

Workshop Report on NARDT - Myanmar



NOVEMBER 30TH 2019

CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Network for Agriculture and Rural Development Thinktanks – Myanmar

Venue: Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF), Insein Tsp. Yangon, Myanmar

Date: 15th November 2019 (Friday)

Welcoming remarks by Dr. Kyaw Tun Myint, Chairman of Myanmar Shrimp Farmers Association, Vice Chairman of Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF)

Dr. Kyaw Tun Myint gave welcome remarks and his expectation from this joint meeting.

Introduction to NARDT by Mr. Nguyen Thanh Tung, IFAD Country Program Officer

Mr. Nguyen opened his speech by highlighting the purpose of the workshop and to cooperate with regional partners. He discussed the roles of IFAD and IPSARD. He also explained how IPSARD is working together with Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and how evidence-based research is important in the case of Vietnam.

Secondly, he discussed the need to change the mindset of farmers and to make sure the farmers are aware of why they produce, where they sell as well as who their potential buyers are. Lessons should be learned from Viet Nam so that Myanmar does not make the same mistake and is willing to support knowledge management. He also emphasized the importance of cooperation among four countries along the Mekong region and believe that there are many alternatives for the rest of the countries to learn from Myanmar and vice versa.

Thirdly, he discussed how Myanmar and Vietnam have similar issues and express their readiness to cooperate with Myanmar. Points of discussion include how the fisheries sector plays an important role for Myanmar and Vietnam as well as the opportunities Myanmar will get from their participation in the project. He emphasized that fishery is a good agenda for bilateral cooperation in deepening the understanding of future market potentials. Myanmar can learn from Vietnam particularly in terms of the role of government in promoting fishery sector to gain access to global markets and the importance of evidence-based policy making in guiding the private sector. Vietnamese experts can also come and assist the Myanmar researchers to develop its strategies in support of private sector.

Regional Grant Project by Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hai Linh, NARDT Project Coordinator, IPSARD

Mrs. Linh introduced an overview of the NARDT Project. The project is to establish a network for Agriculture and Rural Development Think-tanks for countries in the Mekong sub-region. The overall goal of the project is to improve the cooperation and quality of project formulation as well as the impacts of policy implementation in the ARD sector in the Mekong sub-region. She continued on to explain the objective of the project, key activities and their components.

Next, she continued to explain the procedure of Financial Governance, the management system, and the approval & reporting process. Lastly, she discussed scaling up and sustainability of the project and gradual integration of partnership institutions. She also went on to talk about the work plan of the project.

Introduction to Myanmar Program by Dr. Zaw Oo

Dr. Zaw Oo opened his talk by expressing deep appreciation for IFAD for supporting the workshop and IPSARD for allowing CESD to work together with Vietnam which can inspire us to follow the successful path in agriculture transformation. Myanmar would like to engage with the Private sector as the main advocates for shaping government policies and contributing to the implementation of national plans. Local researchers specializing aquaculture sector is very limited in Myanmar, lack of policy directions and institutional foundations are the issues that Myanmar can learn from Vietnam.

Introduction to Joint Research Program by Mr. Dang Kim Son, Facilitator of the Project, NARDT

Mr. Dang Kim Son gave an insider's view of how Vietnam developed its agriculture sector throughout the years. Vietnam's agriculture sector growth rate was shown in comparison to China, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Food supply per capita, protein supply per capita and the monthly median income per head show a steady increase whereas the poverty rate in rural areas decreases significantly. He also showed us the country's export commodities in the global markets as well as the integration process from 1995 to 2016. Furthermore, he emphasized the role of sound evidence in policy making and the role of a policy research institute in achieving success. He also stated that Viet Nam, Myanmar, and Thailand are the most suitable countries to develop Aquaculture.

