

The  
**right to food**  
*make it happen*





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For copies write to:

Diderik de Vleeschauer  
Information Officer  
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
Maliwan Mansion, 39 Phra Athit Road  
Bangkok 10200  
THAILAND  
Tel: (+66) 2 697 4000  
Fax: (+66) 2 697 4445  
E-mail: [Diderik.deVleeschauer@fao.org](mailto:Diderik.deVleeschauer@fao.org)

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# The right to food Make it happen

**The right to food is the inherent human right of every woman, man, girl and boy, wherever they live on this planet.**

**World Food Day/TeleFood  
2007 theme**

The choice of **The Right to Food** as the theme for 2007 World Food Day and TeleFood demonstrates increasing recognition by the international community of the important role of human rights in eradicating hunger and poverty, and hastening and deepening the sustainable development process.

## **Background**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 first recognized the right to food as a human right. It was then incorporated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 11) adopted in 1966 and ratified by 156 states, which are today legally bound by its provisions. The expert interpretation and more refined definition of this right are contained in General Comment 12 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1999). The Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security – the Right to Food Guidelines – were adopted by the FAO Council in 2004 and provide practical recommendations on concrete steps for the implementation of the right to food.

The right to food is a universal right. It means that every person – woman, man and child – must have access at all times to food, or to

means for the procurement of food, that is sufficient in quality, quantity and variety to meet their needs, is free from harmful substances and is acceptable to their culture. Only when individuals do not have the capacity to meet their food needs by their own means for reasons beyond their control, such as age, handicap, economic downturn, famine, disaster, or discrimination, will they be entitled to receive food directly from the state, according to General Comment 12.

This definition is based on the assumption that hunger and malnutrition are caused not just by a lack of available food, but also by poverty, income disparities, and lack of access to health care, education, clean water, and sanitary living conditions. The principle that all human rights are interrelated and interdependent is also acknowledged. This means that the right to food cannot be implemented in isolation from other human rights, i.e. right to education, right to work, right to health, freedom of assembly and association.

The right to food is increasingly being integrated into national constitutions and legislation, and there are several cases in the courts around the world where this right, or some



aspects of it, have been upheld and enforced. However, despite progress in some areas, 59 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right to food remains to be realized for 854 million human beings.

### ***Human rights and development***

Increasingly, it is recognized that human rights and sustainable development are mutually reinforcing. Human rights are based on the inherent worth of every human being. Achieving human rights for all is an overriding objective in itself. Development is not an end in itself per se – it also aims at expanding rights and freedoms. Human rights can help to promote growth and ensure the long-term sustainability of development. People whose right to food is realized are more productive and invest more in their longer-term livelihood strategies. Human rights add a qualitative dimension to development strategies, empowering the poorest to participate actively in society, seek redress for violations of their rights and hold government accountable for the use of available public resources.

### ***The right to food and food security***

A right to food approach complements food security considerations of availability, access, stability and utilization with concerns for human dignity and cultural acceptability, and for empowerment by means of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability. This enables individuals, particularly the hungry and marginalized, to actively look for means of realization of their right to food and to hold government accountable for food security commitments it has taken. They become subjects of legal rights instead of being objects of assistance.

### ***The right to food: make it happen***

States have the primary duty for the realization of the right to food. They must take steps, to the maximum of their available resources, to realize progressively the full enjoyment of the right of every person to adequate food, without discrimination of any kind. The three-fold set of obligations applies: states must respect existing access to food of their population and abstain from taking measures that prevent such access. They must protect the right to food from infringements by third parties through measures ensuring that enterprises or individuals do not deprive others of the access to adequate food. States must also fulfil the right to food

through facilitating individuals' ability to access food by their own means and through providing for those who cannot feed themselves.

For example, states should follow a "twin-track approach", which on the one hand seeks to strengthen productivity and livelihoods, and on the other to build social safety nets for those unable to provide for themselves. This approach should be complemented by measures aiming at strengthening the ability of individuals to participate in the development processes and decisionmaking through appropriate education, training, promoting tolerance, as well as developing and strengthening institutional structures.

While only states have the legal obligation to give effect to human rights, all members of society – individuals, civil society organizations, NGOs and the private sector – have responsibilities with regard to the right to food, when their activities could have an impact on the free exercise of the right to food of others. In particular, civil society organizations and NGOs are important factors for the implementation of state policies and programmes. They assist populations in realizing their right to food through, among other things, dissemination of information, legal advice and training.

The 1996 World Food Summit produced a global commitment to cut the number of hungry and malnourished by half by 2015. The Millennium Declaration also sets a human rights based agenda for hunger reduction. Today, many international organizations and development agencies, with FAO and other UN agencies at the forefront, assess impact of their activities on human rights, promote policies and projects that have a positive impact on the realization of the right to food and avoid those that could have a negative impact on it. They also actively support the realization of the right to food at national level. The Right to Food Guidelines provide the agreed principles and practical guidance needed for concrete steps to be taken by states for the realization of the right to food. They demonstrate how the different agencies dealing with food security can work in a coordinated manner with the full participation of all stakeholders.

**Ensuring that every girl, boy, woman and man enjoys adequate food on a permanent basis is not only a moral imperative and an investment with high economic returns: it is the realization of a fundamental human right.**

## Address by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn

I am delighted to be able to join you all once again at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, to celebrate this year's World Food Day. The theme *The right to food* is most appropriate for our times and deserves the support from each and everyone of us from all walks of life.

Though we live in a world of historically unparalleled wealth and in a region that has led the globe in terms of economic progress and poverty reduction, we are far from fulfilling the goal of *food for all*, which was the main aim for the creation of FAO some sixty-two years ago. According to FAO's *State of Food Insecurity* (SOFI 2006) report, the Asia-Pacific region still accounts for more than 60 percent of the world's undernourished.

The right to food concept is important not only to human beings but living beings as a whole since food is the basis of life. Because food pervades and influences all aspects of life, the issue of the right to food is complex and multi-dimensional. It should not therefore be limited to the right to have and to gain access to food. Nor should it be stressed just on providing food to the needed in difficult times. It should be constructive and proactive not only to those who provide but also to those who need food. We should strive to enable them to produce food for themselves and thereby become self-reliant and self-sufficient. Only on these terms that we can achieve food security and eliminate hunger. In Thailand His Majesty the King's philosophy of the "Sufficiency Economy",

which aims at building small reliable economy units self-sufficient in terms of food and other basic needs, serves as a good example.

In this context the *Voluntary guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to food* are a welcome additional tool for countries in the region wishing to use it to enhance their food security situation. The implementation of the guidelines will directly benefit the most marginalized and vulnerable sections of society since they cover the full range of actions to be considered by governments at the national level in order to build an enabling environment for people to feed themselves in dignity and to establish appropriate safety nets for those who are unable to do so. They can be used to strengthen and improve current development frameworks, particularly with regard to social and human dimensions, putting the entitlements of people more firmly at the centre of development. I am optimistic that the theme, the right to food and the tool will help us immensely in reducing hunger in the immediate future.

I join you all in congratulating FAO on this auspicious day and wish to convey the solidarity and support of the Thai citizens for swift implementation of this year's World Food Day theme – *The right to food*.

Thank you.





# Message of the FAO Director-General

As we have often stated, our planet produces enough food to adequately feed its entire population. Yet tonight, 854 million women, men and children will go to sleep on an empty stomach.

"The Right to Food" has been chosen to be the theme of this year's World Food Day so that the voice of the disadvantaged may be heard. The theme reflects the international community's growing awareness of the crucial role of human rights in eradicating hunger and poverty.

Since it was first recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the right to food has been strengthened by further international measures. By ratifying the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 156 States accepted the right to food as a legally binding obligation.

Increasingly, the right to food is being written into national constitutions. It also features in legislative texts, regulations and strategies. Social programmes provide more ways of claiming the right to food, thus making it easier for all citizens to enjoy their rights. In this context, information is a key element. People need to be aware of their rights and of how to claim those rights. Officials need to know their obligations and how to fulfil them. While legal obligations rest with the State, all members of society - individuals, organizations, NGOs and the private sector - have responsibilities with regard to the right to food.

Freedom from hunger is one of the fundamental goals set out in FAO's Constitution. At the 1996 World Food Summit, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed *"the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger"*. They also committed to the full implementation and gradual realization of this right in order to ensure food security for all.

It was in the follow-up to this commitment that, in 2004, the FAO Council adopted the *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Food in the Context of National Food Security*.

These guidelines serve to bridge the legal recognition of this right and its effective realization, by providing governments and civil society with a coherent set of policy recommendations.

Despite the progress made, putting the right to food into practice still remains a challenge for countries and development practitioners.

