to change to help local people conserve local varieties because the demand for local products in the market shows an increasing trend as the case of maize in Son La province.

Message from the Director

Bio-energy Secondary Crops and Poverty Alleviation

With the global price of oil nearing US\$ 70 per barrel seemingly in a sustainable manner the prospect of bio-energy has changed dramatically worldwide.

In the European Union, the Scandinavian countries have managed to generate 20 per cent of their total energy needs from non-traditional sources but most other European countries are lagging far behind. France is the well-known exception because it generates most of its grid energy from nuclear power. Russia is also rapidly increasing its public energy from bio-sources, using wood chips.

In Asia, the picture is slightly different. Only Thailand has made significant headway in substituting energy from mineral sources with energy from bio sources. Some 2 million tons of cassava annually supply ethanol and initiatives are on the way to utilize palm oil and other plant sources for bio-diesel.

In other countries of Asia, progress is not as impressive in terms of actual substitution. However, many private initiatives have sprung up in the last year including a number of interesting options developed in Asia.

First, the well-known plant *Jatropha* or *Jarak*, which grows all over Asia and Africa has been recognized as a source of bio-diesel, while ICRISAT has developed sweet sorghum as a bio-source of ethanol. The advantage of these two crops is that they can be grown under very dry conditions and that they grow well on marginal soils.

This could create tremendous opportunities for populations in marginal areas if the prices are right. To ensure the prices are right, quite a few steps are necessary.

Sellers and buyers of bio-fuel need to agree on quality standards, efficient technologies for refining and energy conversion needs to be put into place while the whole process needs to be embedded in a clear policy framework.

Private and public benefits of bio-fuel use are tremendous. If all conditions are met, populations in marginal areas can at least count on a stabilized and basic income; the cost of importing oil can be brought down; options for the local generation and use of energy in isolated areas can become a reality; and last but not least the world become a cleaner place.

If there ever was a window of opportunity, where agriculture could once again prove its vital role in local development and this time its contribution to the national energy balance, it will be in the years ahead.

Taco Bottema

10. A more specific strategy is required for remote areas due to the higher percentage of poor people and the large extent of secondary crops. The policies could include improvements in local infrastructure, redistribution of land currently held by state farms, legal recognition of communal agricultural practices, and the development of social services in local languages. Policy

should also incorporate measures to improve the representation of ethnic minorities in local decision-making and build good governance in the most remote areas. This integrated package would ensure better farmer participation in the market.

11. Public budget transfers already favour poorer provinces but the rules and norms on which these transfers are based are still

ad hoc. Analyses like those in this report could be used to design more equitable allocation mechanisms, especially in the social sectors. This process needs to include capacity building for local staff in terms of better management practices.

12. The poverty programme in general is not related directly to agricultural production nor secondary crop promotion.

Normally these programmes are managed by services other than the agricultural service. A lack of co-ordination between services at the provincial level is very common. In addition, agricultural programmes are not pro-poor because they lack proper understanding of the poor in their design. Therefore, pro-poor initiatives co-ordinating two kinds of programme will benefit the poor.

Policy recommendations for rural and market institution development

1. It is unnecessary for the government to plan production zones, however, the government should assist state companies to develop the supply of raw materials. Pro-poor policies should be established through understanding the situation in each region. In general, state enterprises dealing with agri-food processing do not have the capacity to develop the supply system, restricting the access of the poor.

2. The government needs to develop service institutions accessible to the poor. A lot of research on the commodity chains of different agricultural products (value chains) has been completed and it was found that the lack of farmer and market institutions have constrained development.

3. Small-scale farmers and the poor in particular need collective action and adaptive market institutions to establish good linkages with the market.

4. The development of legislation plays an important role in contract farming promotion. In the context of smallholders, however, contract farming should be developed closely with farmer organizations. The industrial sector should approach the development of a raw material network through contracts with farmer organizations. This could resolve the problems associated with a deficient raw material processing network.

5. Different diversification needs to be promoted by policies and by research: vertical diversification is the improvement of product quality through processing and marketing development; horizontal diversification is increasing the range of products available. Intra-branch diversification through the conservation of traditional varieties is also required.

6. Developing measures for agricultural quality management. The establishment of product traceability through the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) or Geographical Indication (GI) is a means of improving the quality. Some experience shows that the poor can participate and receive greater added value from a specific product. This is one way to develop fair trade to help poor farmers.

7. The development of local institutions in terms of environmental management is crucial for the sustainable development of processing and intensive agricultural villages.

8. It is necessary to enhance the trade management capacity of agricultural production for both state and commodity chain

stakeholders. The international trade rules, which are under negotiation, include various aspects, which require capacity building and human resource development in the relevant area. They are not only tax reductions, and the removal of non-tariff barriers but also reforms on trade policies, establishing new forms of legal documents, reforms of procedures in customs, animal and plant inspection, establishment of standards and regulations of food hygiene, intellectual property and protected origin principles. Concerning agriculture, plant protection and food hygiene are the two most sensitive aspects in the negotiation of trade liberalization and these areas are a priority to the capacity building effort.

