Outcome Report
30 – 31 July 2019
Bangkok, Thailand

The ASEAN Guidelines and Action Plan on Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry

Workshop on Operationalizing the Action Plan
The workshop and this outcome report were supported and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the German Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL).
Executive Summary

The ASEAN Guidelines and Action Plan on Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry Workshop brought together more than 60 participants from ASEAN governments, the global and regional private sector, civil society organizations, farmer organizations and other key stakeholders. The aim was to share experiences and establish consensus on the Guidelines and Action Plan; learn from one another through discussions on challenges and opportunities; and generate new ideas for interested stakeholders to implement in support of the ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (“ASEAN RAI Guidelines” or the “Guidelines”).

As the demand for food increases due to growing populations, rising incomes and urbanizing environments across ASEAN, agriculture will continue to attract foreign and domestic investment, particularly in developing regions. The Guidelines seek to attract responsible investment, balance rights and interests of all stakeholders, create a guidance framework and establish a reference for behaviors and decisions.

The workshop was structured around presentations and small group breakouts to allow participants to contribute to topics in which they shared expertise and interest and entered into practical discussions. The two-day workshop provided insights and clarity on how the ASEAN RAI Guidelines could be implemented along various themes selected by participants: Intra-ASEAN Investment in Agriculture and related value chains, Contract Farming, Institutional Capacity Development, Climate Change Action and Rights, Jobs, Livelihood and Gender. The lively debate and proposals for implementation were incorporated from previous setting up processes and initiatives.

The ASEAN RAI Guidelines were adopted at the 40th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) last year. The 10 individual guidelines give an overarching view on what constitutes responsible investing and provide, in one consolidated document, detailed best agricultural practices. The intention is that the Guidelines will become the quintessential approach to larger-scale investments in the region.

This report provides an overview of the main takeaways and outcomes of the workshop, and is intended for the participants, partners, stakeholders and peers to provide context, information and ideas and thereby encourage action.

Learn more and access the Guidelines here
Session Summaries

Welcome and Opening Remarks

In the welcome remarks by Pham Quang Minh, Assistant Director, Sectoral Development Directorate and Head of Food, Agriculture and Forestry (FAF) Division, ASEAN Secretariat, he reiterated the strong support towards implementing the Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry Guidelines within the ASEAN member states. On behalf of the ASEAN Secretariat, he set an inclusive, action-focused tone for the workshop – encouraging participants to share their perspectives and contribute ideas to create a roadmap for adoption.

Michael Riggs, Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) Team Leader and Capacity Development Officer, FAO, highlighted the need to improve investment within the agriculture and food sectors. He noted that in order to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty as per the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 2, it would require additional investments of US$265 billion annually between 2016 and 2030. This investment needs to happen correctly and in the right way (in other words, be “responsible”).

Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia, emphasized the importance of increasing awareness of the Guidelines so that they become standard operating procedure for large-scale investment in the region. Through the workshop, he hoped to instill a sense of involvement and collaboration, to co-create and roll out the roadmap for operationalizing the action plan. Ultimately, his goal was to gain buy-in from the various key stakeholders and convert ideas and discussions shared over the two days into action.

1. See Annex 1: Agenda and Annex 2: Participants
Backdrop to the ASEAN RAI Guidelines

Chaired by Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director, Trade & Investment Facilitation, Mekong Institute for Development and Cooperation, this session provided a backdrop to the creation and development of the ASEAN RAI Guidelines. Presenters shared insights on the principles of the Guidelines and updates on ongoing initiatives.

Grahame Dixie set the scene by highlighting the fact that rapidly increasing prices of agricultural commodities have worried food-importing countries since the mid-2000s, but also created an environment for potentially profitable investments. This time period led to the emergence of agricultural investment funds and increased foreign direct investments (FDI) in large-scale farming operations. The evolution of global investing practices prompted a need for stronger principles for responsible agricultural investments.

Grahame also highlighted the challenges faced by smaller agricultural businesses seeking investment. Many struggle to entice banks or portfolio investors to invest in their projects. At the same time, smallholders often experience the greatest financial loss when investments go wrong, and therefore it would be irresponsible to encourage them to invest in operations with uncertain outcomes. Nevertheless, there are experienced financial resources in ASEAN that have a deep understanding of the sector and can improve operational efficiencies, positively impact communities, promote jobs and investments for local people, and provide ongoing consultation to quickly resolve problems. The challenge is connecting these financial resources with small businesses and smallholders.

Grahame emphasized the importance of forums that bring together the private and public sectors, producers, and civil society to understand priorities and challenges and help governments make better decisions on investments. In the context of the Guidelines and in partnership with IISD and FAO, Grow Asia aims to create platforms for different stakeholders with the shared goal of improving agricultural operations, outputs, and conditions in ASEAN.