Lessons from Vietnam Experience for the Aquaculture Sector Development by Dr. Myo Naing, Senior Research Fellow, CESD

Dr. Myo Naing presented the overview of Vietnam Aquaculture Sector Development to learn lessons from Vietnamese experiences. First, he explained about the beginning of aquaculture development in Vietnam during the period of 1960s until 2017 and also the transformation of aquaculture sector. By the year of 2017, fishery is the 5th largest export item in Vietnam and also seafood is one of the major exporting commodities. Second, he presented about the legal and policy frameworks of fishery sector such as Fisheries Law, Strategy, Master Plan, Action Plan, Decisions and program in comparison with Myanmar. Thirdly, he focused on explaining about the Master Plan of Vietnam Fisheries and Aquaculture Development issued on 16 August 2013 with specific targets until 2020 and 2030. He also presented briefly about the aquaculture value chain in Viet Nam. Finally, he presented the main facts and lessons to be learned from Vietnam for the future development of Myanmar Aquaculture Sector.

Development of BSc (Fisheries and Aquaculture) in Myanmar by Dr. Kay Lwin Htun

Dr. Kay Lwin Htun presented the development of undergraduate degree program on Fisheries (BSc in Fisheries and Aquaculture) and the difficulties she faced during the process. She started by giving a

short introduction about the University system and how fishery was covered only in one course namely Etiology reserved for final year student of Zoology major. Together with 17 faculty members, the University of Arizona and funding from USAID, Lab of Aquatic Bioscience was upgraded and teachers were sent to universities to obtain short term intensive training in hatchery technology, fish nutrition, and feed technology. The idea was to establish a research network to support fishery sector development. Out of the initial 17 faculty members, only 14 were now involved in the actual implementation process as 3 members were transferred to other universities across the country. As of 2019, there are currently 62 students (38 female students and 24 male students).

As a way forward, she hopes to increase the number of students as well as faculty members. Moreover, she looks forward to getting help from experts/foreign universities in giving lectures on specific specializations and to contribute to the development of curriculum in universities across the country. As research will be a key component of the degree completion, she would like to work closely with CESD in developing research agenda through her networks.

Agriculture Labour and Skill Development by Dr. Zaw Oo, Executive Director, CESD

Firstly, Dr. Zaw Oo presented about the Myanmar's recent economic trends such as real GDP growth and sector contribution such as services, industry and agriculture, structural changes in the economy. Secondly he focused on explaining about labour market and jobs in Myanmar, labour force participation rate in each state and region, gender division of labour, labour market developments relating to migration, labour-intensive industries. Thirdly, he discussed about the growth potentials of fishery sector (aquaculture, inland fishery and marine fishery) and agriculture labour and skill development. Finally, he explained about the development and demand analysis, and also public private partnership in skills development. He also mentioned to formulate the employment opportunities in fishery sector and capacity building for human resources development. Innovation lab is one of the tasks to be implemented in Myanmar, research work is needed to explore how Myanmar could take advantage of mobile applications in the fishery sector in line with industrial 4.0 for better workplace and job opportunities.

Open Floor Discussion: Questions, Discussion and Comments,

Dr. Kyaw Tun Myint, Vice Chairman, MFF

- The main fact for the fishery sector development in Vietnam is because of proactive commerce policy, developing species-specific export targets, certification of export products, especially for EU and US export. In Myanmar, even though MFF has been advocating to the National Government, it has not succeeded yet. For example, infrastructures such as electricity and transportation are very important for fishery products. Myanmar has to learn from Vietnam how to organize Private, Public Partnership successfully. **Foreign commercial policy** should emphasize fishery sector through which the government can help industries and businesses to get access to foreign markets.
- Another important requirement is **infrastructure**. We cannot copy what Vietnam is doing. Because of differences in infrastructure between our two countries, our products will be more expensive than theirs.

- Another important thing is ***the government's recognition of aquaculture sector as important for the country's economic development and job creation***, and accordingly issuing law, policies and Master Plans. In our country, fisheries businesses are trying just to survive with break-even points.
- One essential thing to get access to international markets is ***certificates***. GAqP is a basic standard, and we should promote it broadly among small holders. But we also need to go through certification process.
- We need technology, facilities, and finance. We are talking not only about policies, but also about technologies. We are glad to have opportunities from NARDT for technological and innovation support.
- *Specifically, we like to know the role of broodstock* in pushing Vietnam's aquaculture sector move forward. We are curious about how did Vietnam get that technology right? Broodstock is important. Without good broodstock, we cannot get good products. How did they get start with good broodstock, how did they get the technologies for broodstock, what species they are breeding and how did they get those species?