Policy recommendations for the development of the state extension service and other services

Institutional recommendations for the state extension system

1. The role of the provincial government will be more important in the near future: co-ordination of the strategic extension programme and other local extension programmes must be market oriented. In this context, even for the government's strategic programme, there is a need to improve the close linkages between performance and financial allocation by changing the existing activity monitoring and financial management.

2. The professionalism of extension services at different

levels needs to be improved. In the decentralization and socialization extension systems new partnerships between various actors and the National Agricultural Extension Center (NAEC) need to be consolidated. These contractual partnerships will assist the realization of government programmes to achieve national goals such as food security, social equity, sustainable development, and global competitiveness. These contracts need to adapt to the socio-economic context of different regions according to the contribution of the regional goal within the national goal.

3. Horizontal co-ordination between organizations inside and outside of the state extension system through the advisory council for extension at a provincial level lead by a People's Committee is also required. This co-ordination is important to guarantee the success of financial incentives in different extension flows and not only within the state extension system.

4. The state extension system has to play the role of promoting collective action and farmer organization in order to enhance the capacity to receive agricultural extension activities effectively. This organization of farmers is an important condition of applying the technology in practice. The farmer organizations can manage the support from the state and sign contracts with the extension service. They can mobilize the extension fees from farmers.

5. Research institutes should build a technical service sub-

organization and undertake contractual work with local extension services to transfer the results of their research. This service could also provide a technical and advisory service to farmer organizations.

Recommendations for the management of extension services

6. The current extension system is not based on performance but only on quantitative aspects. Improving the quality of governance at the different levels of extension system through financial incentives is necessary to increase organizational efficiency in a professional service provider system. Financial management of the extension programme has to be able adapt to the various regions.

7. Capacity building for methodological diversification, organizational knowledge, co-ordination capacity and planning of activities, and assessment capacity needs to be implemented in NAEC to improve the managerial aspect of the programme. The process of project planning and implementation needs to be improved, paying more attention to continuous supervision and consultation in the extension programme. Reducing the rate of direct investment for households who participate in project design is necessary to share the risks between farmers and the extension service when applying innovation in the extension contracts.

8. Apply innovation and capacity building regarding the methodology of extension relying

on the demand of other actors in the agricultural extension system to the farmers, combining new technology and socio-economic extension in the activities of the provincial agricultural extension system and lower levels. There is a need to organize training courses for the local authority regarding conducting, implementing, supervising and evaluating a project, providing them with knowledge related to the market economy and civil society.

9. Diversifying the financial resources for equipment of the provincial and district extension offices for better realization of extension by response to actual constraints: lack of funds, lack of appropriate training, lack of staff, lack of knowledge, lack of appropriate tools for extension activities (hand-outs, booklets) and lack of supporting tools, among others.

10. There is a need to classify the farmers by household group and by village extension club leader, and to conduct advisory extension adapted to the diverse groups. Under extension clubs in each village, a collective producer organization can be diversified according to its activities.

11. Government extension services need to conduct specific training programmes for commune and village extension workers, up to the rate 500 farmers per extension worker. This is particularly urgent to guarantee the success of the decentralization process.

12. A specific research action programme to promote socio-economic and comprehensive extension focusing on: farmer

needs diagnosis, rural market assessment, practical and managerial advice, marketing and financial advice, farmer organization and voluntary extension, credit project building and micro-credit management, evaluation of the success and impact of extension programmes, and the adaptability of extension staff is needed for provincial, district and village extension staff.

13. There is a need to apply a monitoring and evaluation system in the realization of government extension programmes and to use these results when allocating financial resources. Research development will be necessary to build the benchmarks and standards for performance assessment of extension systems in the direction of socio-economic extension. A synthesis of NGO's experiences in extension needs to be conducted by the NAEC.

14. Programme design of public extension should adapt to the diverse needs and priorities of the different regions in the country. ■

Summary: Revisiting Villages in Java: A Study of Long-term Dynamic in Socio-economic Indicators (Step-1: Exploration)

*Sediono Tjondronegoro and Gunawan Wiradi**

INTRODUCTION

Background

Poverty is a persistent issue in Indonesia. Many efforts have been made and various kinds of programmes have been launched with regard to poverty alleviation. From time to time, during the last 40 years, -based on macro data- the proportion of poor households has declined, and this trend has indeed been recognized. However, especially recently, the issue of poverty has risen again, indicating that the problem has not been adequately resolved. Why?

