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**Proceedings of the Regional Meeting**

**Towards a Joint Regional Agenda  
for the Alleviation of Poverty  
through Agriculture and  
Secondary Crop Development  
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Edited by  
**J.W. Taco Bottema  
Geoff Thompson  
I Wayan Rusastra  
Robert Baldwin**

## **Appendix 3. Guidelines for Contributions to CAPSA's Regional Meeting**

Distributed to workshop participants in September 2007.

The following remarks are intended as guidelines for contributions to the Regional Meeting. We expect contributions from three different sources:

1. our partners and focal institutes in member countries
2. thematic papers on invitation
3. papers by international organizations

Those familiar with agriculture and rural development know that there has been a very well developed set of international and regional networks connecting national and international centres of excellence. However since the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals and a general softening of the profile of agriculture during the 1990s, public support and participation in these established networks have eroded. At the same time there is now continuous pressure to re-invent the role of agriculture in the alleviation of poverty.

Until recently, most researchers and development agriculturalists assumed that any work resulting in improved technology, improved productivity and improved farm income would automatically result in the alleviation of poverty. However, if we take the alleviation of poverty to be the main goal of our development activities in agriculture, it would mean that we would target those people making a living from agriculture at a level below the poverty line. In this case we would focus on a group of agriculturalists with a low absorption capacity, limited scope for innovation, and limited access to credit and markets. Such a focus would limit the chances for success of the strategy, unless there was public allocation on a massive scale to improve agriculture. Unfortunately, the contrary has been the case: until recently public allocations to agriculture have decreased consistently throughout the region. It is also becoming quite clear that in the Asia and the Pacific regions, poverty is centred in rural areas, with 70 per cent of the region's poor being dependent on agriculture or related services. For these reasons, among others, attention to rural development appears to be gaining momentum in a number of countries, China and India, for example.

We can distinguish four ways of alleviating poverty in rural areas:

1. transferring cash to the poor
2. increasing farm and labour productivity and income in agriculture
3. including the local rural and agriculture economies in a wider process of economic growth (Timmer 2007)
4. reducing costs and increasing prices through subsidies.

These four ways of alleviating poverty do not exclude one another. In preparing contributions however, we would like to suggest, that projects, programmes and other activities are grouped in these four categories of impact channels.

We should also acknowledge that the task of alleviating poverty in rural areas is not only undertaken by the ministries of agriculture and their various departments, but also by other ministries, local government as well as the private sector and NGOs.

Important, even vital, issues such as resource management would on first sight not have a place in the poverty alleviation framework. However, because it creates the conditions for improvement of productivity resource management should not be omitted.

If available, case-based information on programme and project modalities is most welcome. Finally, any thought or observation on the agenda on agriculture and poverty alleviation is most welcome and necessary.