U Win Kyaing (General Secretary of Myanmar Fisheries Federation - MFF)

- Myanmar aquaculture law is under revision recently. But it is not so different from the old one which was enforced in 1989 and amendment, which is 30 years old. MFF suggested as the new law should be named Aquaculture Development Law and also committee implementing development work should be organized. We will keep pushing the government and the parliament to undertake serious reforms. Land use policy is very important for aquaculture development and should be changed in Myanmar to be harmonize between agriculture and aquaculture sectors.

U Myint Sein

- What kinds of incentive did the government of Vietnam give to fisheries private sector businesses? For example, tax incentive to the fishery sector?
- Infrastructure: who did initiatives for the infrastructure development, by business owners? Or government support? What roles did the government of Vietnam and the private sector take in the development of infrastructure?
- Technology: How was technology transferred to Vietnam? What did GoV do to bring foreign investment into Vietnam especially for Aquaculture sector?

Afternoon meeting (after lunch, at about 2 pm)

Participants:

1. Mr. Nguyen Thanh Tung, IFAD Country Program Officer
2. Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hai Linh, NARDT Project Coordinator, IPSARD
3. Mr. Dong Kim Son, Facilitator of the Project, NARDT
5. Dr. Zaw Oo, Executive Director, CESD
6. Dr. Myo Naing, Senior Research Fellow, CESD
7. U Nyein Chan Aung, Technology and Communication Officer, CESD
8. Daw Ei Mom Khin, Research Assistant, CESD

Main Discussion Points

- To send the Diagnosis Studies according to the outline that has been sent by Ms. Linh. It should describe the common issues of the country which need support from NARDT to solve such as the country needs for ARD human capacity enhancement training, ARD research and ARD policy advocacy, existing conditions of government implementation activities, priorities of the country, policy gaps, what the Myanmar government cannot answer. Diagnostic Study report should cover all 4 years of project period. After that Inception (Workshop) report should also mention about for expert to expert, leader to leader exchange program and to bring Myanmar government and higher officials from fisheries/aquaculture sector to Vietnam for a study tour for fisheries policy process.
- **Innovation Lab concept and frame** (eg. Mobile app in which information is fed by users who are from different countries, such as Laos, Viet Nam, Myanmar) can be prepared by 10 Dec 2019 but for the detailed function and system needs more time to prepare. The concept of Innovation Lab is a kind of an Information System that is not developed by data suppliers, but fed by users. We want to work with association that has members, who will also feed information to it. The system needs lots of information to get in the next three or four months. CESD will set up the frame of the system. It will start with aquaculture sector on that, based on our country's situation, and other countries can also use it by doing modification to be suited for their country situations. For innovation, knowledge platform is very important. Once the platform is achieved (established), we can converse the information into different languages. Terminology of usage "Innovation Lab" should be changed like "ICT based E-agricultural Policy Lab" or something and this can also be expanded for different countries (eg. Tilapia, farmers from Vietnam can share experience to others via this app). E-agricultural lab is a success in Africa but not yet in South East Asia, so we should start for this. FAO is conducting a scoping study for E-agriculture in Vietnam and maybe other countries also. Vietnam also has project "one commune, one product" this is ICT Based solutions to merge farmers and industry. IPSARD is in the process of thinking for ICT Based to link the existing one. A good example for database system building is Laos which created data and opened access to public.
- Myanmar can learn from Vietnam such as South-to-South cooperation and also International Support Group (ISG) which is trying not only to bring outside government and NGOs but also to make harmonize between them.
- Myanmar have the presence of major development partners such as the World Bank, which provides public sector loan. But not private sector loan. IFAD country loan program has also not yet established in Myanmar. So, it is better to start initiative to establish especially on the focus area for private sector loan (like small financing window especially for agricultural financing, financing policy and strategy and PPP financing and also value chain financing).