Among a number of possible explanations, there is one which is considered relevant, that is, information concerning what has really happened at the grassroots level may not be adequate (unlike during the decades of the 1970's and 1980's). In other words adequate micro data is needed for proper policy design to combat poverty.

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During the decades of the 1970's and 1980's, a number of longitudinal micro studies were conducted in Indonesia, especially in rural Java. Since the largest number of poor households live in rural areas, the studies of those years were centered in a number of sample villages.

Initiated by UNCAPSA, in collaboration with the Centre of Socio-Economic Analysis and Agricultural Policy, Department of Agriculture, a three-step micro study was planned based on "Revisiting Villages in Java". The three steps are, (1) Exploration; (2) More in-depth studies; and (3) Conference. The findings reported here are the results of the Step-1 activities.

Methodology

This exploration is a "rapid appraisal". Secondary quantitative data was collected from the district office from the Central Bureau Statistics (BPS) at a district level, sub-district level, and village office, as far as was available.

In accordance with the terms of reference of the study, pathways in and out of poverty are the focus, "life history" approach has been tried. In each village, three social layers were distinguished, and in each layer two households were selected and interviewed.

Selection of villages

Based on the available data from previous studies conducted between 1960-1985, three villages have been purposively selected, namely:

1. Ngandangan, Purworejo district, Pituruh sub-district, Central Java.
2. Wargabinangun, Cirebon district, Kaliwedi sub-district, West Java.
3. Cidahu, Subang district,

Subang sub-district, West Java.

Ngandangan was selected because this lowland village had been previously studied by Gunawan Wiradi in 1960/1961 and Bambang Purwanto (UGM¹ teaching staff) in 1985, enabling

a comparison between two points in time. Both Wargabinangun and Cidahu the former a lowland and the latter an upland village are ex-village samples of the Agro Economic Survey (AES).

Map of the study areas



¹ UGM: University of Gadjah Mada, Central Java, Indonesia.

General description of the three village communities

General Comparative Features

Table 1. General Conditions of the three villages studied (2005)

Village Profile	Ngandangan		Wargabinangun		Cidahu	
	In the past*	Now	In the past*	Now	In the past*	Now
Belong to sub-district	Pituruh	Pituruh	Gegesik	Kaliwedi	Subang	Subang
1. Village area (ha)	136.205	136.205	302	302	452.924	452.92
2. Distance to sub-district (km)	4	4	3	10	5	5
3. Distance to district (km)	26	26	48	48	6	6
4. Elevation a.s.l.** (m)	n.a.	n.a.	7 a.s.l.	7 a.s.l.	50 a.s.l.	50 a.s.l.
5. Topographic condition	Partly hilly	Partly hilly	Plain	Plain	Hilly	Hilly
6. Road condition	Ground	Asphalt	Gravel	Asphalt	Ground	Asphalt
7. Public transport	None	None	None	Available	None	Available
8. No. of "kampung"	3	2	4	4	4	4
9. Population	551	1 370	2 410	3 725	n.a.	3 980
10. Male	256	710	1 398	1 834	n.a.	1 967
11. Female	295	660	1 012	1 891	n.a.	2 013
12. No. of households	n.a.	264	602	935	n.a.	1 298
13. Ave. no. of household members	n.a.	5.39	4	4	3.58	3.07
14. Paddy field (ha)	36.280	37.009	288.3	270	(Larger)	340
15. Dry land (ha)	87.529	87.529	n.a.	13	n.a.	26.084
16. Settlement (ha)	11.785	11.785	n.a.	19	n.a.	25
17. Population density	405/km ²	1 000.7/km ²	803/km ²	1 233/km ²	n.a.	880/km ²
18. Agr. density	15/ha	37/ha	8.4/ha	13.8/ha	n.a.	11.7/ha
19. Cropping pattern	Rice-Secondary crops-Rice	R-Sc-R	R-R-Fallow	R-R-Fallow	R-R-Fallow	R-R-Fallow
20. Rice prod. (tons)	n.a.	6.6/ha	n.a.	6.5/ha	3/ha	n.a.
21. Existence of NGO	None	STPN-HPS	None	None	None	None

Note: *) For Ngandangan: 1960¹; for Wargabinangun and Cidahu: 1979².

***) a.s.l. = above sea level; n.a. = not available.

¹ See Wiradi, 1981. Landreform in a Javanese Village-Ngandangan: A Case Study on the Role of *Lurah* in Decision Making Process. Occasional Paper No. 04. Agro-economic Survey – Rural Dynamics Study.

