



**REPORT OF
THE REGIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION OF
THE ASIA-PACIFIC NETWORK FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION
ON THE STATUS OF FIVIMS INITIATIVES**

Bangkok, Thailand, 19-22 November 2002

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (RAP)

BANGKOK, THAILAND

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I. INTRODUCTION

Part 1: Opening of the Consultation

1. The Regional Expert Consultation of the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition (ANFN) on *The status of Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) initiatives*, organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 19 to 22 November 2002. Nineteen participants from 12 countries attended the Consultation. The countries included Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. Resource persons from FAO Headquarters, FAO-RAP and from the Innovative Development Strategies (Pvt) Ltd, Pakistan, as well as observers from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan were also present during the Consultation. The list of the participants is given in Appendix 1.
2. Biplab K. Nandi, Senior Food and Nutrition Officer, FAO-RAP and Secretary, ANFN welcomed the participants, observers and guests. He gave a brief background of the Asia Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition and informed the Consultation of the rationale for adopting FIVIMS as the theme. All the participants, resource persons and observers were requested to introduce themselves.
3. Elsa M. Bayani, Executive Director of the National Nutrition Council in the Philippines and Shyam S. Dubey, Deputy Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, India were elected as Chair and Vice Chair persons, respectively. M.O.A. de Zoysa, Director, the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute, Sri Lanka and Lafaele Enoka, Senior Agricultural Economist, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Meteorology, Samoa were elected as the rapporteurs.
4. On behalf of the Director-General of FAO of the United Nations, N. M. Hla, Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of RAP welcomed the participants and opened the Regional Expert Consultation on *The status of FIVIMS initiatives* on behalf of the FAO Regional

Representative for Asia and the Pacific He Changchui who was away on a mission to the Royal Projects of Thailand.

5. Mr Hla reminded the Consultation of the definition of food security adopted during the 1996 World Food Summit (WFS) and emphasized the importance of achieving food security in the context of the region. He also reviewed the WFS goals, which were reaffirmed during the *World Food Summit: five years later (WFS: 5yl)* held in June 2002, and highlighted the role of FAO in the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on FIVIMS in strengthening the monitoring of food security at the national and global levels. He stressed that if the objectives of WFS are to be achieved, appropriate policies and action programmes must be directed specifically at those who are undernourished or at risk. Therefore, a well designed FIVIMS at the country level could be of great relevance in as much as it is intended to provide information and other policy support in designing, monitoring and evaluating related policies and interventions.
6. He reassured the participants that the national FIVIMS initiative had been a priority concern for FAO-RAP. As such, RAP, in collaboration with FAO Headquarters, had been assisting the member countries in establishing national FIVIMS aimed at addressing issues of food insecurity and nutrition vulnerability. In this regard, Mr. Hla expressed his gratitude to the government of Japan for the support it has extended to the Asia FIVIMS project otherwise known as *Development of a vulnerability information base, mapping and dissemination system for Asia in support of FIVIMS: GCP/RAS/170/JPN*. The partnership between RAP and the Asia FIVIMS project was formalized before the end of 2001 to facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of technical assistance to five countries in the region, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
7. Lastly, Mr Hla wished everyone a successful and productive Consultation. The full text of the message is given in Appendix II.
8. Biplab K. Nandi presented the objectives, agenda, expected outcomes, and organisation of the Expert Consultation. He emphasized that all the participants were invited in their personal capacity. Also, he introduced the importance of incorporating the topics, namely the United Nations Development Assistance Framework /Common Country Assessment

(UNDAF/CCA) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), in the current agenda and briefly discussed the opportunities for linking UNDAF/CCA and PRSP initiatives with FIVIMS at the national level. Recognising that while the FIVIMS initiative has yet to be undertaken in some of the countries, the Consultation could provide a unique forum to explore and exchange ideas and experiences on how FIVIMS could be put in place. The proposed agenda was adopted by the Consultation. The details of the agenda, expected outcomes and timetable are given in Appendix III.

II. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PAPERS PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED

Part 2: Overview of FIVIMS

9. Jenny Riches informed the Consultation that the FIVIMS initiative started after the 1996 WFS. During the summit it was recognized that countries needed accurate and timely information on food insecurity and vulnerability to monitor their progress towards attainment of the WFS goals and to support more effective actions and interventions.

10. The overall objective of the FIVIMS initiative was to increase the use of quality information in the design, implementation and monitoring of actions to address food insecurity and vulnerability. The specific objectives focused on: (a) improving understanding through the provision of accurate and timely information on food insecurity and vulnerability; and (b) supporting the advocacy and facilitating functions for more effective action through greater collaboration and cooperation linked with improved performance by relevant agencies. The Consultation was informed that the FIVIMS Initiative operated on two major levels (that is, national and international) to link knowledge and information to actions to address food insecurity and vulnerability issues. For example, development of a conceptual framework of food insecurity links the traditional food production centred system to health, care, and poverty issues within an overall framework of sustainable livelihoods with nutritional status as an outcome indicator.

11. Naoki Minamiguchi informed the Consultation about the objectives and activities of the Asia FIVIMS project including an indication of the future plan of action for 2003-2007. The Consultation noted that a partnership was initiated in January 2002 between RAP and the Asia FIVIMS Project to implement a number of start-up activities in the five selected Asian countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The major aims of the project were to develop an institutional framework at the local level and to build capacity of the relevant national professionals on the FIVIMS approach to facilitate its establishment in the respective countries.

12. The Letter of Agreement (LoA) of the Asia FIVIMS project was signed with Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It was reported that Bangladesh would sign the LoA by the end of 2002. Under the LoA, each country was to implement a number of activities including organisation of the FIVIMS national Steering Committee, Technical Sub-Committee, strengthening of FIVIMS national Focal Points with appropriate hardware and software, conducting awareness building meetings/workshops, enhancing capacity development of the Technical Sub-Committee members and other relevant national experts on FIVIMS type approaches. The final output is a Manual of Operation – a country specific FIVIMS guidelines. National consultants were appointed in all the four countries to assist the FIVIMS national Focal Points in carrying out the said activities. The project also developed suitable indicators and methods for identifying vulnerable areas and population groups at sub-national levels for Thailand and the Philippines.

Part 3: Presentations and discussions to review progress of implementation of FIVIMS, International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) and World Food Summit (WFS) follow-up activities

Bangladesh: Presented by Mirza Altaf Hossain and Anwar Hossain

13. The Consultation was updated on a number of follow-up activities undertaken in Bangladesh after the 2000 Regional Consultation organised by RAP on FIVIMS. The activities included fielding of three FAO missions, organisation of two national workshops, preparation of a Project Concept Paper (PCP), and one brainstorming session, among others. A number of reasons why an initiative like FIVIMS is needed in Bangladesh were reported. These included regional and seasonal variations in food production and availability, diversity in the agro-ecological situation, various causes of malnutrition and vulnerability, and lack of timely information.

14. The Consultation noted that while the Programming Division of the Planning Commission was earlier nominated as the national FIVIMS Focal Point in 1999, the Bangladesh Applied Nutrition and Human Resource Development Board (BAN-HRDB, formerly BIRTAN) of the Ministry of Agriculture was selected to assist the Focal Point in implementing activities related to the establishment of the national FIVIMS.

15. It was reported that the first workshop on nutritional mapping was organized in July 2000 and the second one in September 2001, with assistance from FAO-RAP. A Project Concept Paper (PCP) was presented by BAN-HRDB, which was endorsed by the workshop. It proposed piloting of FIVIMS activities in four *upazillas* (sub-districts) in Bangladesh, which are known to be vulnerable to different types of risks including river erosion, drought and flooding. The Consultation noted that a brainstorming session was conducted by an FAO mission to discuss issues related to information needs and various organizational arrangements to establish the national FIVIMS in Bangladesh. A number of issues related to the establishment of FIVIMS were discussed. It included availability of data on food insecurity and nutrition, selection of a suitable organization to host the national FIVIMS Secretariat, and roles and responsibilities of different national level partners. A number of suggestions were made regarding the most suitable agency, including BAN-HRDB, among others, to host the national Secretariat.