“The Guidelines distil global best practice, and through them we can ensure agribusiness investments are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and inclusive.”

Grahame Dixie
Executive Director,
Grow Asia

2. Presentation slides from the Workshop can be accessed under Past Events at: www.aseanraiguidelines.org/upcoming-event
Michael Riggs spoke on responsible investment and the Committee on World Food Security’s Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI). The CFS-RAI principles are a foundation of the ASEAN RAI Guidelines.

Responsible investment in agriculture and food systems is defined as the creation of productive assets and capital formation, oriented to support the realization of food security, better nutrition and sustainable development, including increased production and productivity. It requires respecting, protecting and promoting human rights, including the progressive realization of the right to adequate food and other relevant human rights instruments.

Michael called for increased responsible investment in agriculture and food systems, explaining how it can benefit farmers, companies and governments. It can contribute to the SDGs, create sustainable livelihoods, increase productivity and respond to business opportunities created by growing the demand for food in the region and globally.

Yet, many developing countries continue to suffer from underinvestment in the agricultural sector. Michael stressed the importance of not only more investment, but of better, higher quality investment in agriculture.

“Investing in agriculture is one of the most effective strategies for reducing hunger and poverty and generating economic growth.”

Michael Riggs
Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) Team Leader and Capacity Development Officer, FAO
The ASEAN RAI: Key Elements of the Guidelines and the Action Plan (Interactive Session)³

The Guidelines are built on detailed research, targeted at governments and investors who have a key role to play in implementing them at a national level. Following their approval, the aim is now to amplify the Guidelines’ reach to government, investors, smallholders, SMEs, communities, home states and civil society groups. Other plans to build momentum and sustain conversation include organizing country programs, regional events and learning and training programs. The goal is to share expertise and information among stakeholders.

Hafiz Mirza, Senior Associate, Agriculture and Investment, IISD highlighted the macroeconomic trends and development indicators that are attracting greater intraregional and foreign investments into ASEAN, including in agriculture. By providing a range of indicators since 1967 (GDP, ASEAN share of world GDP, ASEAN food production index, declining poverty rate, urbanization etc.), he highlighted that South East Asia is almost unique among developing regions because 50 years since ASEAN’s inception it has the wherewithal and capacity to fulfil the goals and objectives of the ASEAN RAI Guidelines. Of course, there are regional differences which means that the implementation of the RAI Guidelines has to be targeted and country-specific.

³ Presentation slides from the Workshop can be accessed under Past Events at: www.aseanraiguide.org/upcoming-event
At the request of the ASEAN Secretariat in 2017, and with support from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the World Bank, IISD and Grow Asia began drafting the ASEAN RAI Guidelines in early 2018, building on both the CFS-RAI and considerable evidence-based research on best practices. The process of developing the Guidelines included several drafts, meetings and consultations, including meetings in Bali and Singapore, and feedback from 250 organizations across the region. The ASEAN RAI Guidelines were adopted by AMAF in October 2018. Since then, an Action Plan has been developed (and adopted by SOM-AMAF), disseminated and consultation events have been organized regionally (including this workshop). Click here for further details in the session’s slides

It is crucial to put in place a system whereby the Guidelines can be refined and adapted as new knowledge and experience emerges from their practical implementation, as well as from ongoing trends and developments in a fast-changing region. Both the ASEAN RAI and the implementation program are therefore ‘living documents’ which will evolve over time.

Looking forward, each country program will be developed in close cooperation with the pertinent ASEAN Member States. Some countries in the region may require (i) a review of their existing regulations and policies, and (ii) guidance to national governments on how the Guidelines can be best adapted and refined to facilitate a smooth and integrated implementation. IISD and FAO are both already engaged with some aspects of such technical assistance in the region.

Doris Capistrano, Regional Advisor, ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC) discussed the need to link and mainstream the Guidelines to existing processes and mechanisms across ASEAN’s pillars and sectoral divisions. For instance, within ASEAN Member States, significant opportunities exist for applying the Guidelines in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

To leverage the Guidelines, tools, metrics and institutional arrangements have to be agreed upon to track progress. There is also a need for scholarly work on the ongoing development and learning from the implementation of the Guidelines.
Marlene Ramirez, Secretary General, Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA) underscored the necessity of translating global mandates into action at regional and national levels. Complementing other relevant ASEAN guidelines and initiatives such as the Roadmap for Enhancing the Role of Agricultural Cooperatives in Agricultural Global Value Chains will allow for easier translation into action.

Importantly, a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders would be incomplete without identifying capacities and needs that are important for the youth, young farmers and agripreneurs in carrying out and benefiting from investments in agriculture and food systems.