An implementation "framework" based on the Right to Food Guidelines has been drawn up in order to implement the right to food in each country. World Food Day provides an excellent opportunity for countries to take stock of the steps taken and the results obtained. It is also an occasion for debate and consensus-building on further steps for the gradual realization of the right to food.

The right to food calls for a shift in paradigm from charity to rights. Ensuring that every human being has an adequate and stable supply of food is more than a moral imperative or an investment with potentially huge economic returns: it is the realization of a basic human right. And the world has the means to realize that right.

This promise, conceived in the 20th century should come to fruition in the 21st century. That is why, on this World Food Day of 2007, I invite you to join me in making the right to food a tangible reality for all.



# Statement by He Changchui

## Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

On behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Jacques Diouf, my colleagues and on my own behalf, I have the special pleasure in welcoming you all to the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific for the commemoration of this year's World Food Day.

This is a special venue. To quote from the plaque outside, unveiled by the then Prime Minister of Thailand on 16 October 1981, on the occasion of the first World Food Day:

"These buildings, provided through the generosity of the Royal Thai government, symbolize a universal commitment to the basic human right to adequate food - a precept enshrined in all living faiths of our world - so people everywhere may rise to more humane standards of living in dignity, justice and peace".

We are especially honoured by the presence of Her Royal Highness, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, whose gracious presence amongst us is a testimony to her and the Kingdom of Thailand's true commitment and inspiration to our collective fight against hunger.

FAO has chosen *The right to food* as its World Food Day theme this year to draw attention to this essential, yet often overlooked, human right. Eleven years ago, at the 1996 World Food Summit, Heads of State and Government reaffirmed "the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger". They urged FAO "to propose ways to implement and realize these rights as a means of achieving the commitments and objectives of the World Food Summit, taking into account the possibility of formulating voluntary guidelines for food security for all."

The "Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security" was adopted by the members of FAO in 2004. In the seven years that it took to arrive at the Voluntary Guidelines, our Asia Pacific region registered phenomenal success on the poverty alleviation front. Between 1996 and 2004, the prevalence of poverty in East Asia and the Pacific fell from 16 to 9 percent whilst in South Asia it came down from 36 to 31 percent. However, in spite of such significant gains, Asia is still home to the majority of the world's hungry people. FAO estimates that some 527 million people in our region suffer from non-acute hunger and are still deprived of their right to food - 300 million in South Asia, 163 million in East Asia and 64 million in South East Asia.

The persistence of under-nourishment in the region, despite rapid economic growth, can mainly be attributed to the growing inequality in income and consumption in the majority of the countries in the region. Apparently the rich are getting richer faster which means that relatively poor individuals and households are not benefiting from or participating in economic growth to

the same extent as richer individuals and households. The rise in inequality, of incomes as well as non-income dimensions such as education and health services, especially in rural areas of Asia, is a major cause for concern.

Clearly there is a need to address the policy bias against sectors and individuals in which the poor are engaged in. The low priority accorded to the rural sector, in particular low investment in human resources in agriculture-related employment opportunities, combined with growing degradation of natural resources, has led to stagnating productivity and earnings in the rural economy on which a large proportion of Asia's population and even larger proportion of Asia's poor depend. The situation has further exacerbated inequalities between the rich and the poor, rural and urban dwellers, creating adverse consequences for social coherence and harmony.

Circumstance based inequalities, which arise from social exclusion, lack of access to productive resources, educational services, health care, and lack of access to income and productivity enhancing employment opportunities for the poor need to be tackled urgently. It calls for a focus on improving governance, the improved delivery of basic health care and education services to the poor, strengthening social protection programmes and safety nets, and raising significantly the employment opportunities for and incomes of the poor if we are to ensure the progressive realization of the right to food.

We urgently need visionary economic policies and a conducive environment that promotes people-centred development and pro-poor growth; encourages reforms related to rural institutions and laws; facilitates trade and investment as well as technology transfer that would dramatically reduce deprivation in the poorer countries. There is no better solution for securing the right to food for the poor other than empowering them with the capacity to enhance productivity and to eliminate poverty. We can no longer afford the gap, let alone further enlargement.

As the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food has noted, progressive realization means that States must move as expeditiously as possible towards the realization of the rights. To this end they must use "the maximum of available resources," which refers both to the resources available within a State and those available from the international community through international cooperation and assistance. In the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, adopted in June 2002, world leaders called for an International Alliance Against Hunger (IAAH) to reinforce the efforts of all actors - governments, international organizations, academics, civil society organizations and the private sector - to achieve the World Food Summit target no later than 2015. This alliance should be invoked to launch an all out war on hunger in Asia, and elsewhere, so that the right to food can soon become a reality for all.

# Right to food in Asia and the Pacific

## – The worm's point-of-view

It is my great honor and pleasure to join you in today's regional observance of World Food Day on the theme of *The right-to-food*.

All of us, I am certain, are inspired by the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, who has made important contributions to the war against poverty and hunger through her work in education and culture, natural resources conservation and rural development.

In 1996, as a member of the Philippine House of Representatives, I participated in the World Food Summit under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. At this conference, governments adopted a declaration which called for the halving of the world's hungry population of 842 million by the year 2015. In June of 2002, I returned to Rome, this time as the Philippine Minister of Agriculture, to attend the sequel to the 1996 meeting. As we know, this follow-up Summit led to the adoption in 2004 of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines to support the right of every person to adequate food in the context of national food security.

I remember that 2002 Summit vividly for another reason. My father Jeremias died on the day of my arrival in Rome.

My father came from a landed family in northern Philippines. During his boyhood, he became aware of the wide economic, social and cultural gaps between his landlord family and their share tenants. His elders told him that the tenants were poor because they were "lazy, ignorant and unwilling to change".

To the surprise of many, my father turned his back against his family's interests. He devoted his life to the cause of the Filipino peasantry. In the process, he realized that the vicious cycle of underdevelopment and impoverishment could be broken. But first, leaders had to change their attitudes towards the poor.

My father liked to compare what he called "the bird's point-of-view" and "the worm's point-of-view". He said that many would-be leaders and reformers failed because they only saw the world from their perspective. Like the eagle, they could fly high and quickly across great distances. From the air, they could see many things that the worm on the ground could not. They were critical of the slow-moving peasants, whom they considered timid, backward and mendicant.

### Keynote address

**Leonardo Q. Montemayor**

President of the Federation of Free Farmers and Chairperson of the Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives (Philippines)

His lesson was that, for leaders to be effective, they must understand the actual conditions and mind set of the poor and the oppressed. They must learn to learn to depend on the people to identify and prioritize their concerns and solutions. Only then can leaders arrive at policies and plans that the people will find relevant and deserving of their support. In our host country today, the ability of King Bhumibol Adulyadej to listen and to empathize with human aspirations has endeared His Majesty to the Thai people and galvanized their support for his programs.

During the past decade, Asia-Pacific countries as a whole – and the People's Republic of China in particular – have achieved dramatic progress in reducing poverty and hunger. On the other hand, so much more needs to be done. In terms of the number of poor people in the world, our region accounts for over half of them. Inequalities in economic opportunities and incomes are also growing between our urban and rural sectors. The situation is not being helped any by declining levels of both in-country funding and Official Development Assistance for agricultural development and food security programs.

Poverty in Asia and the Pacific primarily wears a rural face. Three out of every four destitute and undernourished persons live in the countryside. Many – if not most – of them are small farmers, pastoralists, forest occupants, fisher folk and other types of rural workers.

In 1973, I heard the legendary Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers of America address a national convention of American teachers. Mr Chavez expressed pride over the fact that his members were producing the fruits and vegetables that were feeding many Americans well. Unfortunately, he pointed out, these same farm workers were toiling under subhuman conditions and their families often went to bed hungry.

At the time, I felt as if Mr Chavez was also describing the difficult plight of small farmers, fishers and agricultural workers in the Philip-

piners. Sad to say, the situation of many rural dwellers today remains largely unchanged.

Except for those in countries like Malaysia which have properly funded settlement schemes, many small farmers throughout Asia-Pacific have mostly been left to fend for themselves. Despite this, hundreds of millions of them have managed to develop their landholdings and communities – using their own money, sweat and know-how. Individually, their inputs look miniscule. But collectively, the economic value of their investments would dwarf the budgets of governments and the capital of the biggest corporations.

Based on my organization's half-century of experience, we believe that the small farm holding model can better enable a poor rural family, and society as a whole, to withstand the shocks arising from major economic, social and even political crises. Given adequate support and linkages to agro-industries, the smallholder system can help stem the massive outpouring of rural residents from the farms to the cities, forests and fragile eco-systems. Moreover, a diversified farming operation can do a better job at meeting the essential dietary requirements of a smallholder household than a largely export-dependent, single-crop plantation can for its agricultural workers.