16. As a follow-up to the ICN and WFS activities, the Consultation noted that a number of activities were undertaken in Bangladesh aimed at improving the country's food security and nutritional situation. After the adoption of the Bangladesh National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN) in 1997, each of the 15 development ministries including agriculture, health, livestock and fisheries, social welfare, and women and children affairs identified their sectoral Focal Points on nutrition. Major programmes reported to be under implementation aimed at reducing food insecurity and malnutrition were the Integrated Horticulture Nutrition Project of the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Nutrition Programme of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Cambodia: Presented by It Nody and Choch Nhean

17. The Consultation noted a number of activities that were undertaken in Cambodia related to the establishment of a national FIVIMS. After fielding of a mission supported by the Asia FIVIMS project in August 2002, the location of the national FIVIMS Focal Point shifted from the Ministry of Rural Development to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). In late 2002, with technical assistance from the Asia FIVIMS Project, a national FIVIMS Secretariat was set-up at the MAFF. It was emphasised that without support and coordination of line agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies, such a multi-sectoral system would not be able to function. Identifying a future plan of actions, therefore, was reported to be a key to the success of the national FIVIMS. However, the Consultation was informed that more activities were needed to develop a key indicators database so as to identify the causes of hunger and accordingly take remedial actions. Data were reportedly available for micronutrient deficiencies including iodine deficiency disorders (IDD), vitamin A deficiency (VAD) and iron deficiency anaemia (IDA), but there were gaps in terms of other micronutrient deficiencies, e.g. zinc and folic acid deficiency.

18. In describing the country's progress in relation to the ICN and WFS goals, the Consultation was informed that the Royal Government of Cambodia formulated a long-term agricultural development strategy that focused on poverty reduction. Major programmes included Action against Hunger, Special Programme for Food Security, National Agriculture Development Programme, Community Action for Social Development

Programme, Food Insecurity Programme and Gender Equality in Food Security Programme. The Consultation also noted that the Royal Government of Cambodia began to define more clearly its socio-economic policies and programmes since 1994, which could have a lasting impact on food and nutrition. The country adopted the ICN and WFS goals as indicated in the Cambodia Nutrition Investment Plan (CNIP) 1997 and in the Socio-economic Development Plan 2001-2005. Improvements in agriculture and rural development and nutrition received highest priority including the monitoring and implementation of projects on agriculture, water resource utilization and rural development. Thus, reductions in malnutrition and food insecurity were observed, especially of women and children in Cambodia. The *National seminar on food security and nutrition*, which was held in April 1999, was the very first one of its kind the government had ever organized. It established key strategies in order to improve food security in a sustainable manner.

China: Presented by Yuna He

19. The Consultation was briefed that the Ministry of Agriculture in China organized a workshop on FIVIMS entitled *Mapping poverty and vulnerability in China* in November 2001. Five hundred and ninety two counties were declared as being “Poverty Stricken Counties”, mountainous and bordering regions in China with the highest concentration of the poor. A weighted poverty index (WPI) was developed to target the villages and households. A number of information sources were reported that could significantly contribute to the FIVIMS in China. Rural Statistic Systems in China were identified as one of the major information sources that mostly include data collected through surveys and census. The Consultation noted that major agencies maintaining databases based on sample surveys included the National Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health. So far, two Censuses had been conducted in the country, that is, Population Census 1990 and the First Agricultural Census in 1997; both are conducted regularly every ten years.

20. The Consultation was further informed that since 1980, the Ministry of Agriculture, through its Computer Centre of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), maintained information on about 140 indicators at the county level that were updated annually. Other agencies including the Institute of Geographical Sciences and the Natural Resources Research, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health regularly collected data that could be relevant to the Chinese national

FIVIMS. However, there was no system in existence to exchange or share the information maintained by different agencies. It was hoped that with the formation of the National FIVIMS Steering Committee composed of heads from different agencies, proper coordination and execution of FIVIMS and related activities would take place. Lastly, it was emphasized that necessary funds for FIVIMS related activities should be provided, enabling the system to function.

21. The food and nutrition situation in China was described as were the major programmes aimed at achieving the goals of ICN and WFS. Specifically, the China Food and Nutrition Development Plan 2001-2010, the Plan of Action for Improving the Physical Fitness and Health of Chinese children, and the new Poverty Alleviation Compendium-Directions were identified.

Fiji: Presented by Hiangi Foraete

22. The Consultation was informed of the historical development of the national FIVIMS initiative in Fiji, which started as a pilot project with assistance from FAO. A number of reasons were identified for the slow progress of the national FIVIMS initiative such as lack of coordination among government and non-government institutions, and lack of communication between the FIVIMS national body and FAO.

23. It was emphasised that Fiji had a number of existing information systems and therefore the role of FIVIMS was mostly to support and consolidate the existing systems, not to create any new system. These included the 1996 Population Census Report, the Agriculture Census Report, Fiji Land Use Capability, Agriculture Exports and Imports, Per Capita Food Availability, General Living Standard and Geographical Information Systems and Mapping.

24. The Consultation was further informed that the Ministry of Agriculture was officially nominated as the national FIVIMS Focal Point in late 1999. However, since then very little work has been done towards establishing the system, except that a national awareness workshop was conducted.

25. It was stated that a number of constraints existed including lack of proper coordination of the relevant available information and lack of funding and technical assistance. The major recommendations to establish FIVIMS in Fiji included creating awareness among the different national partners, enhancing campaigns leading to government commitment and strengthening a national FIVIMS centre, where all relevant information on food insecurity could be coordinated, analysed and made available to policymakers and institutions. Other recommended activities included establishment of a national FIVIMS network involving all the line ministries and NGOs, and finally, establishing links with the Global FIVIMS.

26. In reporting on the ICN and WFS follow-up activities, the Consultation appreciated the detailed description given on Fiji including its geographic location, description of the characteristics of its major islands, population, migration, health, socio-economic and nutritional status, government and legal system, climate, soil, vegetation and land use, economic condition including the macro-economic structure, labour force, wage, poverty and food security. Neither malnutrition nor food insecurity were considered as acute problems in the context of Fiji.

India: Presented by Shyam S. Dubey

27. The Consultation noted progress with respect to the national FIVIMS initiative. It was informed that the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution was the national FIVIMS Focal Point for India and an interdepartmental committee was formed to coordinate and facilitate the national FIVIMS related activities in the country. The committee was represented by all the related ministries/departments like the Planning Commission, the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Department of Women and Child Development, the Department of Statistics, the Department of Environment and Forest, etc. The National Informatics Centre, the government organization specialized in nation-wide computer networking and GIS mapping capacity down to the distinct level throughout the country, was also reported to be associated.

28. Fourteen indicators were short-listed for FIVIMS in India, which included indicators relating to the percentage of people living below the poverty line, nutritional status,

agricultural condition, health, market prices, and so on. A brief review was presented on various information systems in India that could contribute to the national FIVIMS initiative, including data from the National Population Census, National Sample Survey Organisation, Agricultural Statistics, Nutrition Relating Data, National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau, National Family Health Survey, Management Information System of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), and District Level Nutrition Profile. In consultation with the FAO country office in India, a pilot project on FIVIMS was prepared under the FAO Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) to be implemented in two states, namely, Himachal Pradesh and Orissa. The project would be initiated soon after its final approval from FAO Headquarters.

