

**RESPONSIBLE  
BUSINESS FORUM  
ON FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE**

**BANGKOK, THAILAND  
26 & 27 MARCH 2019**

**INNOVATION IN VALUE CHAINS FOR  
FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY**



*Outcome Report*

**global  
initiatives**





“Sustainability is one of the main drivers on the theme of advancing partnerships for ASEAN.”

**Supant Mongkolsuthree**  
Chairman, Federation of Thai Industries







“Organisations need to incorporate sustainability concerns into their DNA to manage natural resources better.”

**Kundhavi Kadiresan**

Assistant Director-General and  
Regional Representative, APAC, FAO



## Event Summary

**Global food demand is forecast to double by 2050. Meeting this need equitably and sustainably will require innovation throughout the entire food system, from the sourcing of raw materials to processing and packaging, to the evolution of consumption patterns and waste.**

Changing demographics, including the growth and urbanisation of the global population, is just one of many factors threatening food security in the 21st century. Climate change has the potential to derail progress in rural economies and disrupt supply chains. Ensuring the safety and quality of food remains a paramount concern, with direct impacts on human, economic and social development. Addressing these challenges will require collaboration through knowledge, skills and mobilising capital to promote inclusive and sustainable business models.

The 6th Responsible Business Forum on Food and Agriculture, organised by Global Initiatives, was held in Bangkok, Thailand for the first time. On 26 and 27 March 2019, 350 food, agriculture and nutrition leaders from industry, governments, financial institutions and international development organisations gathered for the two-day forum to share their knowledge and ideas, and to participate in focused working groups designed to cultivate innovative solutions to the issues and challenges of the food and agriculture sector in Asia and around the world.

Under the theme **‘Innovation in Value Chains for Food and Nutrition Security’**, a line-up of sector experts shared their experience and views in expert panels, presentations and keynote addresses. The Federation of Thai Industries named the food and agriculture sector one of the priority sectors in Thailand, while the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) emphasised that humanity’s shared future depends on its ability to create food and agricultural systems that deliver both for healthier people and a healthier planet. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) pointed out the important role of the private sector in innovation and partnerships, both in technology and human rights. One important example of such partnerships is the **‘Partner Statement of Intent on Sustainable Rice Landscapes’**, established by a consortium including UN Environment, FAO, WBCSD, GIZ, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP). The MOU for the Sustainable Rice Landscapes was signed on stage at the RBF, establishing a consortium to work collaboratively on applying scientific advances and best sustainability practices in rice landscapes.





This year's forum placed a major emphasis on the role of technology and innovation in meeting global food demand by 2050, with plenary panels covering traceability in supply chains, as well as the role of data and artificial intelligence within the agri-food industry. Nutrition security was another important topic, along with human rights and social inclusion. Key discussions also took place around the critical role of finance in establishing more sustainable and equitable food systems.

In a unique plenary section, government representatives of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos PDR shared their policies and commitments to achieve food and nutrition security within their respective countries. In Thailand, data is becoming increasingly important for agriculture while in Laos maintaining forested land while increasing food production is now critical. Myanmar is focussing on policies around innovative food systems for farm-to-fork solutions.

RBF hosted focused breakout sessions on individual commodities, tackling cut-across issues in agricultural value chains. Day one had deep-dive commodity working

groups, which covered rice, fruits and vegetables, fisheries, dairy, where local smallholder farmers were able to share their insights alongside expert panelists. On day two, sector experts facilitated parallel sessions that focused on several issues in the food and agriculture sector: human rights and women's empowerment in the food and agriculture chain; impact solutions for agriculture; and adapting business practices for socially responsible consumers.

At the end of the forum, three outcomes from each commodity workgroup were shared and ranked by the audience, bringing forward the following key recommendations:

- Reduce discounting by mills to give farmers a fair price (rice);
- Co-design affordable and locally appropriate tech-solutions (fisheries);
- Build collaborative structures to facilitate inclusion (fruits and vegetables);
- Develop and extend locally appropriate innovative dairy technology (dairy).



## Commodity Working Groups

The commodity working groups took a deeper look into the specific challenges and solutions across the value chain for each of the commodities. The working groups consisted of discussions with an expert panel representing all stages of the value chain, a conversation with smallholder farmers or presentations of an industry expert, and audience roundtable discussions. Each working group brought forward tangible recommendations for action, of which the three key recommendations were taken forward to plenary level and are being shared in this report.





## Rice

Rice is produced largely by resource-poor smallholder farmers who are often remote from markets. With a third of the world's population depending upon rice for their staple food, production needs to increase by an extra 10 million tons per year to meet the demand of a growing population. This increase will have to be met despite a decline in the availability of finite resources (land and water), and the impact of climate change on rice yields.