Let us take the case of coconut. In 2005, the Asia-Pacific accounted for 10.691 million hectares, or 89 percent, of the global coconut area of 12.167 million hectares. The region produced 50.961 billion nuts, or 86 percent, of 59.569 billion nuts world-wide. Millions of people depend on the industry for their livelihood and income.

Ironically, farmers who rely on this "tree of life" are among the poorest of the poor.

And yet, many examples abound on what can be accomplished to defeat poverty and hunger in coconut lands. Firstly, the areas between coconut trees can be devoted to multi-storey cropping, livestock raising and honey production. This will multiply farm incomes and create job opportunities in the villages. Additionally, the potential of the coconut as a base for the processing sector should be fully exploited. Scores of consumer and industrial products can be derived from the nut and the tree itself. For example, the husk can be made into car upholstery and bed mattresses, geo-textiles and other useful and environmentally friendly by-products.

Coconut-producing countries should extract the numerous health, nutrition, and bio-energy by-products from coconut water, nectar, sugar, white meat and milk. The technology exists for making coconut milk – a highly nutritious drink. In the case of virgin coconut oil, some clinical trials and historical accounts suggest its effectiveness against viral diseases like SARS and HIV-AIDS.

Without closing our eyes to problems in the urban areas, I believe that we can overcome mass destitution by addressing its rural roots and enlisting the active involvement of the rural poor. As one Filipino peasant leader puts it, "The farmer is the problem, but he is also the solution!"

What does the small rural producer need to overcome poverty and food insecurity?

Many small farmers, including women, do not have secure access to and control over land. To them, land ownership (or at least secure tenure) is vital for several reasons. It enhances their sense of self-worth, their social standing and their credit worthiness. It gives them and their families a strong psychological and material incentive to work harder, invest more capital and to care more for their natural resource endowments.

Over the past several decades, a number of Asian countries have carried out rent-reduction and land-to-the tiller programs. The decrease in land rentals alone have brought up the incomes of sharecroppers-turned-leaseholders. In China, agricultural reforms begun in the late 1970s stimulated rural growth and incomes by giving small holders greater control over their individual land holdings and output. Since any production in excess of the fixed land rental or procured production quota would belong to the small farmer, he now had a greater economic incentive to maximize his farm output and productivity by adopting improved technologies and putting in more labor and resources.

In this connection, I would like to acknowledge the leadership of the FAO, which organized the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Rome in 1979. Unfortunately, the critical role of agrarian reform in the fight against underdevelopment and poverty became muted during the last two decades. But recent events, such as the 2006 International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where the

FAO played a prominent part, has once again highlighted the importance of the issue.

Due to their crushing debt burden, unfavorable terms of trade and/or weak governance, many developing nations in our region are unable to provide essential farm infrastructure like irrigation, feeder roads, and post harvest facilities for drying, storing and processing agricultural and fisheries produce. Furthermore, despite the rapid advances and reduced costs in information and communications technology, most farmers in these countries still lack access to timely advice on markets, technologies and services. Rain-fed, hilly and up lands are especially affected, because – historically – public investments have been focused on the more physically accessible and politically influential lowlands. In recent years, the periodic episodes of El Nino and other severe weather disturbances have compounded these problems. The situation is even more difficult for archipelagoes like Indonesia, the Philippines and the Pacific states, where port and shipping facilities are severely inadequate and where transport of agricultural and fisheries commodities is generally accorded lower priority.

These deficiencies, coupled with trade-distorting agricultural subsidies and non-tariff barriers by industrialized countries, make for a grossly uneven playing field in international trade and undermine the food security of developing nations. Not surprisingly, there has been a rising clamor against the serious imbalances in the WTO's agriculture-related agreements and a hardening of position by developing country governments and their citizens during the current Doha Round.

All this points to the wisdom of supporting the objective of self-sufficiency of farming households for their basic food, nutrition and even health needs. Malnutrition in a farming area should be deemed inexcusable. Many households can be assisted easily to establish a family garden for vegetables, legumes, root crops and medicinal plants. Moreover, family members can be taught how to process their surplus produce for home consumption instead of letting them rot in the field.

A similar approach can be adopted in school gardens and in idle urban lands. It can also apply to small fisher folk, many of whom are farmers by day. In addition, their income from capture fisheries can be augmented through the introduction of fish cages, seaweed farming and other aquaculture operations.

Rain-fed areas account for a major portion of impoverished and undernourished people in Asia and the Pacific. Farmers in these lands require farm- and community-level water catchments and shallow tube wells, which are cheaper, easier and faster to set up. They want scientists to develop crops that are sturdier, less input-dependent and better-yielding. They also need sound advice on sustainable farming and agro-forestry practices, plus marketing support for their products.

Two years ago, I visited the village of Kothapally in Andhra Pradesh in India. The Adarsha integrated watershed management project therein is a good example of a participatory, farmer-centered approach to sustainable development and natural resources conservation in semi-arid zones. Using small-scale water impounding as its point of entry, the project has energized rural households, especially women, to go into diversified cropping, production of vermiculture-based fertilizer, raising of water buffaloes and other livelihood activities. It demonstrates the excellent collaboration among rural residents and their associations, the state and local governments, NGOs, local research and extension institutions, and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), which is based in the state. The project is now being replicated in other watersheds in Andhra Pradesh and in several Asian countries.

While relying on the native wisdom and contributions of small rural producers, we can further enhance rural incomes and food security by motivating the private sector to invest in the countryside. There are ample opportunities for joint ventures and other commercial arrangements between businessmen and rural workers and their organizations, based on respect for farmers' rights and giving them a genuine stake in the business enterprise.

The magnitude of remittances from citizens of Asia-Pacific countries working abroad is enormous. (In the case of the Philippines, this could be as much as one-half of the national government budget.) This fact poses a challenge on how to channel these substantial inflows into profitable agri-business projects that will provide more jobs and more food.

The rights-based approach to individual and national food security will succeed if there is

political will from above and from below. Reform-minded leaders need the firm prodding and backing of strong grassroots organizations of the poor, especially in the face of opposition from those who are resistant to change.

Incorporation of the right to food and other basic human rights into national constitutions and laws, while important, will not be enough. Their realization on the ground will be blocked or hampered, unless the poor demand and work for their effective implementation. To achieve this purpose, the rural poor must harness their numbers into an organized force for their empowerment. This will require a good organizational philosophy and program, responsible leaders, capable managers and active members.

The precise form of organization will vary, depending on legal, political and socio-economic factors and priorities in each country. It could be a small self-help group engaged in lending or production, a cooperative marketing its members' produce, and so on. My own inclination is toward organizations of the farm or trade union type, consolidated and networked from the village up to the national level. This farm union model allows an association to take up a variety of roles and services at local and national levels, ranging from membership representation and policy advocacy to management of social and economic ventures. Ideally, an organization should be guided by the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity. Solidarity ensures that all members support each other and follow a common purpose and direction. Subsidiarity encourages initiative, self-help and flexibility from the bottom level of the organization, upwards.

To illustrate, may I share the experience of my own organization, the Federation of Free Farmers. In 1982, after several years of intense lobbying, the FFF convinced the Philippine government to institute an Integrated Social Forestry Program. Unlike in the past, when they would be driven away, landless and shifting forest occupants were now offered long-term leases over denuded public forest lands up to eighteen percent in slope, provided that they would follow sustainable agro-forestry cultivation and environmental conservation methods.

In several towns of the central Philippine province of Bohol, farm settlers belonging to my Federation have transformed – mainly on a self-help basis – close to a thousand hectares of previously deforested lands into productive

agro-forest communities. By planting various forest, fruit and coconut trees, they regenerated dry springs, which have enabled them to grow rice, vegetables and fish. The farmers also raise their own chickens, goats and other livestock. With counterpart funding secured by the FFF, our members built public school classrooms for their children. Likewise, they installed a water distribution system, which has spared household members, especially the women and children, from carrying heavy loads of water over long distances to fetch water for family use. They secured national government funding to construct a gravel road linking their mountain villages to the national highway system. Today, the main concerns of our members are the setting up of a small cooperative sawmill and a mini-hydro-electric plant. They are also concerned about small reptiles and monkeys that try to steal their chickens and crops!

Stricter environmental standards and the continuing rise in petroleum prices have triggered much interest in bio-fuels. While demand for bio-fuels will help stabilize the prices for raw material producers, the shift from food to fuel crops production could endanger food security. One alternative would be to limit the production of bio-fuel feedstock to marginal or idle lands. Another would be to encourage the cultivation of crops with both food and bio-fuel uses. A good example is sweet sorghum, which can be used for food, feed, fuel and fiber.

Bio-technology is another subject where the concerns of small farmers and consumers should be fully addressed. Farmers ask that research and development, especially by the public sector, give priority to their needs, such as the improvement of crop varieties that are important for their livelihood and food security, but which may not be financially attractive to private bio-tech companies. Farmers also want to be sure that seeds and other products of bio-technology will not only give them decent returns but are safe for humans and the environment.