29. Reporting on the WFS follow-up activities, an action plan on food security was prepared by the DFPD based on various programmes and policies followed by the Government of India since independence. The major features of India's food security system were promotion of domestic food grains production, a system of minimum support prices to farmers, procurement and storage, a public distribution system, and maintenance of buffer stocks. The Consultation was informed that on account of the success of the Green Revolution, India had achieved self-sufficiency in food grains production, having increased grain production from 50 million tons in 1950 to 200 million tons in 1999-2000. Furthermore, the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in India was reported to be one of the most effective programmes for ensuring food security at the household level. Under TPDS, food grains are distributed through a vast network of around half a million fair-price shops at affordable prices, particularly to the Below Poverty Line Families. A special scheme called Antyodaya Anna Yojna Scheme had been launched for poorest of the poor. As a result of various government policies and programmes, the incidence of poverty in India declined during the period 1993 to 2000 as per the latest poverty estimate of the Planning Commission.

Indonesia: Presented by Iwan Fortuna Malonda

30. The Consultation was informed that the national initiative to establish FIVIMS in Indonesia started in 2000. However, it was limited to the preparation of the country profile on food security. Different ministries/agencies involved in the initiative included the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Bureau

of Statistics, the Coordinating Agency for Family Planning, and the National Planning Agency. A Food Security Council was established in 2001, headed directly by the President of the Republic of Indonesia. For strengthening FIVIMS related activities, the Agency for Food Security of the Republic of Indonesia proposed the establishment of an FIVIMS working group under the coordination of the Food Security Council, which could be responsible for conducting a food security mapping and information system. It was named as SIKAP (the Indonesian name for FIVIMS) and began work in early 2002. It was expected that a government order would be signed by the Minister of Agriculture before the end of 2002, leading to the institutionalisation of the SIKAP initiative. It was reported that SIKAP had already started developing a homepage for FIVIMS. However, the activity was constrained by inadequate technical skills and financial resources.

31. With regard to the follow-up of ICN and WFS, it was reported that the overall food and nutrition situation in Indonesia was quite good before and during 1996. However, the national economic crisis in 1997 led to a significant decline in the amount of energy and protein consumption per capita per day in 1999. Although the crisis is not over, the overall food and nutrition situation in Indonesia showed a fair recovery. The Indonesian government is committed to continuously monitoring and evaluating the situation in terms of food and nutrition surveillance that extends to household level in order to anticipate any food insecurity related problems as early as possible.

Nepal: Presented by Yogesh Vaidya

32. The Consultation was appraised that in response to the 1996 World Food Summit commitment, no activity was carried out in relation to the FIVIMS initiative in Nepal. In March 2001, the Agriculture Perspective Plan Monitoring and Analytical Unit (APPMAU) under the Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative was designated as the national FIVIMS Focal Agency.

33. The Consultation was further informed that a preliminary identification of food insecure and vulnerable population groups, their main livelihood strategy and the factors affecting their vulnerability was planned, linked with the on-going Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) of the World Food Programme (WFP).

34. The existing information systems that could make an immediate contribution towards establishing FIVIMS at the country level included The Nepal Living Standard Survey 1996, the Census 2001, the Nepal Multiple Indicator Surveillance (NMIS), the Nepal Family Health Surveys (NFHS) 2001, and the Nepal National Micronutrient Status Survey 1998. The Department of Health Services of the Ministry of Health, with the assistance of USAID, established an Integrated Health Management Information System (HMIS). The Agribusiness Promotion and Statistics Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives is responsible for Statistical Information on Nepalese agriculture, and could provide data on district-wise agriculture production, export/import, food balance sheets, and prices. Another potential information system that could be linked with FIVIMS includes the local government bodies in Nepal responsible for information generation, analysis, processing, reproducing, dissemination and use down to the district level. It was reported that under a pilot project called the Participatory District Development Programme (PDDP), an information system was established in 20 districts with the capacity of creating of GIS based databases including maps.

35. With regard to the ICN and WFS follow-up activities, it was stated that the NPAN had strongly stressed the need for a well-established and fully functional Secretariat for the National Nutrition Coordination Committee (NNCC) and a Food and Nutrition Surveillance Unit under the National Planning Commission that could extend support to the FIVIMS initiatives.

The Philippines: Presented by Elsa M. Bayani

36. The Consultation noted various programmes and activities being undertaken following the nine strategies or action themes of ICN. To specifically assess, analyse and monitor the nutrition situation, the National Nutrition Council (NNC) Governing Board, the country's policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition, decided to establish an FIVIMS in the Philippines since it helped in locating populations and areas most-at-risk to hunger and malnutrition. The Consultation further noted that a national FIVIMS Task Force was organized in 1998 with representation from different agencies concerned.

37. It was emphasized that the Philippines' FIVIMS would not just be concerned with data banking and archiving, but would be an action oriented system as well. The selection of

appropriate indicators was reported to be one of the most critical aspects in the national level FIVIMS initiative, which would identify populations and areas in the country that are food insecure and vulnerable. A number of analytical techniques, including regression and multiple cluster analysis, were applied to a set of variables to significantly predict food insecurity and vulnerability, with technical assistance from the Asia FIVIMS project, FAO and a nationally appointed Consultant.

38. Recently, the Asia FIVIMS project conducted a baseline vulnerability assessment, which recommended a set of indicators. The report was expected to be shared with the FIVIMS Task Force members at NNC at the end of 2002. This would significantly contribute to the finalisation of a set of FIVIMS indicators for the Philippines. To support accelerating the establishment of FIVIMS in the Philippines, FAO, through the Japan-funded Asia FIVIMS project, provided the amount of US\$23 000 to support Institutional Capacity Building in establishing the system in the Philippines. The national FIVIMS is expected to be operational in the country by early 2003.

39. With respect to the ICN and WFS follow-up, the Consultation was reassured about the commitment of the Philippines to continue its efforts to achieve the goals and objectives set out in the ICN and affirmed at the WFS. The Consultation was also informed about different national level initiatives undertaken to achieve those goal adopted by the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN). The NNC Secretariat, as the Focal Point, was successful in integrating nutrition considerations and components into four national programs, namely: Basic Needs Program (BNP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Modernizations Plan, Early Child Care and Development (ECCD), Safe Motherhood and the 20/20 Initiative. A number of programmes were reported to improve household food security that, among others, included home, community and school gardens among households and communities, and food assistance for preschool and school children as well as for families during emergency situations by the local government bodies; targeted food subsidies through selling of rice and selected food items at discounted prices, complemented by the health sector's micronutrient supplementation; school-based breakfast and milk feeding; and the NNC implemented nutrition education and information on promoting the increased production and consumption of fruits and vegetables, milk and milk products.

Samoa: Presented by Lafaele Enoka

40. The Consultation noted that Samoa was one of the five small island developing states that would pilot the FIVIMS initiative¹ under the European Union-funded project GCP/INT/742/EC. This initiative led to the organisation of two national workshops by the FIVIMS Secretariat in Rome in collaboration with the FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific in Samoa. The first workshop was held in May 2001. Its aims were to improve awareness on FIVIMS initiatives and tools, discuss roles and inputs of various stakeholders in National FIVIMS and define priority actions towards the establishment of a National FIVIMS for Samoa. In addition, FAO sent two missions to help identify possible stakeholders in the National FIVIMS and prioritise areas for FAO assistance. The second workshop was held in September 2002 and aimed at formulating a clear food security, nutrition and vulnerability information strategy in reducing poverty and supporting sustainable livelihoods of different vulnerable population groups.

41. The Consultation was informed about the current status of the national FIVIMS initiative. It was reported that Samoa formulated a National Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Strategy including a conceptual framework and strategic approaches and objectives. The work plan is awaiting the Government's approval. As reported, the FIVIMS related databases included the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 1997, the Agriculture Census 199, the Population Census 2001 and the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2002. These were managed by the Department of Statistics.

42. In reporting the ICN and WFS follow-up activities, it was stated that the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) was the main document that outlined government strategies, both national and sector programmes. In the SDS 2002-2004, the government identified the agriculture and health sectors as priority areas for development leading to the achievement of the ICN and WFS goals.

