



Brief Note

Thematic Green Talk on Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)

- Date: 26 August 2021
- Time: 10:30-12 AM
- Venue: Virtual Zoom Meeting
- Participants: 71 people

Objectives of the meeting:

- To strengthen knowledge and experience sharing on Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) which is certified on agroecological products.
- To promote knowledge exchange and foster learning among ALiSEA members.
- To create a diversified space for knowledge sharing with all ALiSEA members in terms of standard of certification for agricultural products.

Accomplishments:

Mr. Sokkheng, a National Secretariat of ALiSEA network for Cambodia, introduced about the objectives of the meeting and also shared the information and background of diversified speakers who came from different sectors such as non-government organization, farmer and private sector (organic shop) with all audiences. Then, Mrs Lucie Raynaud, Regional Project Coordinator for ASSET project and ALiSEA network, gave an opening remark of the meeting.

▪ Presenter 1:

Mr. Chan Sokha, Program Manager of Cambodia Institute for Rural Development (CIRD), presented about the definition of participatory guarantee system (PGS), why PGS is needed for quality rice seed, the process and methodology of establishment of PGS, outcome of PGS implementation and the constraints and solutions. After finishing the presentation, there were some significant questions that were raised by the audiences as following:

Question 1: Asked by Yun Sinang (ADARIDA Siem Reap), how to access to PGS for rice seed producers and extent it wider?

Answer: We do not have PGS for rice seed yet, but we surely can do it by follow the same protocol for the other crops for exporting. We can promote PGS products broader through many workshops by involving with many NGOs and relevant stakeholders.

In addition, Mr. Prak Serey said that actually we did for rice seed since 2015 based on the government policy for exporting rice for million tones per year. Seed certification is a key to export, so the GPS is a good platform to promote our product of rice seeds.

There were some arguments it on PGS, GAP and SRP. It seems not so clear about the PGS whether it is a standard to check the quality? =) the confirmation is that PGS is quality control/Guarantee not standard as GAP.

▪ **Presenter 2:**

Mrs Douch Ses, a Leader of ECOFARM Agricultural Cooperative in Siem Reap province, presented about the background of Ecofarm, Ecofarm collective business, PGS and Ecofarm collective business on rice seed production, safe vegetable production, solid compost production, safe white rice production, the reason of using PGS and how Ecofarm implementing PGS, field inspection schedule and how farmers involve in the field inspection. After ending of presentation, there were also some interesting questions that expressed by participants such as:

Question 1: was asked by Mr. Sopheak, ED of AFD, who support the PPT slide preparation? It is very interesting and attractive.

Answer: Frankly speaking, it was supported by Gret's staff in Siem Reap

Question 2: To what extent you confident to operate your work on standard?

Answer: It is supported by project.

Answer: Highly confident to work on our standard/ not much challenging so far.

- PGS practiced since 2017 in ECOFARM
- So far, there are many other communities visited our community
- There are internal challenges, lack of young members
- Consumers could not visit the farms in order to check the quality

Question 3: Asked by Mr. Ridan Sun

Q1: What kind of seed of vegetable you purify?

Answer: Vegetable – Local seed but only fruit vegetables.

Q2: How to promote your products? How many times per year? Who are your targets?

Answer: We promote through our Facebook page and conduct campaign called consumer's day; our audiences are different people.

Question 4: Asked by Mr. Chan Sokha, Program Manager of CIRD, what are the market challenges? And what are the solutions?

Answer: So far, before the pandemic breakout, we also faced with market challenges, our members could not sell out their products. The solution was that we bought all products from our members and sell out by ourselves to encourage our members to continue their productions. However, during pandemic breakout, it is harder and it is over capacity of our community to handle as we have been done so far.

Question 5: Asked by Mr. Sok Sarang, founder of CamCert Consulting Firm Co.Ltd, PGS is implemented by ECOFARM so far, but will you plan to apply GAP instead of PGS in the future?

Answer: So far ECOFARM has been practiced GAP, but we would practice for PGS organic standard. Market technical expert of ECOFARM added that so far, we promote our products through many channels such as social media, creating videos posting in Facebook page. We also conduct campaign call consumer's days which more than 100 participants joined this event.

=) Lucies also added some clarifications on certification and standards:

- Technical standard refers to how to check the production of organic rice safe standard like GAP/SRP
- Certification system refers to certifying standard. For instant, PGS can certify those technical standards.

▪ **Presenter 3:**

Mrs Bun Sieng, a Founder of Natural Agriculture Village Shops, presented about why do we need PGS for agricultural products, and its challenges and solutions during using PGS as a tool. Then, Mrs Sieng also revealed some recommendations and lesson learned in terms of PGS tool as below:

- The price of products between PGS or non-PGS is still the same
- Much challenging with chit products in the market
- Somehow, difficult to change mindset of farmers. They are not flexible, stick only mono crops not diversify their cropping systems to adapt with market
- Processing is the key to challenge the current market
- Most of the group of farmers who supply products to her are small and medium scale

Conclusion:

Lastly, Lucie provided key message regarding to online assessment for ALiSEA platform and would encourage all participants and organizers to continue this thematic talk regularly in the future. Then, she gave a closing remark on the meeting by saying that thanks for all respective speakers who spent the value time for sharing these as well as all audiences who are always active participation and then keep moving forward in order to enhance agroecology transition in Cambodia.

Annex: Participant list