With the more frequent occurrences of severe climatic changes like El Nino and La Nina, our region must give beef up our capability to predict these phenomena with better timeliness and precision. Hand-in-hand with an early warning system, we need to work closely with sectors and institutions in vulnerable areas in organizing the logistical network, with which they can deal with future relief and rehabilitation problems. In this regard, buffer-stocking of

food staples will be helpful at local, national and even supra-national levels, as in the case of the ASEAN and the East Asian Emergency Rice Reserve programs.

Small farmers support food aid programs in cases of emergency. Food assistance can also be tied to other objectives like improving school attendance and nutritional levels of children from poor families, and with alleviating joblessness through food-for-work schemes. However, farmers feel that these programs should not undercut their livelihood by lowering prices of local farm produce. Moreover, food aid should be done in a manner that is supportive of local producers. For example, food aid supplies can be sourced internally from areas with surplus production or stockpiles. School feeding programs can offer a ready market for locally produced like milk and rice. In food-for-work projects, priority must be given to the construction and maintenance of infrastructure that will improve agriculture productivity. Incidentally, the successful dairy development program of India shows how foreign food aid and other commodity assistance programs can be transformed from short-term, charitable actions into sustainable national programs with wide-ranging beneficial impacts on food security, livelihood creation and rural development.



# Model farmers

## Awards for outstanding achievements

### **Md. Abdul Kalam Azad, model horticulture farmer, Bangladesh**

In 1990, after nine years of honourable service in the Bangladesh Air Force, Corporal Abdul Kalam Azad suddenly found himself discharged. The reason – a medical examination revealed he was colour blind.

With his education and military service, he might have followed in his father's footsteps and become a government official. Instead, he returned to his town of Adarsha Sadar and chose to become a farmer.

Mr Azad knew virtually nothing about farming. But the urging of a neighbour, coupled with a Rotary Club training course in aquaculture, convinced him that he just might be able to make a living at it.

He started with some fish ponds, and began growing vegetables around their borders. Later he would also grow rice.

Adarsha Sadar in Comila district is not a bad place to be a farmer. Situated on high ground, it rarely suffers the devastating floods that plague most of Bangladesh, taking lives, destroying crops and creating food shortages.

Yet most of the farmers in the sub-district, about 100 kilometres east of the capital Dhaka, were poor. The reason - most were illiterate. They had no knowledge of modern farming methods that could improve their productivity and their lives.

With his education, discipline and work ethic Mr Azad was the natural choice for secretary of the farmer's association. He took the job seriously.

He worked with government officials to learn new farming techniques and technologies, experimenting with new vegetable crops, and also a hybrid strain of rice called "Hira" that doubles the yields.

Then he shared his knowledge with his fellow farmers. "I want to teach and encourage them," he says. "My motto is 'our country free from hunger.'"

With their bounty of vegetables, increased rice yields and growing aquaculture output, the farmers of Adarsha Sadar will play an important role in the government's efforts to eradicate hunger by 2015.

**Five model farmers – from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Mongolia, Samoa and Thailand – were honoured by FAO's regional office for Asia and the Pacific for outstanding achievement, and for proving that the right to food can pay off, although even more can be accomplished if the right policies are in place to address the problems faced by small farmers.**

And working as farmer, Mr Azad says, he's earning five times his Air Force salary.

But if the salary was low, the Air Force taught him some valuable lessons: That there is no real success unless it is shared by all. And that there is no shame in any work.

In fact, becoming a farmer has led to one of the proudest moments in Mr Azad's life – being named an FAO Model Farmer.

Upon learning he was selected, Mr Azad said, "for me, this award is as good as winning the Nobel Prize".

### **Nget Sareng, model aquaculture farmer, Cambodia**

Mrs Nget Sareng of the village of Trapaing Trach in Cambodia is a woman with little formal education and yet she's taught others how to be better farmers.

Farming isn't easy in a place like Trapaing Trach, located in Takeo province not far from the border with Vietnam. Mrs Sareng's small rice field, less than a third of a hectare, only yields enough to feed her family for five months of the year.

And so, Mrs Sareng's husband Khieu Sam would have to go work as a day labourer along the border, hoping to make enough to feed his wife and two daughters and two sons.

While at the border, however, Khieu Sam noticed that some villagers were feeding their families and earning a living through aquaculture. He sent Mrs Sareng 100 000 riel (about



\$50 at the time) and told her to buy fingerlings.

Before she could actually do it, a local officer from the Fisheries Administration chose her to take part in a pilot project for aquaculture. The fingerlings were now free.

She was chosen because her family was poor, she had just enough land and already had a small pond, she was an extremely hard worker – and she knew how to listen and to learn.

With close instruction and monitoring from government fisheries experts and local authorities in Takeo province, Mrs Sareng started by raising common carp, Silver carp and Tilapia. Around her pond she began growing vegetables and herbs used in traditional Khmer food and medicines. Soon she was selling them at market.

She did so well that she began to expand. Today, she has 26 fish ponds breeding common carp, Indian carp, Silver carp, big head carp, Silver barb, Tilapia, frogs and prawns. And the ponds were all built with her own hands.

Recently, her family has traded in their thatch and wood house for a two-storey home partially built from concrete.

But it's her giving spirit that makes Mrs Sareng truly shine. She's taught her neighbours and later farmers and students from provinces all over the country how to improve their lives through aquaculture and the necessary skills and techniques.

With her earnings from aquaculture, this woman who never saw the inside of a classroom has now sent her oldest daughter, Sok Dany, to university – the first in her family to attend.

She is enrolled at Build Bright University in Takeo where she is studying rural development.

"What I've learned has improved my life and the lives of my family," Mrs Sareng says. "But when we all learn, we can help improve Cambodia."

### **Ochirbat Ganzorig, model agribusiness farmer, Mongolia**

Not long ago, Ochirbat Ganzorig and his family were simple herders on the steppes of Mongolia. The past decade, however, has seen

great changes, both for Mongolia and the Ganzorig family.

The changes haven't always been easy. During the 1990s, this mainly rural country shifted from a centrally-planned to a market economy. The transformation was jarring. Businesses were disrupted. Jobs were lost. Food supplies became scarcer, even in the capital Ulaan Baatar.

Once a self-sufficient food producer, today Mongolia imports over 70 percent of its food, and Ganzorig says the quality of that food isn't very good.

During the same time Ganzorig and his family saw their herds of sheep and cows steadily grow. As the people of Ulaan Baatar struggled through hard times, Ganzorig, who has a degree in Agronomy from Mongolia's Agriculture University, saw opportunity in adversity - opportunity to help his countrymen, and opportunity to help his family.

In 2002, with assistance from his father and older brother, he founded Holstein Mongolia. It quickly became the leading agribusiness in the country. Beginning with 900 sheep and 100 cows, today Holstein has 1 300 sheep and 300 cows.

Each day, his cows provide 800–1 200 litres of milk for markets in the city. And each year, Holstein Mongolia provides 20 tonnes of meat for consumers.

But Ganzorig's farm doesn't just produce meat and dairy products. He has also branched out into vegetable farming, working with the government on irrigation systems to turn rough, difficult terrain into fertile fields, despite the country's harsh climate.

Today, the Ganzorigs are growing a variety of organic vegetables for the people of the capital city, and also maize, sunflower, rutenica, barely and oats to produce feed for their livestock and those of other farmers and herders.

"Food is essential for our people. My countrymen have to pay so much for imported food, and the quality of the food is poor. That bothers me, and I think what we are doing can help," Ganzorig says.

The Ganzorigs also help in other ways, hosting study tours for students and other farmers so

that they can learn from his company.

While that might create competition for his own business, Ganzorig says he doesn't mind at all. More important is doing good work and seeing that his fellow Mongolians are getting the food they need at prices they can afford. More important than worrying about competition is building a better, healthier future for his countrymen. "I want to play a role in that," Ganzorig says. Undoubtedly, he will.

#### **Ponifasio Ricky Westerlund, model home gardening farmer, Samoa**

Ricky Westerlund's father told his son not to become a farmer. The Westerlund family had been farming for generations in the Alaisa district of their Pacific island country Samoa. But Ricky was highly educated and already working as a civil engineer. That's rare in Samoa, where about 90 percent of the people till the land.

Ricky, however, is definitely a man with a mind of his own. He saw opportunity where others only saw hardship. Most farmers in Samoa are subsistence farmers. They cultivate enough to survive, but not much more than that.

Ricky saw a better way. With his engineering background he believed that if farmers mechanized their operations they could become commercial farmers – prospering by selling a bounty of goods to markets.

He knew becoming a farmer would be risky, but, he says, "When I decide to do something, nothing can stop me. I wanted to be a farmer, but in a big way".