Esther Penunia, Secretariat General, Asian Farmers’ Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) acknowledged the benefits and risks of agricultural investments to farmers in the region. One particular application of the Guidelines would be to enable farmer organizations and co-operatives to understand and be able to use the Guidelines to reinforce their relationship and negotiation positions with larger-scale agribusiness investors. In the case of contract farming, for example, the Guidelines can serve as a framework for strengthening farmers’ bargaining power and shared decision making on quality standards, valuing women’s work, attracting youth to agriculture and utilizing biodiversity-friendly technologies.

Justine Sylvester, Technical Advisor, Village Focus International (VFI) pointed out that smaller companies and SMEs often lack the technical knowledge and resources to fully implement the Guidelines; this is where partnerships have the potential to fill the gaps. For example, despite existing global guidance with respect to tenure of land (as in the Free, Prior and Informed Consent FPIC right in the UNDRIP), land tenure risk remains an area of concern for most of the private sector. Companies that VFI has partnered with have consistently requested capacity building on key aspects of Guideline #4: (1) land rights, local tenure systems, land laws and regulations, and (2) how to implement community engagement following FPIC principles.

Partnerships have huge potential to play a role in operationalizing the Guidelines – but they must be based on mutual trust, tailored to companies’ needs, and ideally have third-party funding to prevent communities’ dependence on external funding.
Interventions on the Guidelines and Action Plan (Summaries)

Participants from government ministries, the private sector and civil society shared their individual perspectives on how the Guidelines can be adopted.

**Dr Margaret C. Yoovatana**  
Senior Policy and Plan Specialist, Planning and Technical Division, Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), Thailand

“We should create synergies between existing programs. Responsible investment is a key component for all initiatives and cannot work in isolation; it requires a multi-stakeholder approach and dialogue platforms.”

**Ms Bernalin Cadayong**  
Project Development Officer III, Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture, Philippines

“Higher budget allocation and investment in research and development will contribute to the improvement of our agriculture and fisheries sector. The information and technologies that will be developed and optimized thru R&D can guide our national and local agencies in the strategic implementation of the Guidelines.”

**Mr Souvanthong Namvon**  
Deputy Division Head, Department of Technical Extension and Agro-Processing, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR

“It is important to involve the private sector in adopting the Guidelines to benefit smallholder farmers. We should look at ways to motivate and incentivize companies and investors by showing them the financial results of responsible investment.”

**Dr Kamariah Binti Long**  
Deputy Director General of Research, Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI)

“Malaysia’s agriculture sector has a sustainable transformation program that is aligned with the Guidelines. Policies are in place to tackle issues and address investment challenges, and we have seen positive results with the overall growth and economic development of smallholder agriculture.”
Myanmar has a master agricultural research plan encompassing both the country’s agriculture strategies and SDGs. This is closely aligned with the Guidelines. We need to involve key stakeholders to better understand their needs and drive a strong agricultural ecosystem.

Dr Su Su Win
Director, Department of Agriculture Research, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Myanmar

To effectively implement the Guidelines, there are three phases – firstly, recognize them at a national level and conduct awareness programs for all stakeholders. Secondly, integrate them into ongoing strategic plans, policies and regulations. Finally, set clear goals, scope and performance indicators.

Dr Mak Soeun
Deputy Director General, General Directorate of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Cambodia

Vietnam has been trying to increase investment in smallholder farming to develop the agriculture sector. We have seen increasing demand for high quality and better crop output, and the Guidelines will play a key role in scaling the country’s agriculture sector.

Dr Nguyen Anh Phong
Director, Information Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD), Vietnam

To enable effective decision-making on responsible investment in the private sector, we need to understand the gaps and what can be done to ensure the Guidelines are used effectively. There are already several ongoing initiatives, and it will be important to join up the dots and integrate programs where possible.

Mr Duke Hipp
Director of Public Affairs, CropLife
Ms Hataikan Kamolsirisakul  
Group Strategy Director and Chief of Staff, Thai Wah PCL

“We connect with farmers one-on-one to better understand their pain points and improve their productivity and livelihoods. We believe this cannot be done in silos, so we work with government, universities and other companies.”

Ms Nguyen Thi Anh Hong  
Vice Chairwoman, Vietnam Tea Association

“We need to make the Guidelines easy for stakeholders to understand and see the relevance of why they have to do it. Identifying pioneers who can talk about them is a good place to start, and we can build farmer capacity by conducting workshops and helping them teach other producers as well. Ultimately, it lies in the hands of the government to implement the Guidelines, build them into regulations and share the results.”

Mr Shubert Ciencia  
ASEAN Engagement Coordinator, Oxfam

“Oxfam is open to collaborating with like-minded stakeholders to nurture policy environments for responsible investment. In ASEAN, Oxfam aims to advance women’s economic empowerment and it looks to the Guidelines to contribute to the realization of the “Action Agenda on Mainstreaming Women’s Economic Empowerment in the ASEAN” that was adopted at the Manila ASEAN Summit in 2017.”