¹ Other small island developing states include Barbados, Cape Verde, Comoros and Fiji.

Sri Lanka: Presented by M.O.A. de Zoysa

43. A number of past, current and future activities on the FIVIMS initiative were reported to the Consultation including the first Regional Expert Consultation on FIVIMS in Asia organized by FAO in 1999. During the workshop, the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute (HARTI) under the Ministry of Agriculture was identified as the national FIVIMS Focal Point. However, it was regretted that since then nothing substantial happened in the country until September 2002, when FAO approached the government to provide further assistance under the Asia FIVIMS project.

44. As part of the RAP and Asia FIVIMS project partnership, an FIVIMS mission was sent to Sri Lanka to initiate dialogue with different government agencies including the previously nominated National Focal Point. Among other activities, a brainstorming session with all the relevant government and other officials was held and a number of decisions regarding the formation of the FIVIMS National Committee and Technical Sub-Committee were made. Accordingly, a National Committee was formed of representatives from different ministries, UN agencies and other agencies, with the Secretary of Agriculture as the Chair and the Director of HARTI as the Member Secretary. A six-member Technical Sub-Committee was organized with the Director of HARTI as the Chair, with the possibility of the committee's composition being modified and/or extended as and when required. The signing of the LoA between the FAO Representative in Sri Lanka and the Director of HARTI took place on 4 October 2002 and a National Consultant was appointed.

45. The first meeting of the National Steering committee and the Technical Sub-Committee were scheduled for November 2002. A proposed meeting with the Honourable Prime Minister and other ministers relevant to food insecurity and vulnerability will be organized in mid-December 2002. Other activities to be undertaken include launching of an awareness programme on national FIVIMS consisting of activities including a number of TV/radio programmes, newspaper supplements and seminars/workshops and preparation of a document on FIVIMS, namely the Manual of Operations.

46. With regard to the ICN and WFS goals, the Consultation noted that the share of the agricultural sector in the GDP has gradually declined during last three decades. It was pointed out that despite the existence of widespread poverty, the country achieved an

excellent record of improving the quality of life. The high level of poverty was reported to be correlated with other indicators including food consumption, nutritional status of children and women, and low birth weight. Two important targeted programmes, namely Jansaviya and Samurdhi, had been undertaken, which could provide useful information on food insecurity and poverty.

Thailand: Presented by Songsak Srianujata and Arunee Krittayanawat

47. The Consultation noted that although Thailand was a leading food exporter, people in specific areas were facing malnutrition problems mainly due to poverty and poor food distribution systems. Since the inception of FIVIMS in 1999, the Institute of Nutrition in Mahidol University (INMU) worked with FAO as an interim FIVIMS national focal point. However, in 2000, the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE) was officially designated as the national FIVIMS Focal Point. Since then the INMU has been working closely with OAE mainly as the technical arm of the focal point. In supporting the establishment of the national FIVIMS, the FIVIMS National Committee was established in May 2000 composed of representatives from many concerned agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC), the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and INMU, among others. It is chaired by the assigned Deputy Permanent Secretary of MOAC with the secretariat based at the Center of Agricultural Information, OAE. The FIVIMS National Sub-Committee was also established functioning as an operating arm of the Thai FIVIMS.

48. Mr. Songsak proposed that a FIVIMS Technical Sub-Committee be established to function as the coordinating committee at all operational levels with a set of responsibilities including (a) designing the operation system of National FIVIMS program options to be proposed to the National FIVIMS Committee; (b) selecting appropriate indicators for National FIVIMS in accordance with the guidelines of the FAO-FIVIMS Program; and (c) developing a FIVIMS Manual of Operations to be used by the Thai FIVIMS project.

49. The contribution of FAO in establishing the national FIVIMS in Thailand was acknowledged. In October 2001, an FAO mission visited Thailand under the Asia FIVIMS Project. Its purpose was to define and select indicators/data to monitor the food insecurity situation as well as to develop methodologies for vulnerability analyses. Recently, a LoA was signed between FAO and OAE. The National Focal Point was expected to undertake a

number of activities leading to the national capacity development and development of a country specific FIVIMS guideline or Manual of Operations. INMU as an institution was appointed as the National Consultant to assist the initiative in the country.

50. The Consultation was informed that Thailand achieved self-sufficiency and became a major exporter of some food items including rice, sugar and chicken. Although an impact of the 1997 crisis was reflected in almost all indicators of nutrition, it was reported that Thailand was close to achieving the ICN and WFS goals through the implementation of a number of programmes and policies in food, agriculture and nutrition.

Viet Nam: Presented by Nguyen Cong Khan

51. The Consultation noted that Viet Nam had come up with its own set of definitions of vulnerability and food insecurity that included small farmers of the Northern uplands and Midlands (in Northern Viet Nam), small farmers of the Mekong and Red river delta, artisan fisher-folks of the Central coastal region, and poor urban workers with unstable occupations.

52. The Consultation recognised that there was already a group of committed people available in Viet Nam to run the activities linked to the national FIVIMS. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and other personnel engaged in the FIVIMS group already compiled *The state of food security in Viet Nam*. The publication reviews the country's progress on issues related to food security since the 1996 World Food Summit. Data on a number of indicators of food insecurity are available including various factors affecting people's ability to get enough food, such as food supplies, poverty and the general economic condition. It was further reported that new emphasis was given on presenting the most up-to-date statistics on nutrition indicators and other indicators related to FIVIMS. In addition, preparation of a FIVIMS Website was reported to be under priority consideration.

53. In reporting on the progress of ICN and WFS goals, it was emphasised that despite achieving remarkable progress in many sectors including economic growth, food production and supply and consumption, malnutrition was reportedly a challenging problem in Viet Nam for a large part of the population. But, on the other hand, it was shown that a number of diet related chronic health problems including obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and cardio-vascular diseases also turned out to be emerging problems that called for up-to-date information

systems with higher analytical skills for better planning and resource allocation. The government of Viet Nam has adopted the National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN) 1995-2000 and the National Nutrition Strategy 2001-2010.

54. The Consultation urged the countries in the region to make all out efforts to reduce the undernourished population to a level as pledged in WFS. It also reaffirmed that FIVIMS could play an important role in this regard. However, the Consultation strongly felt that FAO's methods of estimating undernutrition do not necessarily match those followed by the countries in determining the percentage of the population living below the poverty line. This resulted in reporting different sets of figures for practically the same purpose. This inconsistency often results in difficulties in interpreting the outcome of an intervention.

Internet-based Asia FIVIMS data dissemination, sharing and mapping system in support to development of Key Indicator Database System (KIDS): Presented by Naoki Minamiguchi

55. The Consultation noted the current status of the project with respect to developing an Asia FIVIMS website through a live presentation focused on web maps. The Asia FIVIMS web-based information dissemination and mapping system could import map and attribute data through GeoNetwork or from local disks. The system would allow the overall presentation and format of the maps to best fit users' needs. Since the system would be entirely web based it could modify maps from anywhere; it would not necessarily require a GIS database at the users' end. The use of metadata in the system was highlighted and the feasibility of using the Asia KIDS technologies in other websites was reported. It was further reported that the technology could be applied to a Nutrition Country Profile as well, and that the source codes could be opened for downloading and modification of the required maps. Raster data such as satellite images could be included in the system. Necessary links could be made with early warning and drought alert/crop monitoring datasets.