² See Kasryno, 1984. Prospek Pembangunan Ekonomi Pedesaan Indonesia. Yayasan Obor, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Observable trends

Based on the short observation of three villages (Ngandangan, Wargabinangun, and Cidahu), trends exist directly and indirectly related to poverty

issues and efforts to eliminate poverty. The trends are as follows:

Worsening poverty condition

In the three villages, a worsening condition of poor

families was found. This can be observed by a fall in the exchange value of agricultural workers' wages and the narrow-land agricultural income. Current agricultural daily wages (per 3-5 hrs) (October 2005) in the three villages are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Wage rate in the three villages

Village	Hoeing wages	Planting/weeding wages
	(male) (Rp)	(female) (Rp)
Ngandangan	8 000	3 000
Wargabinangun	15 000	10 000
Cidahu	12 500	8 000

Other issues are also causing a decline in the condition of poor families, which include:

- The shift from a profit-sharing system to a rental system

The shift from share cropping to a rental system has a negative impact on poor families' access to agricultural land. This is, essentially, a matter of risk-adversity since with a rental system, bad harvests can force poor farmers into debt with the landlord. The sharecropping system offers more protection in case of crop failure.

- The shift from the *kedokan* system to a wage system (cash payments)

This wage system gives uncertain guarantees for agricultural workers, especially at harvest time, because it depends on the landowner's preference to hire agricultural workers. Under the *kedokan* system, agricultural workers, who are mostly poor families, used to have preference for harvesting work. This change has reduced the capacity of poor farmers to maintain or increase their income.

- Increasingly weaker social security

In the three villages observed, the rice-barn system, a substantial assistance to poor families has become dysfunctional or has even completely disappeared. Poor families, therefore, do not have access to this facility to secure rice loans, especially in times of scarcity.

- The increasing decline of agriculture job opportunities
The use of agricultural technology such as tractors and other machinery has reduced the amount of working hours for agricultural workers, including women, which has led to lower income.

In the face of these deteriorating living conditions, some strategies are emerging:

- Becoming migrant workers
Wargabinangun village has a high number of migrant workers, namely 300 people (working in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Hongkong). In Ngandangan, there are as few as three people working as migrant workers and in Cidahu there are around 40.

- Seeking non-agricultural work
In a number of poor families, it is known that members are looking for jobs in urban areas either as street-side food vendors or casual workers (mainly construction).

- Village level intervention
This effort has come from the village administration. Since two years ago, in Ngandangan, the rice barn system has been revitalized to overcome food problems through loans in the form of paddy to the people in need.

The government's anti-poverty programme is not target-accurate

Since the economic crisis in mid 1997, the three villages have

been familiar with government programmes, those organized by the central government, provincial government, or the municipal/district government. Central government programmes, include, for example, the Social Safety Net in the form of intensive-labour programmes, cheap rice (for poor people/*raskin*), education and so on. An example of a provincial government programme, is the *raksa desa*. West Java is providing assistance to the amount of Rp 100 million for every village in West Java. Assistance from the district government is in the form of capital. The amount varies from one regency to another². Central government programmes implemented in the three villages at present are presented in Table 3.

Poor families receive rice assistance totalling 20 kg of rice per month. This assistance is not exactly free but is heavily subsidized and therefore bought for Rp 1,000 per kilogram. In practice, poor families do not actually receive the said amount because the rice is redistributed by the local village government to more (even non-poor) families.

The reason for the redistribution of the rice for the poor is, apart from the fact that poor families cannot afford to pay Rp 20,000, it is also a strategy of the village administration to reduce social jealousy from families who do not receive the rice assistance.

² Ngandangan village, for example, receives an amount of Rp 26.5 million of financial assistance from the local government of Purworejo regency for village development; Rp 4 million for the allowance of the village officials and 2.5 million for the development of the village's rice barn.

Table 3. Government programmes and the target group reached

	The number of people (HH)	School Operational Assistance (BOS)	Poor people (HH)	KKB (HH)	Health security (Person)
Ngandangan	1 370 persons (264 HH)	According to the number of students	36	55	196
Wargabinangun	3 725 persons (935 HH)	-	380	476	1 080
Cidahu	3 980 persons (1 290 HH)	-	359	377	594

HH: Households

Table 4. Distribution of *Raskin* in the three villages

	The number of family receiving the assistance (no. of families)	The amount of rice received by the village (kg)	Distributed to (no. of families)	The amount of rice received per family (kg)
Ngandangan	36	720	144	5
Wargabinangun	380	7 600	700	5-10
Cidahu	359	7 180	-	10 litre

CONCLUDING REMARKS

General

Several concluding remarks can be drawn from this Tentative Draft Report (November 2005) based on a rapid re-evaluative field survey and interviews with village administrators as well as community respondents.

More than 25-40 years ago social stratification, now discernible by brick and painted houses, motorbikes and cars, displayed a more egalitarian lifestyle compared to today.

Population increases -despite some progress in family planning- have resulted in a decrease in employment opportunities in the agricultural sector.