Mr Sok Sotha  
Lead Founder & Managing Director, Cambodian Farmer Association of Agricultural Producers

“Engagement at the local and sub-national levels is key as we need to build the capacity of farmers, farmers’ organizations and the communities to help them negotiate with others, including policymakers. Stakeholders should consider amending existing policies in response to information gathered from farmers.”
Mr Rizal Algamar
Indonesia Country Director,
The Nature Conservancy

“The Guidelines are a timely addition to ASEAN’s agriculture sector. We must clearly state each goal and intended outcome of the Guidelines to provide clarity and ensure lasting, effective partnerships.”

Other Interventions: Selected Participant Suggestions for Implementing the Guidelines

Below is a summary of participants’ thoughts on how to implement the Guidelines at the country and regional levels:

- Design programs to incentivize the private sector.
- While the Guidelines are meant for everyone, there is a no one-size-fits-all approach. Countries should review the Guidelines and identify the different mechanisms that work best for them.
- Continue building capacity of farmers to appeal to investors – the Guidelines will be the supporting pillar to ensure the farmer-investor relationship remains strong.
- Consider using a carrot and stick approach. This is to ensure that rules are followed to protect vulnerable groups.
- Simplify the Guidelines to make them easy to remember and, therefore, implement. Translate the Guidelines to existing projects to better support efforts already underway.
- The Guidelines are general, and it is important to develop a strategy for adoption and implementation at a country level to ensure that they are fit for purpose in every market.
- Key indicators of the Guidelines should be elevated and incorporated into existing laws and regulations to speed up adoption.
- Identify ways to raise consumer awareness on the importance of the Guidelines.
Summary and Outcomes of Breakout Sessions

In smaller groups, participants discussed how to operationalize the ASEAN RAI Guidelines, by tackling key challenges and brainstorming opportunities, approaches and solutions.

1. Engaging Intra-ASEAN Investment and Consumers in Regional Value Chains

**Facilitators:**

- Hafiz Mirza
  IISD

- Christine Violaga
  Grameen Foundation

- Allert van den Ham
  SNV Laos & Myanmar

**Challenge 1:**

Getting the private sector, especially ASEAN foreign investors, on board to acknowledge and use the Guidelines and understand the gaps that the Guidelines are trying to address.

**Solutions:**

- Define the mutual benefits for each investor. Create a shared model to build relationships and trust with farmers. Countries should adapt the Guidelines to ensure they are relevant for their respective markets.
- Conduct a market gap analysis to identify the issues and challenges that will inform research and development priorities.
- Get consumer organizations on board as to a) inform the producers/retailers that are interested in taking RAI into account on what triggers consumers when it comes to making decisions and b) educate consumers about the benefits of RAI-based products and production processes. Prioritization of the (ASEAN) consumer value chain, including certifications, standards and food safety, will drive change.

**Principal players:**

- ASEAN Business Council Advisory, ABAC-Inclusive Business, AWEN – ASEAN Women Entrepreneurship Network, Banks, Consumer organizations, Farmers’ organizations

**What is needed to boost likelihood of success:**

- Increase awareness of the Guidelines through media and government campaigns. Make the campaign more attractive and easy to remember.
- Create video to show how processing/sourcing and packaging can = compliance to RAI standards.
- Promote farmers as active players in the value chain. Raise funds to educate farmers on the RAI standards, as well as boost their business and financial literacy.
- Find ambassadors in industry/the private sector who will be able to push and continue to promote the RAI Guidelines.
- Consider an annual gathering to touch base, share learning and showcase successful applications of the Guidelines.

**Challenge (and Opportunity) 2:**

The level of consumer awareness is not at the same level as industry experts. Greater consumer awareness – and ASEAN consumer-driven change given regional value chains – is an opportunity for ensuring a higher uptake of the Guidelines by regional investors.
2. Promoting Responsible Investment in Contract Farming

**Facilitators:**

**John Meadows**
Mekong Region Land Governance

**Souvanthong Namvong**
Department of Technical Extension and Agro-Processing (DTEAP), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)

**Prak Sereyvath**
Cambodian Institute for Research and Rural Development (CIRRD)

**Challenge 1:**

Promoting responsible investment in the context of contract farming, recognizing that there are different models of contract farming.

**Solution:** Narrow the key Guidelines and build in safeguards that are relevant to contract farming.

**Principal players:**
- Public sector, NGOs, Private sector, Investors and Lenders

**What is needed to boost likelihood of success:**
- Create awareness of the Guidelines among key stakeholders.
- Promote the benefits of contract farming and how it produces positive outcomes.
- Support farmers when it comes to financing.
- Provide technical assistance for farmers and investors where needed.