56. The issue of access to the database was raised. The Consultation was informed that it was restricted by password to protect the intellectual right of the data suppliers as well as to ensure that data were secure. The example of GIEWS was given, which had provided passwords to their partners to allow secured data exchange. It was reported that the type of restriction to access databases and the level of security would be up to respective

governments. However, the Asia FIVIMS regional data, which are relatively generic, would be freely available to all users. Since the national data belonged to a specific country, it could not be freely disseminated by the project. There was no CD version of the Asia FIVIMS web based system available as it is highly time consuming due to its dynamic rather than static nature. The CD version of the system will be developed in 2003. However, the project indicated possibilities of providing small teams of developers to interested countries to establish their own national systems. The Consultation noted that although the work to establish the dynamic web system required a few days, longer time was needed to perform other background tasks including ensuring data quality, updating, cleaning, gathering, etc. A server with any capacity could be used to maintain the website, but the number of visitors to the website was indicated to be the main determinant to the expected speed.

For the attention of countries

57. The Consultation agreed that the following actions were required to be undertaken:

- Including FIVIMS in the country's annual development plan for allocation of resources.
- Preparing and submitting suitable project proposals to national authorities and international agencies for seeking external funds.
- Conducting advocacy and/or orientation meetings at the country level to link FIVIMS with national initiatives, policies and programmes in order to generate political support from politicians, policy makers, international agencies and donors.
- Seeking partners engaged in other initiatives and programmes to extend the support base for FIVIMS, for example, PRSP and MDGs.
- Soliciting external support to prepare project proposals for submission to interested potential donors for FIVIMS establishment and similar other activities.

58. The Consultation also emphasised that the following actions would be useful for the countries which have yet to establish FIVIMS mechanisms at the national level:

- Issuance of government notification to establish appropriate authority and organisational set up for FIVIMS to constitute committees, such as, FIVIMS National Committee, Technical Sub-Committee etc.
- Establishing suitable working groups for selection of indicators and to identify appropriate analytical procedures for analyses of food insecurity and vulnerability.
- Seeking national support to undertake activities for the immediate establishment of FIVIMS Task Force and network.
- Organising an institutional network of FIVIMS.

59. Furthermore, the Consultation recognised that the following actions were requested to be undertaken particularly by those countries which had established FIVIMS mechanisms at the national level:

- Strengthening of advocacy activities aimed at enhancing political commitment to establish and institutionalise the national FIVIMS.
- Promoting the mechanism of involving FAO and other related UN and international agencies in the national FIVIMS activities.
- Upgrading technical as well as administrative capacity of the FIVIMS Focal Point/Agency.
- Preparing a work plan for a national FIVIMS initiative and its continued monitoring.

For the attention of FAO**60. The Consultation re-endorsed the following actions based on an earlier Consultation held in 2000:**

- Strengthening collaboration with other UN partners to ensure coordination of FIVIMS at all levels.
- Suggesting mechanisms to involve the National FIVIMS Focal Point in a country's food security related activities.
- Developing a common guideline on the FIVIMS approaches to ensure best practices in implementing FIVIMS at the country level.
- Sharing all the FIVIMS related documents with the National Focal Points.
- Sending suitable communication to appropriate high level government and other officials emphasising the functions and opportunities of establishing a national FIVIMS.
- Providing relevant data sets and mapping techniques to National FIVIMS Focal Points with appropriate training support.
- Developing a regional database with common selected indicators to the extent that it is feasible to do so.
- Documenting and disseminating the success stories of the national FIVIMS initiative.
- Providing assistance to countries to support translation of key documents on FIVIMS into local languages.
- Circulating information to ANFN representatives on relevant international and regional initiatives such as PRSP and MDGs for their information and use.

61. The Consultation also recognised that the following actions were urgently needed:

- Including all the national FIVIMS Focal Points within the framework of a common network.
- Assisting the national Focal Points to identify partners and resources to support national FIVIMS, e.g. to assist in the preparation of project proposals on FIVIMS.
- Strengthening coverage of support to involve more countries in the region.
- Considering expanding the scope of Asia FIVIMS projects activities in the Pacific region.
- Considering applicability of the concept of Asia FIVIMS project's in other countries of Asia and the Pacific region.

Part 5: FIVIMS in relation to the PRSP and UNDAF/CCA process**Introducing FIVIMS in relation to the PRSP and UNDAF/CCA process: Presented by Rene Verduijn**

62. The Consultation noted the context for the group work on FIVIMS and the UNDAF/CCA and PRSP initiatives. An overview of the overall FIVIMS approach and objectives, in addition to its conceptual framework, was provided. As reported, the identification of users' needs was found to be a necessary first step to ensure appropriate design of information collection, analysis and dissemination systems. Reportedly, there was a very broad range of national FIVIMS users, from UN, donor and government agencies to an individual citizen, as well as national and sub-national level developmental policy makers, allowing new and powerful entry points to be identified for FIVIMS. Several links between FIVIMS and other initiatives were stated both at the national and international level – two examples were the UNDAF (CCA and MDG) and the PRSP.

63. Opportunities to link FIVIMS to other prospective partners could be explored further in the workshop. The example of the UNDAF/CCA and FIVIMS in Kenya was briefly outlined. The MDG process (bringing together all UN agencies in the country) and its goals and indicators were explained with the focus on the indicators directly related to hunger. MDG progress reports from Cambodia and Viet Nam were mentioned. They provided an integrated assessment of progress and were found to be potential FIVIMS users. The advantages to FIVIMS of linking with these two initiatives were outlined (higher profile, sustainability, etc.). It was emphasised that two significant gains for FIVIMS could be achieved through its linkage with the on-going UNDAF/CCA and PRSP process. It included uplifting the profile of the FIVIMS initiative at the national level as a large contributor to more powerful initiatives and enhancing the institutional sustainability of FIVIMS-type data collection, analysis, and dissemination efforts through closer integration among key partners.

UNDAF/CCA – overview and a regional perspective: Presented by D.B. Antiporta

64. The Consultation appreciated an overview of UNDAF/CCA from the regional perspective for Asia and the Pacific. It was noted that there was little awareness at the

country level of the initiative. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were presented, which incorporated those developed in earlier global summits on social and economic issues. The poverty and hunger targets and indicators were explained in detail. The Consultation noted that there had been thirty years of improvement in poverty levels due to sustained agricultural sector growth. However, at the country level there were big differences throughout the region in progress. The recent Asian crisis severely affected overall food security, especially that of food insecure and vulnerable people. The need for information was emphasised to ensure that the problems were recognised and rightly acted upon. It was further noted that the new economic paradigm of globalisation has different effects on the food security of different vulnerable groups.

65. The Consultation was informed that those countries depending on rice were concerned about adopting free market concepts; the prices would fall (impact on domestic producers) and become unstable (effect on all consumers/producers). Prices for staples had been declining overall, but the variability around that trend was unpredictable. There is a need for an information system that could assess it to allow better responses. UNDAF was explained as an attempt to unify and harmonise the UN's activities and give support to development challenges of countries. As stated, it could be seen as a business plan of the UN with common objectives and a programming framework for UN resources. CCA was reported to be the underlying analytical process and report for the UNDAF – looking at the crosscutting issues and available resources from the UN perspective.

66. The Consultation recognized that the MDGs had eight goals, eighteen targets and forty-eight indicators related to poverty, education, gender and women's empowerment, HIV/AIDS, environment, health and nutrition. The main advantage of the UNDAF/CCA process was that the UN system put more recognition on agriculture as a focal area for food security and poverty alleviation

67. The Consultation noted that in Kenya the PRSP had been successful in operating a functional institutional FIVIMS network.

68. National awareness of UNDAF/CCA was found to be very poor and hardly any national institution was found to be involved in the process. The Consultation noted some constraints in involving the UNDAF/CCA in the national FIVIMS initiative. However, the

benefits of the linkages were discussed and how best to pursue a better coordination between FIVIMS and UNDAF/CCA at the country level was recognized. Sensitizing relevant ministries to contact FAO or other UN agencies at the country level to ensure better partnership was strongly suggested.