Landholdings have become more unequally distributed, resulting in two alternatives for the small-scale farmers and landless labourers: (a) either accepting a patron-client relationship, or (b) leaving the village for off- or non-farm employment opportunities.

Out migration from native villages usually means heading

for distant urban centres with a preference for the nation's capital of Jakarta, or leaving the country on labour contracts.

The rush towards both opportunities is a clear reflection of the unemployment pressure as well as the attraction of relatively extraordinary wages, for which great risks are taken such as family separation, divorces, inhuman treatment, etc.

Agriculture

Landholdings of an average of 0.3-0.5 ha do not enable a peasant family of four to meet their daily food and other requirements for one season even after a rice harvest. Any agricultural revitalization programme, therefore, needs to correct the proportionality of production factors.

Due to the free market system land purchases by richer people/farmers in surrounding villages is increasing. The urban rich refrain from making investments in agriculture.

The existence of irrigation systems is most helpful, enabling farmers to cultivate secondary

crops during the dry season.

Upland areas tend to be reserved for multi-year horticultural crops, fruits and other marketable trees (for timber).

A combination of accessibility to irrigation water and upland cultivation over and above a rice harvest from 1 hectare of paddy field seems to guarantee an income of well over US\$ 2.00 per day.

Although organic farming has been popularized and practised by a few farmers the problem remains the availability of animal dung/manure.

HYPOTHESES

Finally, from the brief observation outlined above, a number of hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

1. More often than not, macro statistics do not reflect the grass root reality.
2. Poverty criteria determined by the central government do not always match the peoples' perception of poverty.

3. Family impoverishment demands greater sacrifices from women.
4. Patron-client relationships as a traditional social institution, are disappearing.
5. Villages able to cultivate secondary crops tend to increase economic sustainability.
6. Village institutional capacity and village official ability contribute much to determining the success or failure of poverty reduction.
7. Uniformity of administrative structure in rural villages tends to weaken the effectiveness of local institutions.
8. The strategy of the people in taking pathways out of poverty varies in accordance with their socio-economic environmental conditions.
9. Wherever there is a scarcity of lowlying fields, irrigation tends to be preserved. ■

CAPSA News and Activities

AGRIDIV

As a final activity of project implementation, a series of in-country seminars were organized in each participating country during January to March 2006. The dates of the seminars were as follows:

Thailand: 16-17 January
 India: 20-21 February
 Bangladesh: 27 February
 Lao PDR: 2-3 March
 Myanmar: 7 March
 Indonesia: 23 March
 Viet Nam: 9-10 March
 Sri Lanka: 20-21 March

During the seminars, the findings and recommendations of the AGRIDIV country study were presented to the participants, who were policy planners, research managers and other stakeholders in poverty alleviation issues in each country. Two key topics regarding the relevancy of the recommendations and applicability of the experience of

successful cases were discussed by all participants.

The in-country seminar in Thailand entitled "Poverty Alleviation through Diversified Agriculture in Thailand", was held in Central Duangtawan Hotel, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 16-17 January 2006. The seminar was inaugurated by Ms. Anchalee Ooraikul, Secretary General, Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), followed by presentations of the major findings of the country study in Thailand by the national experts. Country study highlights in Indonesia and Lao PDR were presented by respective national experts to compare the cases with Thailand. Two local cases focusing on agricultural diversification and poverty alleviation issues were introduced by the researchers in Thailand. Each presentation was followed by discussions, from which the major conclusion was that the participants recognized the usefulness of agricultural diversification for poverty

alleviation and future policy implementation should consider secondary crop development as an important policy focus, especially in disadvantaged areas. ■

IS/DB

Database

In January 2006, the Database section published a CD-ROM containing statistical data and CAPSA publications. The statistical data covers eight countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam) focusing on secondary crops at national, provincial and district levels. The time series for most data is from 1960-2004.

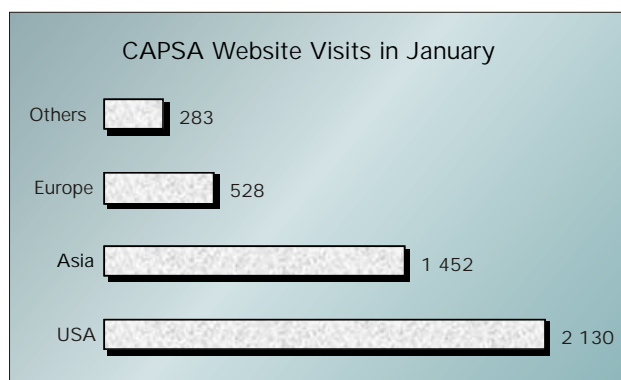
CAPSA publications included on the CD were those published up until 2005. Publications published from 1997 onwards are available in PDF format.

