Global Agro-Industries Forum: Increasing Competitiveness and Development Impact

New Delhi, India, 8-11 April 2008

Revised Provisional Technical Programme (November 2007)

Design of the Forum
The Forum will run for four days, with a programme that comprises five main activities: opening and closing sessions, plenary addresses, parallel roundtable discussions, and regional strategy workshops. The proposed structure for the programme sessions, detailed below, is presented schematically below.

Preceding, following and interspersed with the formal forum programme, there will be side events and exhibitions. These will be sponsored and organized on a self-funding basis by participating companies, foundations, NGOs, chambers of commerce, universities, etc.

The Forum Programme

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<td>Morning</td>
<td>Forum Inauguration</td>
<td>Competitiveness roundtables 1 to 3</td>
<td>Regional</td>
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<td><strong>Coffee Break</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Strategy Workshops</strong></td>
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<td>Session</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Opening Address</td>
<td>Plenary Papers 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Competitiveness roundtables 4 to 6</td>
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<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Opening Address</td>
<td>Plenary Papers 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>Session</td>
<td>Plenary Panel: Challenges of Agro-Industries Regional Dialogue Session</td>
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Welcome & Opening Address:
The session will consist of:
- A welcome address by the organizers presenting the Format and Agenda of the Forum, as well as side-events organized during the Forum
- A opening Address by a high-level Authority
Forum Inauguration:
The session will consist of:
- Welcome Addresses - Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Industries leading to introduction of Prime Minister.
- Statements of Agency Heads - Director-General of FAO, Director-General of UNIDO, President of IFAD.

Plenary panels

Challenges of agro-industries development
This panel will introduce from differing stakeholder perspectives the challenges of agro-industries development, as well as strategies and actions to increase competitiveness and the developmental gains from agro-industries.

Plenary panel on Regional Perspectives
Following the regional strategy workshops, findings and recommendations will be presented and discussed in a plenary round table.

Plenary papers

First session
1. Agro-industry trends, patterns and developmental impacts
This paper will identify the attributes that make agro-industries distinctive, call attention to some of the major drivers of agro-industrial competitiveness worldwide, and identify key trends and patterns with specific attention to the diversity of challenges faced in different regions and developmental circumstances.

2. Enabling environments for competitive agro-industries
This paper will characterize the key factors that contribute to the provision of an enabling environment for agro-industries to develop and achieve sustainable competitiveness.

Second session
3. Technologies shaping the future
The purpose of this paper will be to draw the attention of participants to technological changes and how these are impacting on agrifood systems; including technologies that are expected to shape agrifood systems in the next 20-30 years.

4. Business models for small farmers and SMEs
The paper will address the challenges of promoting linkages that ensure efficient and equitable supply chains while minimizing the risk of excluding small scale producers, processors and traders.

Third session
5. Public-private sector cooperation
This paper will characterize approaches, experiences and lessons learned in forging cooperation between the public and private sectors to support agro-industries development, including investment funds and public-private partnership programmes.

6. Global citizenship and responsibility
This paper will characterize some of the strategies, initiatives and experiences of individual firms and private sector organizations to support social, economic and environmental sustainability and fairness in the development of global value chains.

**Competitiveness round tables**

1. **Understanding markets: market research and intelligence**
   
   This panel will make the case that understanding how markets work is critical to the success of farms and firms. It will point out experiences in building capacity at the farm and firm level for improving market intelligence, as well as commercial services to improve market appraisal and planning by farms and firms.

2. **Meeting consumer requirements: quality, safety, emerging concerns**
   
   This roundtable will address the proposition that priority attention must be given to meeting consumer requirements regarding quality, safety, health concerns, origin and other attributes. The roundtable will comment on the technical and managerial means for meeting consumer requirements, particularly for quality and safety, in cost efficient ways. Related regulatory and institutional issues will be considered as well as the firm level strategies, requirements and technologies.

3. **Improving productivity: technology acquisition and utilisation**
   
   This roundtable will address the proposition that systematic attention is needed to building capacity for acquiring and utilizing productivity enhancing technologies. It will draw attention to requirements at the firm level and for technology development and transfer service providers.

4. **Strengthening business linkages: value chain development**
   
   This roundtable will address the proposition that programmes are needed to strengthen business linkages and support the upgrading of agricultural value chains. It will review the experiences, strategies and lessons learned in strengthening business linkages and upgrading agricultural value chains in the developing world.

5. **Differentiating products: branding and certification**
   
   This roundtable will address the proposition that access to higher-valued markets requires capacity to develop, distinguish and certify specific product traits. It will discuss approaches and experiences relating to GAP, GMP, organic and fair trade products, as well as brand labels associated with specific firms and countries. The panel will discuss some of the key issues and challenges relating to capacity building, compliance and certification; as well as development and harmonization of institutional frameworks.

6. **Attracting investment: agro-industry and agro-enterprise finance**
   
   This roundtable will address the proposition that financial services and products which fit the environment and specific agro-industry conditions of producers, processors, marketing companies and others in the supply chain are critical for agro-industry competitiveness and for achieving social objectives relating to economic growth and rural development. The changing needs of farmers, SMEs and agribusiness firms for financial services as well as emerging lessons and innovations for agribusiness finance will be discussed in this panel as well as the requisites for an enabling environment.
7. **Staying competitive: innovation, product development, adaptation**

This roundtable will address the proposition that constant innovation is the only guarantee of competitive advantage. It will examine successful examples of innovation within the food industry, and analyse the accompanying costs, risks and benefits.

8. **Improving efficiency: agro-industries operations management**

This roundtable will address the proposition that capacity to introduce and apply advanced techniques for supply chain management and logistics will increasingly become a requirement for competitiveness of agro-industries targeting global and regional markets. It will highlight the potential offered by modern logistics, supply chain management and ICT in promoting the streamlining of agro-industrial operations, and will debate relevance, potential applicability and implications of these concepts and techniques for developing countries.

9. **Organizing smallholders: producer organizations and cooperatives**

This roundtable will address the proposition that concerted efforts are needed to organize smallholders – farmers and SMEs – for engagement in national, regional and global markets. It will characterize requirements, approaches and practical experiences in organizing smallholders and building their capacity for engagement in agro-industry activities and supply of products to agro-processing enterprises, retailers and exporters.

10. **Establishing clusters: agro-industrial clusters and food parks**

This roundtable will address the proposition that attention should be given to development and strengthening of agro-clusters and food parks. It will characterize some of the experiences and approaches used to support firm clustering and networking, comment on the role of the public sector in facilitating clustering and cluster services, and identify some of the specific challenges that need to be address in development of agro-industrial clusters.

11. **Reducing costs: infrastructure development**

This roundtable will address the proposition that infrastructure must be improved, particularly rural infrastructure, in order for agro-industries to be competitive. It will draw attention to the potential of a better integration between the private and public sectors for enhanced planning, financing, implementing and maintenance of productive infrastructure.

12. **Human resources development**

This roundtable will address the proposition that development of agro-industries requires attention to human resources development at many levels. It will characterize the challenges faced in human resources development needed for development of competitive agro-industries, identify and assess approaches and experiences, and point to potential strategies and priorities.

**Regional strategy workshops**

The purpose of the regional strategy workshops will be to clarify regional specific interests and needs, as well as diversity of interests and needs within regions. The workshops also will contribute to identification of priorities for financial and technical support and capacity building to help guide technical agencies and financial institutions.