Starting with five acres of leased land, he used his meagre savings to buy an old used tractor from Polynesian Airlines. Mechanizing his farm made him more efficient and earned him more profits. And so he leased more land, and bought more tractors and other equipment.

He was also smart in what he chose to grow: vegetables. Subsistence farming and a high-fat diet have left many Samoans either malnourished, obese or even both. Ricky grew tomatoes, cabbages, all sorts of beans, lettuce, capsicum, bak choi, corn and ginger.

Today, his 45-acre farm is the leading supplier of vegetables in Samoa. He supplies hospitals, hotels and markets. At the same time, the

government is promoting vegetable consumption to improve the health of the people.

Other farmers in Samoa now come to learn from Ricky. "I teach them modern farming methods. I teach them to become commercial farmers," he says. While few have made the transition, he's confident that in time more will. "If you want to reap, first you must sow," he says.

That's important to Ricky. Because this farmer, who is also a preacher, regards it as part of his mission to help his countrymen become free from malnutrition, disease and poverty.

And so while here in Bangkok, he's been out shopping for seeds to grow heartier strains of vegetables, and researching organic farming methods and even fish farming. There are few limits to what a man can achieve when his spirit is strong.

"God wants us to live in abundance," Ricky says when talking about his vision for the future of Samoa. "When we have abundance we are not at the mercy of others. When we have abundance we are free."

#### **Pramuan Charoenying, model community forestry farmer, Thailand**

Like many Thais, when Mrs Pramuan Charoenying and her family began farming they mainly grew rice. But her home province of Buriram is typical of many areas in northeastern Thailand: Drought is a problem. When the rains came, the family did well. When the earth was cracked and parched, they suffered.

Then one evening about 15 years ago, Mrs Pramuan listened as His Majesty the King addressed the nation on television. His Majesty, who has dedicated himself to uplifting his subjects, and especially rural people, outlined what he called his "New Theory". It urged farmers to divide their land and diversify their crops, by planting vegetables, fruits and digging ponds to raise fish and irrigate fields. In this way, farmers could become more sufficient and protect themselves against the uncertainties of climate and other misfortunes.

Mrs Pramuan followed the King's advice. "He is a great teacher, and a model for everyone," she says. Today, her family always has food on the table, thanks to the diversity of crops and the fish they raise. And her vegetable gardens,

irrigated from the fish pond, never lack for water. Her family cultivates enough rice to sell on the market.

His Majesty the King's philosophy has been broadened over the years into the "Sufficiency Theory of Economics". Among its principles are valuing community and using resources wisely.

Those are things Mrs Pramuan knows something about.

Her small village of Khoakok borders a forest called Pha Kok Kruat. The forest is part of the sufficiency structure of the community. It provides villagers with food and its plants and herbs are used as traditional medicines.

But forests have been steadily disappearing in Thailand. A few years back, it looked as though Pha Khao Kok would be lost too. Companies came to clear the land and build poultry farms. Other villagers were cutting trees to claim fields for crops.

Mrs Pramuan knew something had to be done. She organized her community and confronted the company and the villagers. At first she was afraid. Some villagers threatened her. But she and her neighbours persevered.

When the company saw the community was united, it decided to find a new location. And slowly the villagers came to understand that Mrs Pramuan and her neighbours weren't trying to keep the forest for themselves, but were preserving its bounty for everyone.

Because of her wisdom, courage and determination, she has been elected twice to the Tambon Council, a local government body. She is the only woman officer in the Committee on Natural Resources Management for the Northeast.

Mrs Pramuan says she doesn't serve for the salary. "We need the forests for our lives, and so I am working for society," she says. "The forest is for everyone, and it is our duty to protect it. I hope more will join us in our efforts."



World Food Day  
**PHOTO**





# GALLERY

WORLD FOOD DAY 16 October 2007

# Media coverage

## Annex 1

- 11 October – Announcement on the Thai Government website of WFD Observance in Thailand
- 16 October – Announcement of WFD observance  
Radio Thailand 07:00 o'clock news (Thai)  
  
Live interview with He Changchui on World Food Day celebration (07:30 hrs)
- 17 October – DPA report on WFD celebration in Thailand
  - 20:00 hrs. news report on WFD celebration at FAO Regional Office on all Thai TV Channels – 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and TITV
  - Thairath Newspaper report on World Poverty Day activities and 62th anniversary celebration of the founding of FAO
- 18 October – The Nation report on WFD celebrations
- 19 October – Thailand Public Relations Department news report on WFD celebration in Bangkok, HRH Princess Maha Chakri Siridhorn address and conferring of awards to five model farmers from Asia
  - Photo of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Siridhorn arriving at FAO for WFD celebration, Thairath Newspaper
- 21 October – A short Thairath report on WFD celebration
- 22 October – Director General's message read at national WFD celebration
- 5 November – Matchon photo report on national WFD celebration and candlelight vigil

**กระทรวงเกษตรฯ ร่วมกับ เอฟ เอ โอ จัดงานวันอาหารโลก**  
**www.thaigov.go.th – Thursday, 11 October 2007**

กระทรวงเกษตรฯ จับมือเอฟเอโอ และกรม จัดงานชักจูงรำลึกวันอาหารโลก พร้อมเน้นย้ำความเท่าเทียมในการได้รับอาหารที่ปลอดภัยและเพียงพอ ดีเคย 22 ตุลาคม จุดเทียนพร้อมกันทั่วโลก ณ ลานคนเมืองกรุงเทพมหานคร นายพินิจ กอศรีพร รองโฆษกกระทรวงเกษตรและสหกรณ์ เปิดตัวเขา ในโอกาสที่องค์การอาหารและเกษตรแห่งสหประชาชาติได้กำหนดให้วันที่ 16 ตุลาคม ของทุกปีเป็นวันอาหารโลก ซึ่งขณะนี้ประเทศไทยสมาชิกกว่า 180 ประเทศทั่วโลกโดยจะพร้อมใจกัน จัดงานเฉลิมฉลองวันอาหารโลก เพื่อรำลึกถึงวันจัดตั้งองค์การและรณรงค์ถึงความสำคัญของการอาหาร ที่มีต่อมวลมนุษย การแก้ไขปัญหาความยากจน และขจัดความอดอยากทั่วโลกทั้งนี้ ในปีนี้ เอฟ เอ โอ ได้กำหนดหัวข้อ การรณรงค์วันอาหารโลกว่า "สิทธิที่พึงได้รับอาหาร" ของประชากรโลก เพื่อเน้นถึงสิทธิในการได้รับอาหารที่ปลอดภัย และเพียงพอ เนื่องจากปัจจุบันประชากรโลกยังประสบปัญหาความแตกต่างด้านชีวิตความเป็นอยู่ สภาพแวดล้อม และสังคม ส่งผลให้มีจำนวนประชากรโลก ที่อดอยากหิวโหยกว่า 800 ล้านคน และกว่า 500 ล้านคนอาศัยอยู่ในภูมิภาคเอเชีย นอกจากนี้ ในวันที่ 22 ตุลาคม 2550 ซึ่งทั่วโลกจะจัดงานเฉลิมฉลอง วันอาหารโลกพร้อมกัน โดยกระทรวงเกษตรฯ จึงกำหนดจัดงานขึ้นเช่นกัน โดยร่วมกับเอฟ เอ โอ ประเทศไทย และกรุงเทพมหานคร จัดนิทรรศการ การมอบประกาศนียบัตร และการบรรยายพิเศษ ณ ลานคนเมือง เสาชิงช้า ตั้งแต่เวลา 15.00 น. และในเวลา 17.30 -18.30 น. จะมีการจุดเทียนร่วมรำลึกในวันอาหารโลก ซึ่งจะมีการจุดพร้อมกันทั่วโลก จึงขอเชิญชวนประชาชนชาวไทยร่วมงานดังกล่าว พร้อมใส่เสื้อเหลือง รวมจุดเทียนรำลึกถึงวันสำคัญของประชาชนโลกด้วย

**More than 150 countries to mark World Food Day today**  
**Gulf Times – Tuesday, 16 October 2007**

ROME: More than 150 countries are scheduled today to observe World Food Day by kicking off a series of events including sports contests and a global candlelight vigil, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has said.

"This year's World Food Day theme, 'The Right to Food', highlights a basic human right that is often ignored as severe food insecurity continues to afflict more than 850mn people," the Rome-based UN agency said in a statement.

A global candlelight vigil will begin the evening of October 22 in Samoa and move across the world's time zones through various cities including Yokohama, Japan, Yerevan, Armenia, Lusaka, Zambia, Bratislava, Slovakia, Quito, Ecuador and Rome, where the a vigil will be held at the Colosseum.