69. Political will was reportedly critical for any successful implementation of the initiative. Progress towards the MDGs would be monitored and reported annually to the General Assembly. Public awareness through advocacy, therefore, would help motivate governments to mobilize resources and take appropriate action. It needs to be done sooner rather than later to minimize the gradual reduction in regional human resources.

PRSP – Overview and regional perspective: Presented by Maria Antonia G. Tuazon

70. The paper provided an overview on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) as well as Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) both in terms of objectives, guiding principles and steps in their development. As reported, PRSP could be viewed as a description of a country's macroeconomic, structural as well as social policies and programs to promote growth and reduce poverty. FIVIMS, on the other hand, was described as a system that assembles, analyses and disseminates information regarding who is food insecure or at risk, extent of food insecurity, where they are, and the underlying causes or determinants. Both were guided by principles such as country or needs driven, comprehensive, results-oriented, and broad-based in terms of participation of relevant sectors and sustainability. There was also a shared recognition of the need to prioritise the population according to poverty levels or food insecurity and/or vulnerability.

71. While there was no blueprint for development of PRSP, there were three recommended steps where FIVIMS could be linked. Those were: 1) development of a comprehensive understanding of poverty and its determinants 2) selection of a mix of public actions which have demonstrated the highest impact on poverty and 3) selection and tracking of outcome indicators. FIVIMS is a system intended not just to be archival, but to provide a quick response mechanism to existing as well as impending threats of food insecurity and vulnerability. It could direct PRSP developers in targeting or identifying the groups to whom public actions are needed. The link between poverty and food insecurity and nutrition vulnerability has long been established and recognised so the data users of FIVIMS (like

PRSP developers) could be used for poverty diagnostics. Furthermore, as part of tracking outcomes or the impact of poverty reduction strategies in the absence of well-conducted research, FIVIMS data could provide a substantial wealth of data either as direct or proxy indicators.

72. One potential benefit derived from linking PRSP with FIVIMS, aside from the obvious convergence of actions, was the creation of a wider base of partnerships. Within and outside the country, that link could provide opportunities for establishing strategic partnerships between and among sectors as well as between data providers and data users.

73. Lastly, some issues or challenges were presented, as they would likely affect the link between PRSP and FIVIMS. These were harmonization of indicators to be used, ensuring data quality, resource requirements and sustainability.

**Opportunities and scopes for FIVIMS to monitor the progress towards the PRSP:
Presented by Sohail Jehangir Malik**

74. The Consultation was updated that monitoring and evaluation are the key to the PRSP process. FIVIMS could provide the means to do so. In turn, FIVIMS could gain access to resources for long-term sustainability. PRSP was reportedly built on national ownership and global partnership. There was a need to recognise that there are declining global aid resources for development. Those, therefore, needed to be rationally allocated. The history of the PRSP and HIPC process was reported and the need for monitoring based on reliable information systems was highlighted. It was reported that evaluation of some PRSP documents was undertaken, and once evaluation of the completed PRSP documents is completed, there will be very good opportunities to find mechanisms for FIVIMS to link into the process. The Consultation was informed that an important use of the food security concept was in highlighting agriculture's key contributions to poverty reduction (employment, food production and economic growth). The Consultation noted several trends – reduction in World Bank disbursements for traditional sectors (including agriculture) in two critical regions, namely Africa and South Asia. It was also informed of the decline in investment lending (more to adjustment lending). In this scenario, efficient allocation of resources became important and provides an excellent opportunity for FIVIMS to link into the process. The Consultation was appraised of the growing importance of MDGs. Hence, it

was observed that that there were few completed PRSP documents (2 out of 12) that were reviewed and none referred directly to food insecurity in defining poverty. The strategies were poorly linked to the national poverty profiles and did not contain a good assessment of how to best implement a pro-poor perspective. The completed PRSPs had no sectoral (agriculture sector) breakdown in the budget; no impact analysis; and a shortfall in the analytical and monitoring area. It was stressed that the PRSP source book needed to be immediately improved to ensure that these issues are addressed.

75. The Consultation was informed that a major opportunity for FIVIMS to be linked with national level PRSP would be after the review of the 12 PRSP documents in 2003. For that some preparatory work needed to be done with the focal people connected to PRSP to raise awareness of what FIVIMS could contribute. At the national level, the Consultation encouraged relevant stakeholders to contact the World Bank desk officers and the local World Bank office who could leverage funds for FIVIMS type activities – particularly if it was pointed out that FIVIMS could provide all the indicators that PRSP needed.

76. The Consultation noted that Samoa was restructured in 1996 and the resulting document was used as a basis for their current strategy for FIVIMS. It was recognised that the FIVIMS and PRSP initiatives were complementary and those links needed to be reinforced.

77. The Consultation, having reviewed the strategies of NPAN in various countries, recognised that there was scope to link it with PRSP, so that availability of resources from the World Bank could be considered.

Part 6: Working groups – opportunities to raise the profile of FIVIMS Focal Points

78. The participants were grouped into two by self selection. Group 1 agreed to work on the topic “Mainstreaming FIVIMS to national development efforts”, while group 2 discussed opportunities to raise the profile of FIVIMS focal points.

79. A context was set for the SWOT analysis (strength, weakness, opportunities and threat) and the process of organizing the group work was explained. An overview was given of the internal as well as external environment as an example (social gathering) on how to conduct a SWOT analysis (social gathering was cited as an example). The detailed guideline that was distributed to all the participants is given in Appendix IV.

Working group 1: Mainstreaming FIVIMS into national development efforts

Facilitator: Sohail Jehangir Malik

80. The objective of the SWOT analysis was to examine how best the FIVIMS initiative in the respective countries could be linked with the on-going PRSP process.

81. The Consultation noted the following as outcomes of the working group session:

Strengths

- Able to promote the importance of FIVIMS – the usefulness of data generated can be used for targeting and setting priorities.
- Existing organisational structures and focal points at the country level.
- FIVIMS approach integrated in several of the national policies and plans.
- Participation of FIVIMS advocates – e.g., His Excellency of Cambodia, who can work for integration of FIVIMS as well as in a policy advisory capacity.
- Institutional involvement and participation.

Weaknesses

- Data related problems: ownership, quality control, level of desegregation, duplication and overlapping systems, frequency and timing of data collection and format.
- Poor communication or dialogue between FIVIMS partners.
- Workload of FIVIMS partners – activities associated with FIVIMS not being the main responsibility.
- Limited availability of resources, both financial and technical.
- Lack of mandate – no focal points for FIVIMS (in some countries).
- Absence of institutional or organisational set up.

Opportunities

- Linking FIVIMS with other international and/or national initiatives (e.g., PRSP, MDG) for resource generation and generating political will and support.
- Using FIVIMS data for advocacy, prioritisation of target groups, planning of interventions to address food security, poverty and nutritional vulnerability.
- Consolidating and harmonising data management.

Threats

- Inadequate fund allocation due to low priority placed on FIVIMS by the Government, leading to lack of motivation.
- Organisational structure leads to low access to sub-national data.
- Human resource development inadequate, leading to limited technical capacity to implement FIVIMS.

Working group 2: Opportunities to raise the profile of FIVIMS Focal Points**Facilitator: Rene Verduijn**

82. The Consultation noted the main points agreed upon by the members of the working group as follows.

Strengths

- Commitment at the highest political level in some countries.
- Adequate infrastructure, database, and human skill/expertise.
- Organisational structure/operational base.

Weaknesses

- Lack of commitment of political executives and/or agencies.
- Lack of facilities, human and financial resources.
- Lack of coordination among government institutions, partners and stakeholders.
- Inadequate database.
- Lack of adequate sensitisation at field level.
- Overlapping of activities with other agencies.
- Delegation and decentralisation.
- Geographical constraints.