Our worldwide website visitors

*Robin Bourgeois**

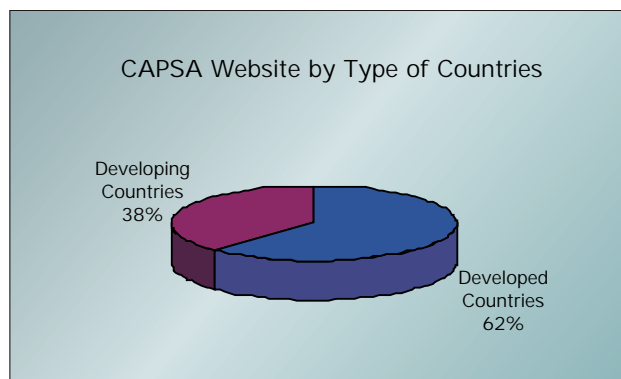
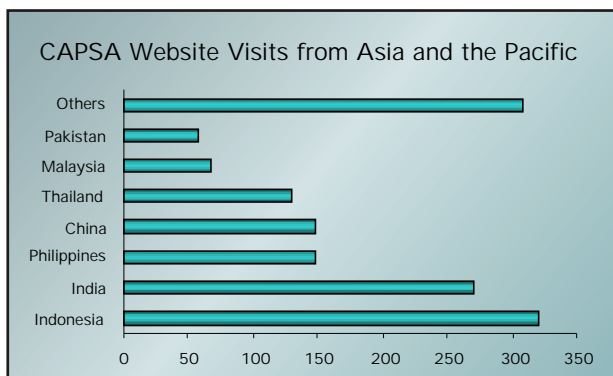
Website visits from 97 countries

In January, the CAPSA website received more than 4,500 visits from 97 different countries including 134 from Africa and 74 from Latin America, showing the worldwide reach of the Centre.



More than half of the visits to the CAPSA website originated from the United States of America, while another third came from Asian countries. Europe's share is comparatively lower with only 12 per cent of the visitors.

In Asia, five countries (Indonesia, India, the Philippines, China and Thailand) accounted 70 per cent of the visits to the website. There are clear relationships with the size of population and the level of access to Internet services.

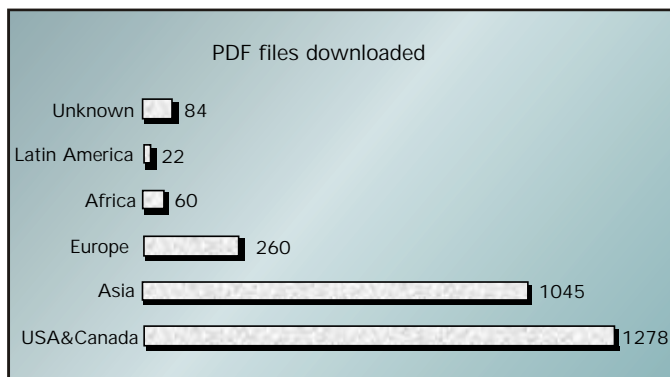


As a result of the influence of the United States of America, developed countries' visits reached 62 per cent of total visits. This raises the question of the support these countries provide to the Centre. The biggest user (USA) does not contribute a single dollar to the operation of the Centre. The same applies to a group of five developed countries (Australia, United Kingdom, Germany, The Netherlands, and Canada) who represent 40 per cent of the users when excluding United States of America and Asia/Pacific countries.

* IS/DB Programme Leader, UNESCAP-CAPSA, Bogor, Indonesia.

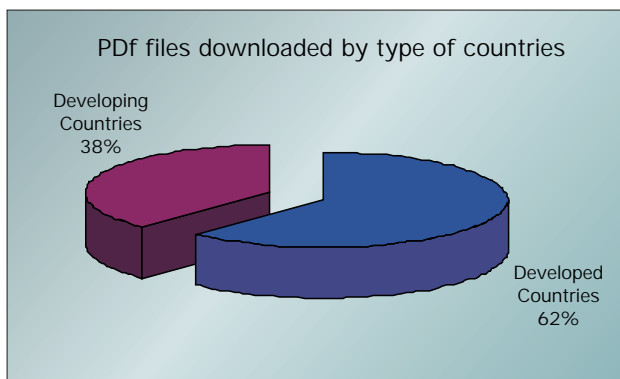
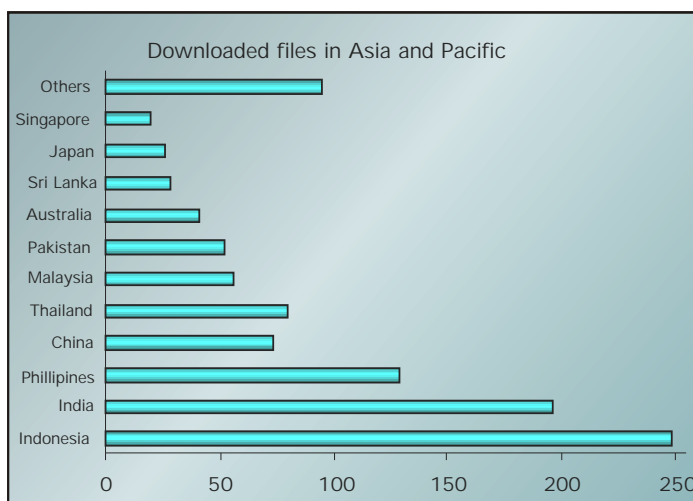
Downloaded files to 88 countries