Thailand will celebrate World Food Day with a regional symposium attended by Crown Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, while Japan will organise a TeleFood television fundraising concert in Yokohama. - DPA

**วันขจัดความจนโลก**

**ไทยรัฐ – วันพุธที่ 17 ตุลาคม 2550**

โรม: องค์การอาหารและเกษตรแห่งสหประชาชาติ (FAO) จัดกิจกรรม "วันขจัดความจนโลก" ซึ่งตรงกับ 17 ต.ค. โดยมีเป้าหมายเพื่อต่อสู้กับความหิวโหยทั่วโลก และยังเป็นการฉลองครบรอบ 62 ปี ของการก่อตั้ง FAO องค์การซึ่งมีสมาชิกกว่า 150 ชาติ โดยมีกรูจัด "วังเพื่ออาหาร" ในกรุงโรม อิตาลี และในหลายประเทศทั่วโลก รายงานระบุว่าประชากรราว 854 ล้านคนทั่วโลก หรือทุก 1 ใน 7 คน อยู่ในสภาพขาดแคลนอาหาร FAO ตั้งแผนลดจำนวนผู้หิวโหยลงปีละ 31 ล้านคน จนถึงปี 2558

The Nation - Thursday, 18 October 2007

**WORLD FOOD DAY**

**UN calls for concrete action**

Freedom from hunger is basic human right, says FAO

■ Agency France-Press  
 PARIS

**T**he UN food agency marked World Food Day on Tuesday with an appeal for concrete action to guarantee the "basic human right" of freedom from hunger. "Our planet produces enough food to adequately feed its entire population," director-general Jacques Diouf said at a ceremony at the Food and Agriculture Organisation's Rome headquarters. "Yet tonight, 854 million women, men and children will go to sleep on an empty stom-

ach," Diouf added. "The right to food calls for a shift in paradigm from charity to rights," he said. "Ensuring that every human being has an adequate and stable supply of food is more than a moral imperative - it is the realization of a basic human right. "I invite you to join me in making the right to food a tangible reality for all." Pope Benedict XVI, in a message read out at the ceremony, appealed for greater "consciousness, within the community of nations, of the solidarity that considers food as a universal right, without distinction and discrimination".

He added: "I think of the situation of children, the first victims of this tragedy." UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for his part, said in a message: "We need to do far more to place the integrity and rights of every human being at the centre of all our efforts. The world has the resources, the knowledge and the tools to make the right to food a reality for all." A week of World Food Day activities, with the theme "The Right to Food: Make It Happen," will mark the 62nd anniversary of the FAO's founding. More than 150 countries have organised events for the

occasion, including a "Ban for Food" on Sunday in Rome. Speaking at Tuesday's ceremony, Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete said that in sub-Saharan Africa, which along with southern Asia suffers the brunt of the scourge of hunger, "we see some light at the end of the tunnel." But in order to "consign hunger to history" in Africa, the continent needs a "green revolution" involving a major increase in irrigation-based agriculture, widely available and affordable higher-yielding seeds and other inputs, he said. "All countries are capable of guaranteeing the right to food to their people," Kikwete said. "However, for most of our people in the South this will be possible only by revolutionising our agricultural production." He added: "All that is required is the reliability... on the part of the donors to support and complement our efforts." The FAO launches that despite the 2006 World Food Summit's pledge to reduce the number of undernourished people by half by 2015, the number of hungry people continues to rise. "Keeping the summit pledge would require reducing the number of undernourished by 31 million every year until 2015, whereas the number of hungry is currently climbing at the rate of some four million a year," the FAO said when it released the 2006 report on the state of world food insecurity.

**His Majesty the King's Sufficiency Economy Cited as a Good Example for Eliminating Hunger**  
**Thailand Public Relations Department news – Friday, 19 October 2007**

His Majesty the King's philosophy of Sufficiency Economy has been cited as a good example for people to achieve food security and eliminate hunger.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn on October 17 joined the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific to celebrate this year's World Food Day. FAO has chosen the Right to Food as its World Food Day theme this year to draw attention to this essential, yet often overlooked, human right. She also took part in the global "Stand Up against Poverty and Hunger."

In her address, the Princess pointed out that the issue of the right to food is complex and multi-dimensional. It should not be limited to the right to have and to gain access to food. Nor should it be stressed just on providing food to the needy in difficult times. It should be constructive and proactive, not only to those who provide but also to those who need food. She also said that we should strive to enable them to produce food for themselves and thereby become self-reliant and self-sufficient. In Thailand, His Majesty the King's Sufficiency Economy philosophy, which aims at building small reliable economy units self-sufficient in terms of food and other basic needs, serves as a good example.

On this occasion, Her Royal Highness presented FAO awards to five Asian farmers for their outstanding achievement. They were from Bangladesh in the area of horticulture, Cambodia in aquaculture, Mongolia in agribusiness, Samoa in home



gardening, and Thailand in community forestry. The citations were read during the award ceremony.

Mrs. Pramuan Charoenying, the award recipient from Thailand, lives in the northeastern province of Buri Ram. One evening, about 15 years ago, she listened as His Majesty the King addressed the nation on television. His Majesty, who has dedicated himself to uplifting his subjects, especially rural people, outlined what he called his "New Theory." This concept urged farmers to divide their land and diversify their crops, by planting vegetables, and fruits and digging ponds to raise fish and irrigate fields. In this way, farmers could become more sufficient and protect themselves against the uncertainties of climate and other misfortunes.

Mrs. Pramuan followed His Majesty's advice. She said that His Majesty is a great teacher and a model for everyone. Today, her family always has food on the table, thanks to the diversity of crops and the fish they raise. And her vegetable gardens, irrigated from the fish pond, never lack for water. Her family cultivates enough rice to sell on the market. His Majesty the King's philosophy has been broadened over the years into the "Sufficiency Theory of Economics." Valuing the community and using resources wisely are among its principles.

**ไทยรัฐ** – วันอาทิตย์ที่ 21 ตุลาคม 2550

ใครรูบงว่า ประชาชนราว 854 ล้านคนทั่วโลก หรือทุก 1 ใน 7 ทัว โลก อยู่ในสภาพขาดแคลนอาหาร, นี่เป็นตัวเลขในรายงานของ องค์การอาหารและเกษตรแห่งสหประชาชาติ (FAO) ในวันฉลอง 62 ปี ของ FAO เมื่อวันที่ 17 ต.ค. ที่ผานมา เลขดังป้จะลดจำนวนผู้หิวโหยลงป้ละ 31 ล้านคน จนถึงปี 2558

### World Food Day 2007

**WFP Relief Web** – Thursday, 25 October 2007

Kabul: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) celebrates World Food Day (WFD) each year on 16 October, the day the Organization was founded in 1945 in Quebec City, Canada. This year's World Food Day theme is "The Right to Food." This year's World Food Day theme, "The Right to Food," highlights a basic human right that is often ignored as severe food insecurity continues to afflict more than 850 million people.

The right to food, according to international law, is the right of every person to have regular access to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and culturally acceptable food for an active, healthy life. It is the right to feed oneself in dignity, rather than the right to be fed. Since the 1996 World Food Summit, FAO has worked with governments and communities worldwide to gain recognition for this basic human right.

The FAO in collaboration with Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) celebrated the WFD on Thursday, 25th October 2007, at 10:00 - 12:00 am at Knowledge Centre of Badam Bagh farm in Kabul City.

The FAO Representative in Afghanistan, Mr. Tekeste G Tekie read the message of the FAO Director General for World Food Day on "The Right to Food" in which he mentioned "The Right to Food" has been chosen to be the theme of this year's World Food Day so that the voice of the disadvantaged may be heard." He added, "This context, information is a key element. People need to be aware of their rights and of how to claim those rights. Officials need to know their obligations and how to fulfil them." "Freedom from hunger is one of the fundamental goals set out in FAO's Constitution." "World Food Day provides an excellent opportunity for countries to take stock of the steps taken and the results obtained."

His Excellency Obaidullah Rameen, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock mentioned in the his message ""This year World Food Day is being celebrated while Afghanistan together with Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and all the countries of the world that the food security situation of the country has significantly improved as a result of efforts of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The total crop production has been estimated 5.6 MT in the current year, considering the local requirement of 6.1 MT indicates 92% self-sufficiency. Likewise, estimation of wheat production in 4.5 MT which in comparison to the local requirement of 4.9 MT it shows 92% self-sufficiency. "

UN Agencies, International NGOs, Ambassadors, donors, the representatives of Governmental authorities, Afghan farmers and national and international media were invited to the celebration.

An exhibition of agricultural projects and activities of Ministry of Agriculture and FAO took place and a short film was showed which highlighted this year's WFD theme. The ceremony ended with distribution of agricultural inputs to the farmers.

