

## **FARMER CONSTITUTENCY OF RCEM**

### **Asia-Pacific Forum Sustainable Development (APFSD)**

**May 21, 2015**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I am representing Farmers constituency of AP Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (RCEM) on Sustainable Development. We in the farmer major group think that the process of sustainable development is very important. For us, we need to ensure essential human rights like the right to land, food and water for peasants, small and landless farmers, while farmers are often among the most affected by the multiple crises, they also hold the solutions for sustainable development in their hands.

Around 37.5% of the world's land area is agricultural land while around 48% of the total world's population live in the rural areas. A large number of the hungry population live in the rural areas, poverty rates in the rural areas are on average more than double those found in urban areas. Poverty is basically a rural problem in Asia. In major countries, 80 to 90 per cent of poor people live in rural areas.

The Goal 2 in the zero draft talks about ending hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture through increase productivity and Goal 2a. says "increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development, and plant and livestock gene banks to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular in least developed countries"

The above mentioned guidelines are developed in such a way that they do not benefit most of the rural population mainly small and landless farmers but serve the giant agribusiness corporations. Only 6 multinational corporations – Monsanto, Bayer, Syngenta, Dow, DuPont, and BASF own the world's seeds, pesticides and biotech industries and control the research and development of agriculture influencing policy making bodies nationally and globally, ultimately controlling the fate of food and farming.

The much emphasis on promotion of Genetically Modified Crops (GM) to solve the hunger and environment related issues will further intensify monopoly control, health and climate related problems.

So, we propose on emphasis that small farm holders, small fishing folk particularly women have just and equitable access and control over land, productive resources, and appropriate and environmentally sound technology and that this will contribute to

sustainable agriculture and livelihood for the marginalized communities across the world.

Policy prescriptions for agriculture must be consulted with farmers and the most affected constituencies rather than with corporations and technical experts. No longer can only institutions make decisions based on volatile market signals; we know that market demand is intertwined with speculative markets, corporate and political interests.

The new path of development should entails the empowerment of communities whose voices had never been heard most particularly the small and landless farmers.

Thank you.