During the same month visitors from 88 countries downloaded more than 2,700 files in PDF format [these include Monographs, Working Papers, CGPRT Flash (CAPSA's monthly bulletin) and Palawija News issues].



Figures show a more equitable balance between USA + Canada and Asia/Pacific with respective shares of 48 per cent and 40 per cent of total downloads. Europe loses ground with less than 10 per cent. Asian visitors have the highest rate of downloads topping USA and Europe.

In Asia, the same five countries are the biggest users of CAPSA publications with 70 per cent of downloaded files. However, Australia, Japan, Sri Lanka and Singapore also appear as regular users. Visitors from no less than 27 different Asian countries downloaded at least one PDF file from CAPSA website in January 2006.



However, the share between developed and developing countries remains remarkably constant. The relative change in balance between the number of visits and downloaded files between USA and Asia is compensated by the fact that visitors from developed Asian countries (Australia, Singapore, Japan) access more of the Centre's publications.

This further raises the issue of the support developed countries provide to the Centre activities, in particular CAPSA research and studies, activities that generate the documents they download for free. ■

Field Research Preliminary Results in Java

UNCAPSA has begun work on its latest project "Revisiting villages in Java" to seek substantial insights into the long-term dynamics on poverty (refer to article in this issue). The latest fieldwork was conducted from 30th January until 19th February 2006 by two researchers in Ambal village, Karangobar sub-district, Banjarnegara, Central Java. This village was surveyed 25 years ago by Dr. William G. Wolters from Nijmegen, The Netherlands on the dynamics of the economic conditions of poor people in the village. For the first two days, the researchers were accompanied by two observers; Jacque Marzin from CIRAD-TERA ARENA, France, and Robin Bourgeois from UNCAPSA; to gain a quick overview of upland village life in Java.

The fieldwork itself was conducted through an explorative survey. Firstly, data was collected on the general socio-economic features of the village; and secondly, people were interviewed at the household level. Interviews with three generations of families were conducted to discover the pathways out of poverty. Around 10 families were selected with different levels of economic status according to village perception.

Most people in the village are farmers. Their main crop is maize, which they consume as their main daily meal. They also plant "cabe rawit" (chili) and

albasia trees on their land to fulfil their other daily necessities by selling their products. Most of the first generation in the families are retired and have become part-time farmers on their children's land after passing on their land to their children. The second generation work the land and continue their parents' planting system. Their limited size of land, which cannot sufficiently produce although the crops are diversified, has made them try other work, namely as migrants in the cities. Finding employment as construction workers or housemaids are their main choices, which are considered compatible with their low level of education as elementary school graduates. Male farmers are keen to work in the cities temporarily while waiting harvesting, but female migrants stay longer in the cities, especially those who are still single. Some of the third generation have decided to work in the cities while some are still studying in elementary school. Their perception of being poor is the inability to send their children to higher education than elementary school. School is a luxury for them although the cost of schooling has decreased through government subsidies, namely "Bantuan Operasional Sekolah" (School Operational Assistance).

The results of this survey, which are hypothetical pathways, will serve as inputs for phase 2 of this project on the identification of pathways in and out of poverty. Meanwhile other surveys are being conducted in several other villages in Java.

Another survey conducted during the fieldwork was to

study the role of local institutions in the implementation of poverty reduction programmes. This part of the research was compiled as an objective of one of the researchers, Indriana Nugraheni in completing her thesis, but is still based on the main objective of the UNCAPSA project. She conducted her research in two villages, Ambal and Slati, in the same sub-district. Both villages still use the same village organizational structure as before the decentralization era. Not much change has occurred in these villages. Most poverty reduction programmes that have been implemented in these villages came from the government, only a few programmes have come from villagers' initiatives but they were also financially supported by Gol.

(Reported by Hasrat Madiadipura and Indriana Nugraheni). ■

New Interns in UNESCAP-CAPSA, Bogor, Indonesia

Indriana Nugraheni

From 13th January until 15th March 2006, UNCAPSA welcomed Indriana Nugraheni - a masters student in International Development Studies from Wageningen University in the Netherlands - to work on her thesis. Her thesis follows one UNCAPSA project "Revisiting villages: a study of long-term dynamics in poverty". Her thesis focuses on the subject of the role of local institutions in the implementation of poverty reduction programmes, the case study of villages in Java,

study of villages in Java, Indonesia.