**“Worked example”**
Cambodia established a Coordination Committee for Agricultural Production Contract (CCAPC) to develop policies and strategic plans that support and promote contract farming; facilitate and strengthen harmonization between contracting parties; and intervene in, or reconcile arguments or conflicts relating to agricultural production contracts.

**Challenge 2:**

There is a lack of trust between farmers and businesses.

**Solution:** Develop a policy and legal framework which clearly states the terms between both parties to abide by and to raise capacity of farmers.

**Challenge 3:**

There is a power imbalance between farmers and businesses.

**Solution:** Involve third parties such as the government and CSOs to mediate and provide a balanced perspective and opinion.
3. Building Climate Change Action into the Implementation of the ASEAN RAI Guidelines

Facilitators:

**Doris Capistrano**
ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC)

**Huynh Tien Dung**
IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative

**Kanokwan Chodchoey**
Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA)

Challenge:
Climate change has affected every sector, not just agriculture. Prevalent key issues include depletion of water resources; persistent drought; ongoing temperature rise that has led to the existence of new pests and disease outbreaks; soil degradation; saline-affected areas caused by higher sea levels; carbon dioxide emissions from land development; and environmental destruction caused by biodiversity reduction and crop burning.

Solution:
Create a platform that can address effects of climate change in a holistic, ecosystem-focused approach and integrate all solutions in one package. This platform should contain information on:

- Breeding technologies – new disease and pest-resistant varieties and focus on the use of resilient crops.
- Production technologies – seedling nurseries and irrigation systems.
- Sustainable, integrated, resilient practices and systems in production, processing, marketing of crops and products from farms, fisheries and forests.
- How to build capacity of farmers through crop protection, integrated pest management and soil management.
- How to engage multiple stakeholders and divide expertise into knowledge, investment and capacity-building groups to tackle climate-related challenges.
Principal players:
- ASEAN Multisectoral Framework for Climate Change, ASEAN climate-related Working Groups (e.g. Social Forestry, Agri Cooperatives)

What is needed to boost likelihood of success:
- Add the Guidelines into the deliberations of all related ASEAN Working Groups.
- Build a multi-stakeholder platform to connect the different stakeholders.

“Worked examples”:
Outbreak of pests and disease
- Gather public resources on research and innovation, emergency response systems and pest management guidelines.
- Leverage public sectors’ capabilities in crop insurance, investment on biocontrol agents, and training of farmers to reduce the risk and control the spread of pests and disease.
- Educate producers with their cooperatives and organizations to conduct research and risk assessment, diversify their crops, and support implementation of the actions to eradicate pests and disease.
- Form and strengthen groups for effective partnership between public and private sectors.
4. Creating Effective Conditions and Institutional Capacity for RAI: The Role of Regional Learning Programs

**Facilitators:**

- **Michael Riggs**
  FAO

- **Marlene Ramirez**
  AsiaDHRRA

- **Madhurjya Kumar Dutta**
  Mekong Institute for Development and Cooperation

**Challenge 1:**

Governments in the region need to learn ways to integrate RAI Guidelines into program and policy development.

**Solution:**
Support capacity development to offer educational and sharing sessions on the Guidelines to government representatives to help them better identify ways to adopt and implement the Guidelines.

**Principal players:**
Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Departments of Planning and Investment, Departments and Ministries of Finance, Parliamentarians, Investment promotion boards, Field agents, Project development staff

**What is needed to boost likelihood of success:**
- Institutionalization of RAI-related learning in government.
- Access to learning/training at decentralized government level (i.e. outside of capitals).
- Provide clear linkages between ASEAN RAI Guidelines and SDGs.
- Facilitate sharing of good practices.

**Challenge 2:**

Private sector needs to understand what the ASEAN RAI Guidelines are, why they are important to the wider agriculture sector and the business case for applying the Guidelines.

**Solution:**
Educate private sector on the Guidelines through assets such as videos, multi-media, and brochures.

**Principal players:**
ASEAN Business Advisory Council, Private companies, media

**What is needed to boost likelihood of success:**
- Ensure information and assets reach the hands of key decision makers.
- Identify opportunities to attend learning visits.
- Learn from other companies on their best practices.
- Provide recognition for good practices in applying the Guidelines.
Challenge 3:

Research universities need to bring RAI into their specialization and curriculum development.

Solution:
Conduct short courses for faculty members on the Guidelines; develop action plans for specific academic contexts; identify opportunities to introduce curriculum in graduate and post-graduate courses.