### Bangladeshi farmer wins FAO model award

**New Age** – Thursday, 18 October 2007

Dhaka – Abul Kalam Azad, a Bangladeshi horticulturist, has been among the five 'model farmers' in the Asia-Pacific region awarded this year for their outstanding achievement in farming.

The regional office of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations has given the awards to encourage farmers of Asia and the Pacific, home to majority of the world's hungry people, in spite of significant progress in poverty alleviation.

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presented the five Asian farmers with the FAO awards in a ceremony on the occasion of the 62nd anniversary of the UN body in Bangkok on Wednesday.

Azad, the secretary to the local farmer's association in the Comilla district headquarters, was honoured as a model horticulturist representing South Asia.

After he had been discharged from the air force for being proved colour-blind in 1990, Azad chose to become a farmer and started with some fish ponds, and began growing vegetables along the pond banks. Later he also grew rice.

Azad learnt farming techniques and technologies, experimenting with new vegetable crops, and also a hybrid strain of rice called Hira that doubles the yields, said a release issued by the UN body.

The organisation believes there is no better solution to securing the right to food for the poor other than by empowering them with the capacity to enhance productivity and to eliminate poverty.

'The rise in inequality, of incomes as well as non-income dimensions such as education and health services, especially in rural areas of Asia, is a major cause for concern,' said He Changchui, the UN body's Asia-Pacific chief.

The global body maintains that there is a need to address the policy bias against sectors and individuals in which the poor are engaged.

Four other awarded are Pramuan Charoenying of Thailand for community forestry, Ponifasio Ricky Westerlund of Samoa for home gardening, Nget Sareng of Cambodia for aquaculture and Ochirbat Ganzorig of Mongolia for agribusiness.

### **World Food Day 2007 celebrated at Dungkar Primary School, Lhuentse Bhutan Ministry of Agriculture news**

This year the theme for World Food Day was "The Right to Food" and it was hosted by Dungkar Primary School, Kurtoe geog, Lhuentse Dzongkhag which is one of the remotest communities in Bhutan. Dungkar is one of the most historically important places being the origin of the Royal Family in Bhutan.

The World Food day is internationally celebrated by the member countries as the founding day of FAO. It was first founded in 1945, in Quebec city, Canada. This is the 62nd anniversary of foundation. Bhutan being a member country joins to celebrate this important day every year. This is the 22nd year Bhutan has been hoisting this day as partner of UN. This day is marked to honour the farming community, donors and policy makers who are involved in the agriculture development.

In Bhutan WFD is hosted every year in schools with school agriculture program. Ministry of Agriculture has been identified as the focal agency to organise the WFD in collaboration with FAO Bhutan. As a part of WFD program, the School Agriculture Program has awarded national level prizes to the outstanding schools under SAP.

As many as 400 people including school children and public gathered in the school ground of Dungkar Primary school to join hands for World Food day celebration. The day was marked with debates on importance of farming in schools by two High schools of Lhuentse (Tangmachu MSS and Phuyum HSS). Quiz competitions on RNR/health and cultural programs. Farmers from the community also displayed and sold the local RNR products to the visitors. Dasho Dzongdag of Lhuentse graced as the Chief Guest along with the dignitaries of MoA and other agencies. The message from the Director General of FAO was read out to general public by Asst. Resident Representative of FAO in Bhutan.

### **India committed to ensure food security for every citizen: Pawar Daily India/ANI – Tuesday, 16 October 2007**

New Delhi: Union Agriculture and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Sharad Pawar today said the country was committed to ensure food security for every citizen.

Addressing the World Food Day celebrations here today, Pawar said the Right to Food Approach complements food security in terms of food availability, accessibility and utilization with human dignity and cultural acceptability.

"We have been following a twin-track approach in this regard to strengthen productivity and livelihoods at one level and implementing social safety nets for those unable to provide for themselves at another level," he added.

Keeping in view the challenges of growing population and the need for food security, two major programmes have been launched recently to augment food production and availability in the country, he said.

The first one is the 'National Food Security Mission' targeted to push both production and productivity of staple food grains such as wheat, rice and pulses on a mission mode. The other programme 'Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna' provides for additional assistance by the Centre as 100 percent grant to incentivise states to take up agriculture development on priority and in a comprehensive manner with definite action plans.

He expressed the hope that with such major initiatives, there would be enough production to take care of the country's food security requirements.

Pawar said that towards ensuring social safety net for food and nutritional security for our citizens, the States interventions cover the Targeted Public Distribution System. Under this, subsidized food grains are being distributed to the poorest of the poor families under the Antyodaya Anna Yojna.

Under various welfare schemes, more than 50 lakh tonnes of food grains were distributed last year. To ensure that there is no adverse impact on food security in the country, the government maintains the required buffer stock of food grains as per norms, procures food grains at minimum support prices from the farmers and also imports wheat when required from abroad.

The Minister pointed out that the Central Issue Prices of food grains distributed under the targeted public distribution system have not been increased over last six years.

Kantilal Bhuria, Minister of State for Agriculture, Dr. Daniel Gustafson, Country Director, FAO and Dr. P.K. Mishra, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Dr. Mangla Rai, DG, ICAR also addressed the gathering.

World Food Day is observed every year as an International Day on October 16, the founding day of Food and Agriculture Organisation. The theme for this year is 'The Right to Food'.

### **Nepal experts call for right to food Xinhua – Tuesday, 16 October 2007**

Beijing: Nepali experts and officials called for treating right to food as a basic human right prior to the World Food Day, local newspaper The Rising Nepal reported Tuesday.

The National Network for Right to Food Monday demanded right to food be treated as a basic human right with nearly 20 percent of Nepalese living on a single meal every day.

The network on the eve of the World Food Day has appealed to the general people to join its three-day campaign to start Tuesday to mount pressure on the concerned authorities to deal with hunger as a state of emergency.

Prior to the World Food Day which falls on Tuesday, the network has voiced that the state should ensure that the people are empowered and given control over the means of production.

It has also asked the government to ensure all the rights of the citizens to fight against hunger and starvation. Addressing a press conference organized by the network Monday, team leader of Action Aid, Ila Sharma, said 800 million people were starving in the world. Right to food is a basic human right, she said.

Secretary General of All Nepal Peasants Federation Prem Dangal said 31 percent of people live below the poverty line in Nepal. Nepali Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives Chhabilal Bishwokarma Monday said the government was effortful to step up people's access to safe and nutritious food, as Nepal has endorsed the "right to food" as a fundamental right in the Interim Constitution promulgated on Jan. 15.

Minister Bishwokarma was speaking at a seminar jointly organized by Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in observance of World Food Day.



# List of guests

Annex 2

The following is a list of selected guests who attended the regional observance of World Food Day at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific on 17 October 2007.

## Guest of Honour

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn

## Guest speaker

Leonardo Q. Montemayor, President of the Federation of Free Farmers

## Model farmers

Md. Abul Kalam Azad, model horticulture farmer, Bangladesh

Nget Sareng, model aquaculture farmer, Cambodia

Ochirbat Ganzorig, model agribusiness farmer, Mongolia

Ponifasio Ricky Westerlund, model home gardening farmer, Samoa

Pramuan Chareonying, model community forestry farmer, Thailand

## Office of the Privy Councillors

H.E. Ampol Senanarong, Privy Councillor for Royal Agricultural Project

## Royal Thai Government

### Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

H.E. Thira Sutabutra, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives

Jaranthada Karnasuta, Permanent Secretary, Office of the Permanent Secretary

Pinit Korsieporn, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Office of the Permanent Secretary

Prajuab Lumubol, Advisor to the Minister, Office of Minister

Songkram Thammincha, Secretary to the Minister, Office of Minister

Theerapat Sutabutra, Office of Minister

Thanai Sutabutra, Office of Minister

Boonyawat Somtat, Office of Minister

Chapakom Prakorbsub, Office of Minister

Charnwut Jaitham, Office of Minister

Duanghatai Danvivatthana, Deputy Secretary-General and National FAO Committee, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation Division

Kasem Prasutsaengchan, Senior Policy and Plan Analyst, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation Division

Yupadee Hemarat, Chief Protocol Sub-division, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation Division

Jarunee Agwonoung, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation Division

Saifon Nirantararat, Administration Staff, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation Division

Pornprom Chairitchai, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation Division

Korntip Seneewong Na Ayudhaya, Director, Division of International Organization, Office of Agriculture Economics

Saowanee Worapanich, Director Bureau of International Agriculture Economics, Office of Agriculture Economics

Montol Cheamchareon, Deputy Secretary-General, Office of Agriculture Economics

Chamnan Pongsri, Office of Agriculture Economics

Saranya Busaparoek, Chief, International Cooperation and Special Project Group, Department of Agriculture