She chose Ambal and Slatri villages in upland Karangobar sub-district, Banjarnegara, Central Java for her research location, which includes one of the villages in the UNCAPSA project. She conducted her fieldwork from 30 January until 19 February 2006 together with one UNCAPSA researcher. She worked on the report for UNCAPSA over the next four weeks. Not only did she conduct her own survey but she was also involved in the survey for UNCAPSA. ■

Gabriela Ezeta Ramos

Gabriela Ezeta Ramos is a Biology student from Universidad Nacional Agraria la Molina, Lima, Peru. She came to UNCAPSA on 30th January 2006 and stayed until 28th February 2006, enrolling in many of UNCAPSA's activities as an intern.

Gabriela's first assignment was to help convert survey information into an Excel format. The next step was to process the data using SPSS with assistance from UNCAPSA researchers. With the output generated from SPSS she wrote a report that included a statistical analysis of many of the variables found in the survey. Gabriella had difficulties understanding Indonesian and that made the process of understanding the information in the surveys longer. Gabriella also had the opportunity to research a topic that was new to her, the use of biomass as

renewable energy. Having to look for institutions in Asia and the Pacific that work in this aspect she noticed how many countries are already using biomass technology to replace non-renewable fuels and the importance of enforcing research on the subject.

After a month of work Gabriella leaves UNCAPSA with a better understanding on how the institution works, having practiced her statistical and computer skills and knowing a few more Indonesian words and phrases. ■

Hitoshi Yonekura

(Professor, Department of Resource and Environmental Economics, Graduate School of Agricultural Science, Tohoku University, Japan)

Professor Yonekura attended the CAPSA office from 13th through 17th March 2006 as part of his travels for in-country seminars held by AGRIDIV project which aims to disseminate the fruits of the research project comprising eight countries. After the seminars in Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam he arrived in Bogor. During his stay, he penned a chapter for the final project report. In the draft, he emphasized the role of the markets and focused on local entrepreneurs who could open new market avenues for secondary crops, distribute and process them, and ultimately contribute to poverty alleviation.

Recently, secondary crops have become more attractive by alcohol and other chemical

industries reflecting the ethos of sustainable development through resource recycling. The demand from the large-scale industrial sector may radically change existing farming systems, and the distribution and local market structure. A critical issue is how to make such changes or momentum conducive to poverty alleviation and pertinent in the transformation of traditional rural economies. He studied linkages among maize farmers, traders and large-scale feed industries in East Java in 1990 with the results published in one of the monograph series of CAPSA (formerly the CGPRT centre). Such industrial uses will become much more widespread in developing Asia.

More than fifteen years have passed since the days when Yonekura worked for this office. The atmosphere remains the same although only a few staff members still work here. The layout of office rooms, desks and others is almost the same. The faded map of West Java on the wall is the same map he saw ever day 15 years ago. Various voices and sounds made him feel as though he was still working on the project team of fifteen years ago. The same and familiar centre has been renovated under the directorship of Dr. Taco Bottema. Yonekura deeply hopes that this centre will fulfil its mission and contribute to the reduction of poverty and alleviation of distressing circumstances in Asia and the Pacific. ■



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ISBN 979-9317-54-1

CAPSA

The Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops' Development in Asia and the Pacific (CAPSA) is a subsidiary body of UNESCAP. It was established as 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) in 1981 and was renamed CAPSA in 2004.

Objective

CAPSA promotes a more supportive policy environment in member countries to enhance the living conditions of rural poor populations in disadvantaged areas, particularly those who rely on secondary crop agriculture for their livelihood, and to promote research and development related to agriculture to alleviate poverty in the Asian and Pacific region.

Functions

1. Co-ordination of socio-economic and policy research on secondary crops.
2. Networking and partnership with other international organizations and key stakeholders.
3. Research and analysis of trends and opportunities with regard to improving the economic status of rural populations.
4. Production, packaging and dissemination of information and successful practices on poverty reduction.
5. Dissemination of information and good practices on poverty reduction measures.
6. Training of national personnel, particularly national scientists and policy analysts.
7. Advisory services.

Palawija News

Contributors are invited to submit summaries that cover recent socio-economic or policy aspects related to research or development of secondary crops and rural poverty alleviation in Asia and the Pacific. Submitted summaries should be sent by e-mail to library@uncapsa.org or by regular mail. Articles must be in English.

Submitted summaries should not exceed eight pages, including graphs, tables, references and author information.

Palawija News is distributed free of charge to interested individuals and institutions. Please send address corrections and additions to: Publications Section, UNESCAP-CAPSA, Jl. Merdeka 145, Bogor 16111, Indonesia.

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