Principal players:
Researchers, Technicians, Academicians, Universities

What is needed to boost likelihood of success:
- Build capacity of faculty members to bring the Guidelines into their own area of specialization (not only agriculture).
- Learning should be made easy and can be done online or face to face.
5. Integrating Gender into Rights, Jobs and Livelihoods: Sustainable Outcomes and Report

Facilitators:

Marianna Bicchieri
FAO

Ade Soekadis
Mercy Corps Indonesia

Thongdam Phongphichith
Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Development Association (SAEDA) and LaoDHRRA

Challenge 1:

There is a lack of gender statistics reflecting women in agricultural value chains.

Solution:
Research baseline statistics of women in agricultural value chains and develop mechanism to inform related associations on newly registered organizations of women and women entrepreneurs.

Principal players:
Ministries of Women’s Affairs/ Departments of Agriculture on Women; National Statistical Commissions; Ministries of Planning; Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

What is needed to boost likelihood of success:
• Ensure women’s voices are heard at critical platforms and networking events.
• Build up women in leadership roles in agriculture.
• Coordinate with specific agencies and research institutions to conduct the study.
• Gather funding support.

“Worked example”
• Cambodia Rice Federation can provide government with data in relation to women in rice value chains in Cambodia.
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**Challenge 2:**

Women have limited access to and control of resources (technology, grants, capital, land, education, etc.)

**Solution:**
Engage young people to participate through scholarship or programs, to amplify and disseminate information on available technologies. Support programs and initiatives that develop and commercialize appropriate resources addressing specific women’s needs and financial limitations.

**Principal players:**
Parents, Community, Youth, Government, CSOs, Private sector, Financing institutions, and Associations for women entrepreneurs

**What is needed to boost likelihood of success:**
- Use information technology and mobile apps to encourage youth to participate.
- Conduct seminar series and forums.
- Provide funding support for initiatives and incentivize and give recognition to women scientists and researchers.

**“Worked examples”**
- Mercy Corps and Bayer “Agvocacy” initiatives.
- Cambodian Women Entrepreneur Association (CWEA) SME Smart Ladies Loan Package initiative.

**Challenge 3:**

Low appreciation and dignity of farming as a profession.

**Solution:**
Build and strengthen cooperatives through a formalized cooperative framework and conduct capacity building for farmers and key players. Increase presence of and access to support systems such as marketing, finance and technical assistance.

**Principal players:**
Individual farmers, Farmers organizations, Government agencies, CSOs, Regulators and Policymakers, Private companies, Researchers

**What is needed to boost likelihood of success:**
- Create presence of global interest, campaigns and access to alternative financing.
- Support cooperatives to leverage government funds to improve road networks and transport systems thereby facilitating movement of agricultural goods and knowledge.

**“Worked examples”**
- Cases of farms developed by youth in the Philippines.
- Vinesa project on Training of Young Farmers in Africa.
- Development of home and school gardens.
Closing Message: Next Steps

The organizers encouraged participants and others to continue to support the ASEAN RAI Guidelines in their respective domains. Grow Asia, IISD and FAO on their part are committed to raising support for the further rollout of the ASEAN RAI Guidelines to encourage widespread adoption across ASEAN’s agriculture and food sector. The workshop provided valuable intelligence and insights which add nuance to the existing Action Plan. The revised Action Plan and a related Implementation Strategy will inform future direction in consultation with relevant stakeholders at the regional and country level. Other forthcoming developments by partners include:

- FAO is developing RAI-related learning courses targeted towards the public sector, and have plans to launch a separate course for the private sector.
- IISD and FAO are organizing a workshop to develop capacity of farmers’ organizations for responsible contract farming.
- FAO is about to begin a new project with the Lao PDR government on RAI.
- Grow Asia, IISD, and SDC are working with the ASEAN Secretariat and others to explore the nature and design of a regional learning program to build momentum in the uptake of the Guidelines, particularly for key stakeholders.

The issues raised and topics identified at the workshop are not limited to ASEAN alone. There are plenty of opportunities to exchange learning and experiences from other regions through exchange of information, joint initiatives and insight-gathering events at the regional and national levels.

If you have any feedback, suggestions or ideas on the Guidelines, please contact us at info@growasia.org.

