COMMUNICATING FARMERS PRIORITIES IN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS:
A Philippine Experience

Raul Montemayor

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Lack of stakeholder consultations during UR negotiations led to:
- Errors in schedules of commitments
- Relatively excessive concessions
- General lack of understanding of UR AoA

Public backlash after accession due to:
- Broken promises for GATT safety nets
- Surge in imports and trade deficits
- Apparent unpreparedness of key sectors for open competition
Onset of Doha Round negotiations spurred a more consultative process due to:
- Need to generate stakeholder support for new trade agreement and further reforms
- Lack of financial and technical resources at capital and in Geneva
- Clamor of private stakeholders for involvement

This led to the creation of the:
- Private Sector Task Force on WTO Agreement on Agriculture Renegotiations (TF-WAAR)
- TF-WAAR Core Group
CABINET COMMITTEE

SECRETARY Of Agriculture

UNDERSECRETARY For Policy & Planning

TF-WAAR Core Group

Task Force on WTO Agreement on Agriculture Renegotiations (TF-WAAR)

AMBASSADOR To the WTO

Agriculture Negotiators
EXPANDING THE TF-WAAR MODEL TO COVER REGIONAL FTAs

CABINET COMMITTEE

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Committee on International Trade

ASEAN-AFTA Sub-Committee

Philippine-Japan EPA Sub-Committee

ASEAN-India FTA Sub-Committee

Other FTA/EPA Sub-Committees
LESSONS LEARNED

- Need for sincere willingness of the part of the government to involve the private sector in trade negotiations
- Consultation mechanism must be formalized, institutionalized, sustained, and linked to official negotiating structure
- Need for clear and consistent policy direction from government
LESSONS LEARNED

- Private stakeholders must be willing to invest time, resources and effort.
- Private sector representatives must maintain close contact with their constituents.
- Consultation must be inclusive while exhorting representatives to adopt broad-minded perspectives.
- Official alliances within the WTO can be complemented by private sector linkages with peers in other countries.
LESSONS LEARNED

- Need for prompt, comprehensive and continuous preparation for negotiations
- Need to invest in information management systems for trade negotiations
- Transparency must be balanced with need to preserve confidentiality of information