Opportunities

- Getting assistance and collaboration from UN agencies and other donors.
- Facilitation and greater cooperation among countries, particularly within the region, e.g. SAARC.
- FIVIMS data needed by private companies.
- Development of vulnerable group profile with support of UN agencies.
- Entry point for reorientation and incorporation in socio-economic development plans.

Threats

- Competition for priorities of government and other UN agencies.
- Reallocation of resources and priorities in view of disasters and natural calamities.
- Lack of suitable standardisation mechanism in external agencies.
- Lack of consensus among government and opposition.

Part 8: Closure of the Consultation

83. The draft report of the Consultation was reviewed by the participants and adopted.

84. In conclusion, T.C. Ti, Senior Food Systems Economist, RAP expressed his appreciation for the efforts that were put in by all participants at the Consultation to ensure that FIVIMS is viewed as a country priority in undertaking future actions in areas of food insecurity and vulnerability. The Consultation adjourned with a vote of thanks by the Secretariat.

Appendix I**List of Participants****REGIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC NETWORK
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Appendix II

Opening Address

By

He Changchui

FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

(Delivered by N. M. Hla)

Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Participants, Representative from the Government of Japan, My colleagues from Headquarters and the Regional Office, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am pleased to welcome you all on behalf of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Dr. Jacques Diouf, and on my own behalf to the Regional Expert Consultation of the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition on *The status of FIVIMS initiative*.

According to the World Food Summit, food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Achieving food security means ensuring that sufficient food is available, that supplies are relatively stable and that those in need of food can obtain it. Food-insecure people are those individuals whose food intake falls below their minimum calorie (energy) requirements as well as those who exhibit physical symptoms caused by energy and nutrient deficiencies resulting from an inadequate or unbalanced diet or from the body's inability to use food effectively because of infection or disease. An alternative view would define the concept of food insecurity as referring only to the consequence of inadequate consumption of nutritious food, considering the physiological utilization of food by the body as being within the domain of nutrition and health.

The World Food Summit resolved to reduce the number of undernourished people in the world by at least 50 percent by the year 2015. In addition, it set the longer-term goals of, eventually, eradicating hunger and achieving food security for all. The *World Food Summit: five years later (WFS:5yl)* held in June 2002 reaffirmed the role of FAO and the importance of the Inter-Agency Working Group on FIVIMS in strengthening national and international

monitoring of food security. The State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) 2002 estimates that there are 799 million undernourished people in the developing countries. If the objectives of the WFS are to be achieved, appropriate policies and action programmes that are directed specifically at the people who are undernourished or at risk need to be developed and implemented. An important first step is the identification of food-insecure and vulnerable groups, and the causes of their food insecurity and vulnerability. Such information should make it possible to monitor and assess the situation and to design and, eventually, evaluate possible policies and interventions. This again underscores the importance of an initiative like FIVIMS.

If they are to be effective, policies aimed at promoting food security require accurate and timely information on the incidence, nature and causes of food insecurity and vulnerability. Unfortunately, there is a particular lack of good information at the subnational and household levels.

Many countries have established information units or systems for specific purposes such as providing early warning systems, promoting market efficiency, monitoring health and nutrition status or preparing food security situation assessments.

As we all are aware, the FIVIMS process takes into account some important and crucial socio-economic, nutritional and geographical information and related information systems, such as agricultural information systems; health information systems; land, water and climatic information systems; early warning systems; household food security and nutrition information systems; market information systems; and vulnerability assessment and mapping systems. RAP, in collaboration with FAO Headquarters, has been assisting member countries to establish national FIVIMS with a view to addressing the issues of food insecurity. I am pleased to mention that the Japan-funded Trust Fund project entitled *Development of a vulnerability information base, mapping and dissemination system for Asia in support of FIVIMS: GCP/RAS/170/JPN*, known as the *Asia FIVIMS project*, is being implemented to provide technical support to the overall FIVIMS initiative, as well as to provide an assessment of food insecurity and vulnerability in Asia. At the end of 2001, RAP and the Asia FIVIMS project formed a partnership in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of technical assistance to five countries in the region to start with. The countries included are Bangladesh, Cambodia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The activities are aimed at building government capacities in establishing and operationalizing FIVIMS. It is

encouraging to note that Phase II of the Asia FIVIMS Trust Fund Project plans to operate from RAP in close collaboration with FAO Headquarters.

I wish to thank the Government of Japan for its support to the FIVIMS initiative in the RAP region. The present consultation is indeed an effort to strengthen that initiative.

Madam Chair,

Food insecurity is a multisectoral and multidimensional phenomenon and is attributable to a range of factors that vary in importance across regions, countries and social groups, as well as over time. These factors include the socio-economic, environment, food economy and caring practices, besides health and sanitation. In order to achieve success, strategies to eliminate food insecurity have to tackle these underlying causes by combining the efforts of those who work in diverse sectors such as agriculture, nutrition, health, education, social welfare, economics and the environment. At the national level, this means that different ministries or departments need to combine their complementary skills and efforts in order to design and implement integrated cross-sectoral initiatives which must interact and be coordinated at the policy level.

I am told country-wise initiatives are underway in order to establish and strengthen national level FIVIMS initiatives. I also understand that the national participants present here are directly involved with the FIVIMS initiative in their respective countries. The present consultation will deliver upon various issues of national FIVIMS so as to have the expected outcomes at the country level which may include improved policy formulation, improved programme management, more effective design and focusing of interventions and more comprehensive intersectoral and institutional dialogue.

I trust that the deliberations will be productive and I wish you a successful meeting. I also wish you a pleasant stay in this wonderful city. I thank you for your kind attention.

Appendix III

Agenda

1. Overview of FIVIMS - FAO perspective;
2. Review of country status related to implementation of FIVIMS and identification of future actions;
3. Review of national-level progress in implementing the follow-up activities on ICN and WFS;
4. Discussion on FIVIMS in relation to the PRSP and UNDAF/CCA; and
5. Any other item with permission of the Chair.

Expected outcomes of the Consultation

1. Status of FIVIMS implementation updated.
2. Constraints with regard to FIVIMS implementation identified.
3. Approaches toward project development and/or implementation on establishment of FIVIMS identified.
4. Firm commitment to work towards establishing FIVIMS at the national level expressed.
5. Current position in implementation of NPAN and WFS Plan of Action updated.
6. Strategies of linking national FIVIMS to UNDAF/CCA and PRSP discussed.

Timetable

DAY 1 - 19 November 2002

Part I: Opening of the Consultation

- 0830 Registration
- 0900 Opening session
Welcome: *Biplab K. Nandi*, Secretary, ANFN, FAO-RAP
Introduction of the participants and election of the officers of the meeting
- 0915 Opening address by *He Changchui*, FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific
- 0930 *Refreshment*
- 1000 Objectives, agenda, adoption of agenda and organisation of the consultation by *Biplab K. Nandi*, FAO-RAP

Part 2: Overview of FIVIMS

- 1030 Global perspective of the FIVIMS in monitoring food insecurity and vulnerability by *Jenny Riches*, FIVIMS IAWG Secretariat
- 1100 Update on FIVIMS activities under the RAP-Asia FIVIMS partnership by *Naoki Minamiguchi*, Asia FIVIMS, FAO

Part 3: Presentations and discussions to review progress of implementation of FIVIMS and ICN and WFS follow-up activities

- 1130 Bangladesh
- 1205 *Lunch (Hosted by the Regional Representative)*
- 1330 Cambodia
- 1405 China
- 1440 Fiji
- 1515 *Refreshment*
- 1545 India
- 1620 Meeting of the rapporteurs

DAY 2 - 20 November 2002**Part 3: Presentations and discussions – continued**

| | |
|------|---|
| 0830 | Indonesia |
| 0905 | Nepal |
| 0940 | Philippines |
| 1015 | <i>Refreshment</i> |
| 1045 | Samoa |
| 1120 | Internet-based Asia FIVIMS data dissemination and sharing system in support to development of KIDS by <i>Naoki Minamiguchi</i> , Asia FIVIMS, FAO |
| 1150 | Discussion |
| 1200 | <i>Lunch</i> |