For more information, please visit the dedicated ASEAN RAI Guidelines website: www.aseanraiguidelines.org
## Annex 1: Agenda

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<tr>
<th>When</th>
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<th>Who</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning, Day 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>08.15 – 09.00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td><strong>Pham Quang Minh</strong>, Assistant Director, Sectoral Development Directorate and Head of FAF Division, ASEAN Secretariat; <strong>Michael Riggs</strong>, RAI Team Leader, FAO; and <strong>Grahame Dixie</strong>, Executive Director, Grow Asia</td>
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<td>09.00 – 09.30</td>
<td>Welcome and opening remarks</td>
<td><strong>Pham Quang Minh</strong>, Assistant Director, Sectoral Development Directorate and Head of FAF Division, ASEAN Secretariat; <strong>Michael Riggs</strong>, RAI Team Leader, FAO; and <strong>Grahame Dixie</strong>, Executive Director, Grow Asia</td>
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<td>09.30 – 09.45</td>
<td>Tour de table</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Madhuriya Kumar Dutta</strong>, Director, Trade &amp; Investment Facilitation, Mekong Institute for Development &amp; Cooperation <strong>Presentation: Grahame Dixie and Michael Riggs</strong></td>
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<td>09.45 – 10.30</td>
<td>Backdrop to the ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (ASEAN RAI)</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Madhuriya Kumar Dutta</strong>, Director, Trade &amp; Investment Facilitation, Mekong Institute for Development &amp; Cooperation <strong>Presentation: Grahame Dixie and Michael Riggs</strong></td>
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<td>10.30 – 11.00</td>
<td>Group photo taking followed by refreshments</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Grahame Dixie</strong> <strong>Presentation: Hafiz Mirza</strong>, Senior Associate, Agriculture and Investment, IISD; <strong>Doris Capistrano</strong>, Regional Advisor, ASFCC; <strong>Marlene Ramirez</strong>, Secretary-General, AsiaDHRRA; <strong>Esther Penunia</strong>, Secretary-General, AFA; and <strong>Justine Sylvester</strong>, Technical Director, VFI</td>
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<td>11.00 – 12.30</td>
<td>The ASEAN RAI: Key elements of the Guidelines and the Action Plan (Interactive Session)</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Grahame Dixie</strong> <strong>Presentation: Hafiz Mirza</strong>, Senior Associate, Agriculture and Investment, IISD; <strong>Doris Capistrano</strong>, Regional Advisor, ASFCC; <strong>Marlene Ramirez</strong>, Secretary-General, AsiaDHRRA; <strong>Esther Penunia</strong>, Secretary-General, AFA; and <strong>Justine Sylvester</strong>, Technical Director, VFI</td>
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<td>12.30 – 13.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon, Day 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>13.30 – 15.30</td>
<td>Interventions on the Guidelines and Action Plan</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Grahame Dixie</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>15.30 – 16.00</td>
<td>Refreshments</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.00 – 17.00</td>
<td>Summary of day and preparation for Day 2</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Marianna Bicchieri</strong>, Land Tenure Officer, FAO</td>
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## Annex 1: Agenda