Magaret C. Yoovatana, Policy and Plan Analyst, Department of Agriculture

Chawee Lomlek, Policy and Plan Analyst, Department of Agriculture

Chatprapa Srisawat, Agricultural Information Division

Theerapat Kemthong, Department of Agriculture

Chumnarn Pongsri, Department of Agriculture

Wiroj Saenbanka, Director, Department of Agricultural Extension

Ath Intalak, Deputy Director-General, Department of Agricultural Extension

Boppha Mongolsilp, Senior Subject Matter Specialist, Department of Agricultural Extension

Srisuda Taechasan, Senior Subject Matter Specialist, Department of Agricultural Extension

Orasa Dissataporn, Director of Vegetable, Flower and Herb Promotion Division, Bureau of Agricultural Commodities, Department of Agricultural Extension

Pramoj Thaworn, Deputy Director-General, Cooperatives Promotion Department

Prasert Kosanvit, Director-General, Rice Department  
 Sakchai Sriboonsue, Director-General, Department of Livestock Development  
 Laddawalaya Ratananakorn, Senior Veterinary Expert, Department Livestock Development  
 Nantana Apiwattanakul, Agricultural Land Reform Office  
 Wimol Jantrarotai, Senior Experts on Fisheries Foreign Affairs, Department of Fisheries  
 Suthewat Somsueb, Fishery Biologist, Department of Fisheries  
 Orthai Silapanaporn, Director, Office of Commodity and System Standard, National Bureau of  
 Agricultural Commodity and Food Standard  
 Patrathip Vacharakomolphan, Standard Officer, National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food  
 Standard  
 Busba Vrakornvorawut, Director of Kasetradhikarn Institute,  
 Buakan Wachesataya, Head of Strategic Agricultural Administration Development Sector,  
 Kasetradhikarn Institute  
 Sopa Khongkharat, Head of Technical and Curriculum Sector, Kasetradhikarn Institute  
 Chadet Klinchuen, Head of Administrative Branch, Kasetradhikarn Institute  
 Khumnung Jaipean, Head of HRD Technology Center, Kasetradhikarn Institute

#### **Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment**

Oankarak Ritthiruth, Forestry Technical Officer 7, Royal Forest Department  
 Thira Kwoprasit, Forestry Technical Officer 7, Royal Forest Department  
 Narong Thongrak, Forestry Technical Officer 4, Royal Forest Department  
 Wittaya Phumipan, Accompany

#### **Ministry of Social Development and Human Security**

Sirirat Ayuathana, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security  
 Phongpenkea Devahusdin, Chief of Foreign Affairs Coordination Group, Ministry of Social Develop-  
 ment and Human Security  
 Vudhisit Viriyasiri, Director, International Organization Partnership Branch (Multi-lateral), Depart-  
 ment of Thailand International Cooperation and Development Agency

#### **Universities**

Sudip Rakship, Vice President for Research, Asian Institute of Technology  
 Rosalin Smitabhidu, Assistant Director, Royal Chitralada Project  
 Methee Kaewnern, Associate Dean for Planning and Development, Kasetsart University  
 Somsri Pattaratuma, Head of Rural Studies Center, Kasetsart University Research and Development  
 Institute  
 Somsakdi Taptimthong, International Affairs Division, Kasetsart University

#### **Other Ministries, Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and Associations**

Siri Ekmaharaj, Secretary-General, Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre  
 Somsong Rungreongsilp, Project Coordination Director, Royal Development Projects Board  
 Atipa Engrtrakul, Board of Director, The National Council of Women of Thailand

#### **Embassies**

BELGIUM	Dirk Heuts, Minister Counsellor
BHUTAN	Karma Phuntfho, First Secretary
CAMBODIA	Ouk Sophoin, Counsellor
CEC	Andrew Jacobs, Counsellor, Head of Operations, European Union
CHINA	H.E. Zhang Jiujuan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Puxiaojun, accompany
HOLY SEE	Msgr Dennis Kuruppassery, First Secretary
IRAN	Aliakbar Nazari, Second Secretary, In charge of Economic Affairs
JAPAN	Naoyasu Murayama, First Secretary
LAO PDR	H.E. Ouan Phommachack, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP
MALAYSIA	Shamsul Akbar Sulaiman, Agriculture Counsellor
MONGOLIA	H.E. Yaichil Batsuuri, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
MYANMAR	U Myint Soe, Minister-Counsellor

REPUBLIC OF KOREA Hahn Yong Joo, Counsellor  
VIET NAM Vubich Dung, First Secretary

**United Nations**

ADB Roykaew Nitihanprapas, External Relations Officer  
ESCAP Hiren Sarkar, Chief, Development Policy Section, Poverty Development Division  
ILO Jiyuan Wang, Director  
UNFPA Viennarat Chuangwiwat, National Program Associate  
UNHCR Kitty Mckinsey, Senior Regional Public Information Office  
UNICEF Tomoo Hozumi, Representative  
UNIDO Gaute Ellingsent, Programme Officer  
UNOPS Sunil Bhargava, Regional Director  
WFP Erika Joergensen, Deputy Regional Director  
WORLD BANK Luis Benveniste, (Acting) Country Sector Coordinator of Human Development

**Government officers accompanying the model farmers**

Kao Sochivi, Cambodia  
I. Khanimkhan, Mongolia

**FAO Ex-Staff**

W. Hulscher  
Prapas Weerapat  
Narong Chomchalow  
Alistaire Hicks

# Organizing Secretariat

Annex 3

WORLD FOOD DAY 16 October 2007

## Steering committee

Changchui He, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative (Chairperson)  
Hiroyuki Konuma, Deputy Regional Representative  
Nay-Myo Hla, Chief, Management Support Unit  
Dorjee Kinlay, Economist, Economic and Social Department  
Tarina Ayazi, Meetings and Publications Officer  
Diderik de Vleeschauwer, Information Officer (Secretary)

## Organizing committees

### Invitations, reception and protocol

Hiroyuki Konuma, Chairperson  
Diderik de Vleeschauwer  
Kanokporn Chansomritkul  
Vishnu Songkitti (Master of Ceremony)  
Kanjerat Boonyamanop  
Monpilai Youyen  
Panida Jongkol  
Umpaiwan Pipatanavilai  
Rangrong Sodamak  
Chanrit Uawongkun  
Navaporn Liangchevasunthorn  
Thapanee Tayanuwattana  
Supajit Tienpati  
Chananut Auisui  
Nawarat Chalernpao  
Bongkoch Prasannakarn  
Kanyarat Singhaphun  
Pawadee Chokoonkit  
Nawarat Phayungkij  
Thanomkwan Rachtachat  
Ornusa Petchkul  
Jintana Anunacha  
Duangporn Sritulanondh  
Sune Hormjunya  
Thamrongsak Techatadaku  
Chaturat Damrongsrisakul  
Navaporn Liangchevasuntorn  
Suthep Rakpanyakaew  
Jaruwan Singhaphanthu

### Liaison with Thai government

Hiroyuki Konuma, Chairperson  
Somchai Udomsriung Ruang  
Panida Jongkol  
Surawishaya Paralokanon

### Liaison with model farmers

Diderik de Vleeschauwer, Chairperson  
Anton Bontje - Bangladesh  
Helene P. Gunatilaka - Cambodia  
Jo Cadilhon - Mongolia  
Jesper Clausen - Samoa  
Don Triumphavong - Thailand

### Logistics and catering

Nay-Myo Hla, Chairperson  
Sri Limpichati, consultant  
Kevin McKeen  
Wichai Nomkhumtode  
Cristina Sriratana  
Chainarong Palaprasert  
Suthep Charoenbutr  
Pensri Yujang  
Prasert Huatsawat

### Media, publications and photographs

Diderik de Vleeschauwer, Chairperson  
Tarina Ayazi  
Apinya Petcharat  
Kanokporn Chansomritkul  
Prasert Huatsawat  
Nutchaluch Phoowatananusorn  
Prayoon Amaree, photographer  
Voravute Lapsombune, photographer  
Robert Horn, writer consultant



# Publications distributed

Annex 4

- ❖ 2007 WFD information note
- ❖ 2007 WFD issues paper
- ❖ 2007 WFD poster
- ❖ The right to food: questions and answers
- ❖ Address by the guest of honour
- ❖ Message of the UN Secretary-General
- ❖ Message of the FAO Director-General
- ❖ Welcome and introductory statement by He Changchui
- ❖ Keynote speech on *Right to food in Asia and the Pacific –The worm's point-of-view* by Leonardo Q. Montemayor, President of the Federation of Free Farmers, and Chairperson of the Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives (Philippines)
- ❖ Citations of model farmers
- ❖ RAP publication *Selected indicators of food and agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific region, 1996-2006*
- ❖ CD-ROM of RAP publications 1999 to 2006
- ❖ RAP publication *Rapid growth of selected Asian economies. Synthesis report*