Part 4: FIVIMS in relation to the PRSP and UNDAF/CCA process

| | |
|------|--|
| 1330 | Introduction by <i>René Verduijn</i> , FIVIMS IAWG Secretariat |
| 1350 | UNDAF/CCA: overview and a regional perspective by <i>D.B. Antiporta</i> , FAO-RAP |
| 1420 | Discussion |
| 1430 | PRSP: overview and a regional perspective by <i>Antonia G Tuazon</i> , RTP-FNP, UPLB, the Philippines |
| 1500 | Discussion |
| 1510 | <i>Refreshment</i> |
| 1540 | Opportunities and scopes of FIVIMS to monitor the progress towards the PRSP by <i>Sohail Jehangir Malik</i> , Innovative Development Strategies (Pvt) Ltd., Pakistan |
| 1610 | Discussion |

Part 5: Working groups – Opportunities to raise the profile of FIVIMS Focal Points

| | |
|------|---|
| 1620 | Introduction and formation of two working groups Working group 1: National FIVIMS as a contribution to the PRSP process – a SWOT analysis Facilitators: <i>Antonia G Tuazon and Sohail Jehangir Malik</i> Working group 2: National FIVIMS as a contribution to the UNDAF/CCA process - a SWOT analysis Facilitators: <i>D.B. Antiporta and René Verduijn</i> |
| 1700 | Meeting of the rapporteurs |

Day 3 - 21 November 2002**Part 6: Working groups - continued**

| | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 0830 | Group work 1 and 2 |
| 1000 | <i>Refreshment</i> |
| 1015 | Group work 1 and 2 |
| 1100 | Plenary presentation by group 1 |
| 1120 | Plenary presentation by group 2 |
| 1140 | <i>Plenary Discussion</i> |
| 1200 | <i>Lunch</i> |

Part 7: Presentations and discussions to review progress of implementation of FIVIMS and ICN and WFS follow-up activities

| | |
|------|----------------------------|
| 1330 | Sri Lanka |
| 1405 | Thailand |
| 1440 | <i>Refreshment</i> |
| 1500 | Viet Nam |
| 1535 | Discussion |
| 1600 | Meeting of the rapporteurs |

DAY 4 - 22 November 2002**Part 8: Closure of the Consultation**

| | |
|------|---|
| 0800 | Preparation of the draft report of the consultation |
| 1000 | <i>Refreshment</i> |
| 1030 | Presentation and adoption of the report |
| 1130 | Closing |
| 1200 | <i>Lunch</i> |

Appendix IV

Guidelines for Working Groups

SWOT analysis of FIVIMS in relation to the UNDAF/CCA and PRSP process

Background and Rationale

After the introductory presentations and discussions on the UNDAF/CCA and PRSP process in Part 5 of the meeting, in Part 6 the participants will be asked to sit together, discuss and analyse the opportunities of linking the FIVIMS initiative more closely with the

National FIVIMS, a definition:
Any system or network of systems that assembles, manages, analyses and disseminates information about people that are food insecure and/or malnourished, or are at risk of becoming food insecure and malnourished.

CCA/UNDAF and PRSP process in individual countries. The SWOT analysis (analysing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) has been selected as a tool to guide the interaction in the working groups.

SWOT Analysis - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. A SWOT Analysis is an effective method of identifying your own Strengths and Weaknesses, and to examine the Opportunities and Threats you face in your working environment (FIVIMS). Carrying out this analysis will often be illuminating - both in terms of pointing out what needs to be done, and in putting problems into the right perspective. Ideally, the SWOT analysis provides you with the components to update your business strategy, to use your own strengths and opportunities perceived around you to overcome some of your less strong points, and to anticipate well in advance some of the trends that could negatively impact on your work. Details of the SWOT Analysis, its general meaning and examples of specific questions that we would look at in our working group session on Wednesday and Thursday, are provided in the matrix below:

SWOT ANALYSIS Focussing on FIVIMS

| <i>Internal Environment – Under Control</i> | <i>External Environment – Out of Control</i> |
|---|---|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are your strengths? - What are you good at? - What do you have to offer? <p>Specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What indicators does FIVIMS generate that would help the preparation of reports such as a CCA or PRSP? - How could this benefit the UNDAF/CCA and/or PRSP process? - What are the advantages of having indicators on hunger, malnutrition and information on specific vulnerable groups? - Can they help in monitoring poverty as well? | <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the opportunities for FIVIMS? - What are the interesting trends? <p>Specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the current opportunities and trends in UN, donor and government policies that could set up an operational food insecurity and malnutrition monitoring system? - What are the opportunities for institutionalization of this process, with national ownership and sustainability? - What are opportunities for raising necessary funds to develop and maintain a national food security and nutrition monitoring system? - Who could be users interested in food security and nutrition data? |
| <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the things that could be improved? - What is done badly? - What should be avoided? <p>Specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is FIVIMS already operational? Does a network of information experts already exist, with exchange of data and inter-sectoral analysis? - What are the institutional weaknesses of your national FIVIMS structure? - How important is food security information monitoring on the national scale of priorities? | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What obstacles do you face? - What is your competition doing? - Are the required specifications for your products or services changing? - Do you have funding problems? - What are the trends that are likely to have a negative impact on our own work? <p>Specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the impediments in your view to “institutionalizing” FIVIMS? - Do you foresee problems with raising funds for FIVIMS type work? |

Goal

The main goal of these working groups is to raise awareness among participants on the CCA/UNDAF and PRSP process and the importance that both could play as an important target audience for food insecurity and vulnerability information generated by a national FIVIMS.

Output

At the end of part six, through the two working group presentations we expect to know more about the working environment of FIVIMS for operational and institutional issues in a number of countries, in particular its role with/ links to the UNDAF/CCA and PRSP process through the successful monitoring of food insecurity and vulnerability information, as well as the analysis of cross-sectoral information to identify and characterize specific vulnerable groups of people.

Process

The participants will self-select their working groups based on their national context and experiences with the PRSP and/or UNDAF/CCA process. In case all participants have a preference to discuss the relationship between FIVIMS and the PRSP, we can easily facilitate that by having two groups on that topic. The participants will then disperse to their pre-assigned break-away rooms. The following steps provide some guidance to the facilitators in the flow of activities:

Step 1: Group introductions

Step 2 : Explanation of SWOT analysis by facilitator(s).

Step 3: Explanation of specific goals of the exercise/ expectations from the participants.

Step 4: Identification of a rapporteur, who is likely to give the presentation the next morning.

Step 5: Start brainstorming exercise by asking to list three important *strengths* on separate coloured cards.

Step 6: Ask participants to rank observations 1-3 based on perceived importance.

Step 7: Facilitator starts clarification of the cards/ drawing out process and discussion. Only use cards listed 1 (highest priority) for group discussion due to time limitations.

Step 8: Group summarizes (Rapporteur notes down on the flip chart) the listed “strengths,” with possibly country examples, and outcome of discussions. We should aim to

complete the “strengths” analysis by the end of the day, so that the other three (W-O-T) can be discussed the next morning.

Step 9: Complete brainstorming exercise for Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats as well.

Step 10: If time is available, please have a look at the result and discuss if you can. Combine/use some of your strengths to take onboard some of the opportunities that have arisen. In a similar fashion you could discuss use of your strengths and opportunities to address some of your weaknesses. *Example:* Based on expertise in food security information (Strength), and given the need for food security information by the PRSP/ CCA/UNDAF process (Opportunity), some institutions like the WB might consider funding a number of support activities. This way, “lack of funding” has been overturned as a Internal Weakness/ External Threat by finding a customer willing to pay for your services.

Step 11: Present findings of the working group in plenary!