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning, Day 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>09.00 – 12.00</td>
<td>Intra-ASEAN Investment and Value Chains</td>
<td>Hafiz Mirza, Christine Violago, Allert van den Ham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakout Sessions</td>
<td>Contract Farming</td>
<td>John Meadows, Souvanthong Namvong, Prak Sereyvath</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building Climate Change Action into the implementation of the ASEAN RAI</td>
<td>Doris Capistrano, Huynh Tien Dung, Kanokwan Chodchoey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Creating effective conditions and institutional capacity for RAI: the role of regional learning programmes</td>
<td>Michael Riggs, Marlene Ramirez, Madhurjya Kumar Dutta</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rights, jobs and livelihoods, and gender: sustainable outcomes and impact</td>
<td>Marianna Bicchieri, Ade Soekadis, Thongdam Phongphichith</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.00 – 13.00</td>
<td>Lunch and preparation of summaries and outcome by Session Chairs/Rapporteurs</td>
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<td><strong>Afternoon, Day 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>13.00 – 15.30</td>
<td>Summary/outcomes of breakout sessions</td>
<td>Chair: Hafiz Mirza</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.30 – 16.00</td>
<td>Final words and next steps</td>
<td>Chair: Marianna Bicchieri, Michael Riggs and Hafiz Mirza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rungtip Imrungruang</td>
<td>Program and Policy Manager</td>
<td>Action Aid Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doris Capistrano</td>
<td>Regional Advisor</td>
<td>ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanokwan (May) Chodchoey</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunapon Phuntunil</td>
<td>Technical Coordination Manager</td>
<td>Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pirawan Wongnithisathaporn</td>
<td>Environment Program Officer</td>
<td>Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther Penunia</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
<td>Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene Ramirez</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
<td>Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen Xuan Hong</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cezar S. Belangel</td>
<td>Senior Program Manager</td>
<td>Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Skinner</td>
<td>Program Associate</td>
<td>Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sokha</td>
<td>Chairwoman of Agro-Industry Working Group</td>
<td>Cambodia Women Entrepreneurs Association (CWEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sok Sotha</td>
<td>Lead Founder and Managing Director</td>
<td>Cambodian Farmer Association of Agricultural Producers (CFAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prak Sereyvath</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Cambodian Institute for Research and Rural Development (CIRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nang Seng Pin</td>
<td>Senior Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke Hipp</td>
<td>Director, Public Affairs</td>
<td>CropLife Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su Su Win</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Department of Agricultural Research (DAR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhea D. Desalesa</td>
<td>Senior Agriculturist</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Agricultural Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalin P. Cadayong</td>
<td>Agriculturist II</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Agricultural Research</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Annex 2: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret C. Yoovatana</td>
<td>Senior Policy and Plan Specialist, Planning and Technical Division</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvanthong Namvong</td>
<td>Deputy Division Head</td>
<td>Department of Technical Extension and Agro-Processing (DTEAP), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)</td>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penchan Manawanichkul</td>
<td>Senior Finance Advisor</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Him Noeun</td>
<td>CamboDHRRA Coordinator</td>
<td>Farmer and Nature Net (FNN)</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chhoun Chamnan</td>
<td>Director, Post-Harvest Technologies and Quality Control (DFPTQ)</td>
<td>Fisheries Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marianna Bicchieri</td>
<td>Land Tenure Officer</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Riggs</td>
<td>Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) Team Leader</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mak Seoun</td>
<td>Deputy Director General</td>
<td>General Directorate of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Jeanne Violago</td>
<td>Country Manager, Philippines</td>
<td>Grameen Foundation</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grahame Dixie</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Grow Asia</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reginald Lee</td>
<td>Director, Partnerships</td>
<td>Grow Asia</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norng Sivouthan</td>
<td>Country Director</td>
<td>HEKS/EPER</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoang Thi Lua</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Helvetas</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Tomecko</td>
<td>Economist</td>
<td>Independent Consultant</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Tiongson</td>
<td>Program and Development Cooperation Specialist</td>
<td>Institute for Social Entrepreneurship in Asia (ISEA)</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nguyen Anh Phong</td>
<td>Director, Information Center for Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
<td>Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD)</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hafiz Mirza</td>
<td>Senior Associate, Agriculture and Investment</td>
<td>International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Wyatt</td>
<td>Deputy Head, IUCN Indo-Burma Group</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orachos Napasintuwong</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Kasetsart University</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shwe Thein</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Land Core Group</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zaw Win</td>
<td>Land and Agricultural Administration Lead</td>
<td>Landesa</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamariah Binti Long</td>
<td>Deputy Director General (Research)</td>
<td>Malaysia Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI)</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhurjya Kumar Dutta</td>
<td>Director, Trade &amp; Investment Facilitation Department</td>
<td>Mekong Institute for Development &amp; Cooperation (MRLG)</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Edward Meadows</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>Mekong Region Land Governance</td>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ade Soekadis</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Mercy Corps Indonesia</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bounthanom Mekdala</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and Investment</td>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saw Hei Moo</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Myanmar Development for Human Resources in Rural Areas (MyanDHRRA)</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chin Kok Fay</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>National University of Malaysia</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
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<td>Tatrit Kunasol</td>
<td>Corporate Agri-Services Manager</td>
<td>Nestlé Thailand</td>
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<td>Yin Nyein</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Network Activities Group</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
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<td>Shubert Ciencia</td>
<td>ASEAN Engagement Coordinator</td>
<td>Oxfam GB</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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<td>Caridad R. Corridor</td>
<td>National Coordinator</td>
<td>Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hataikan Kamolsirisakul</td>
<td>Group Strategy Director, Chief of Staff</td>
<td>Public Company Limited (PCL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chandra Wibowo</td>
<td>Country Lead</td>
<td>Rainforest Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nova A. Ramos</td>
<td>Program Specialist - Training</td>
<td>SEAMEO Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Studies and Research in Agriculture (SEAMEO SEARCA)</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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<td>Allert van den Ham</td>
<td>Country Director</td>
<td>SNV Laos &amp; Myanmar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thongdam Phongphichith</td>
<td>Co-Director</td>
<td>Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Development Association (SAEDA) and LaoDHRRA</td>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
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<td>William Wyn Ellis</td>
<td>SRP Coordinator</td>
<td>Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP)</td>
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<td>Huynh Tien Dung</td>
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<td>Kol Preap</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Transparency International Cambodia</td>
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<td>Tran Thi Thu Trang</td>
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<td>Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA)</td>
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<td>Nguyen Thi Anh Hong</td>
<td>Vice Chairwoman</td>
<td>Vietnam Tea Association (VITAS)</td>
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<td>Justine Morven Sylvester</td>
<td>Technical Advisor</td>
<td>Village Focus International (VFI)</td>
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<td>Matas Danielevicius</td>
<td>Co-Founder</td>
<td>Whatnot Innovation Studio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delphine Larrousse</td>
<td>Regional Director</td>
<td>World Vegetable Center (WorldVeg)</td>
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