Yet, rice production faces multiple sustainability challenges including the use of natural resources, impact of climate change, over-use of chemicals and biodiversity loss. Rice crops use 25-33% of the world's developed freshwater resources and 13% of global nitrogen fertilizer, and rice fields account for 10% of the agriculture sector's methane emissions. To meet future demand in an economically viable and environmentally sustainable way, the rice sector is in need of global transformation.

The commodity working group discussed how initiatives like the Sustainable Rice Standard incentivize adoption of climate-smart, sustainable best practices. Accordingly, the session explored collaborative approaches to drive the transformation towards more sustainable rice supply chains. Three key approaches being reduced discounting by mills to give farmers a fair price, development of new farm services which provides business models such as an uber platform for farms, and engaging large retailers in supply of consumer-preferred rice.

## Fisheries

Southeast Asia is a leading global producer of seafood and the region is home to more than 600 million people who rely on healthy oceans and rivers for their livelihoods and food security. The waters of the Asia-Pacific region are home to the most biologically diverse and productive ocean ecosystems on Earth, providing food and income to over 200 million people in the region alone.

However, Southeast Asia's fisheries are overexploited, and this combined with IUU fishing (illegal, unreported, unregulated) is putting extreme stress both on fisheries and coastal community livelihoods.

The commodity working group on fisheries was hosted in collaboration with the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership. Multiple challenges, opportunities and solutions were discussed, covering the topics of sustainable sourcing related to consumer demand, traceability and incentives for adoption of traceability technologies, supply chain management with technology and innovations like AI and Blockchain, affordability, human rights and workers issues in the supply chain, certification, legal framework and financial access for smallholder fisheries. A set of actionable recommendations were identified, of which the three key recommendations were the co-design of affordable and locally appropriate tech-solutions, creative incentives for data sharing throughout the entire value chain and national standards to promote innovation in local markets.



## Dairy

Dairy demand has been on the rise in Asia for the past three decades, representing the strongest growing region for dairy consumption driven by a rapidly expanding population and a growing middle class who look to diversify their diets.

As acknowledged and emphasized by the FAO, dairy provides essential nutrients and is an important source of dietary energy, high-quality proteins and fats. Yet, the increase in production of dairy brings forward challenges linked to climate change e.g. greenhouse gasses released at farms, cultivation and purchase of cattle feed and other raw materials, water and energy usage involved in its production as well as the need for smart and sustainable packaging for enhanced shelf life.

The commodity working group on dairy was hosted in partnership with FrieslandCampina, and covered the following topics: education and increased income to empower smallholder farmers. Traceability and big data technology. Regulation. Food security and rural livelihoods. Enhancing milk yields and tackling the disparity between Asia and Europe. Malnutrition and climate-smart livestock production.

The discussion sought to understand the challenges and opportunities in addressing the main issues within these topics, and how to mobilise and incentivize the private sector to get more involved and forge effective partnerships with public sector resources. The three key recommendations were identified as development and extensions of locally appropriate innovative dairy tech, promotion of youth participation in farming via capacity building and support of development and growth of the Dairy Asia platform.

## Fruits and Vegetables

A growing global population coupled with an increase in income, especially in urban areas, are creating a rise in demand for fruits and vegetables as consumers seek to improve and diversify their diets. Increasing production to respond to this demand creates important economic opportunities and yet major challenges like sustainable land and natural resources use, climate change resilience, the use of pesticides and biodiversity loss. The working group on fruits and vegetables explored uniform challenges, opportunities and innovative solutions across the multiple supply chains of both fruits and vegetables, including the following: Opportunities forthcoming from the increase in demand should be available for smallholder farmers to keep farming attractive for future generations. Access to financial support should be enhanced for female smallholders. Research innovation is critical to increase crop yield and nutritional value and to limit further degradation of land. Technology and innovation are key for disruptive solutions to minimize the usage of pesticides and accordingly minimize the impact on biodiversity. Smart solutions to minimize packaging but simultaneously enhance shelf life are needed to avoid post-consumer waste. Fruits and vegetables should be affordable for every consumer as a means to combat malnutrition and obesity. More needs to be done to increase awareness and education on diets to change consumption patterns. The session brought forward a set of detailed recommendations for action, of which the three important ones were identified as collaborative structures to facilitate inclusion, enhanced technology to accelerate participation in value chains and inclusion of the resource base and risks involved.





## Parallel Sessions

### Human Rights and Women Empowerment in the Food and Agriculture Chain

This parallel session focused on the human rights issues involved in the food and agriculture chain, including gender equality, land tenure, modern slavery and child labour. The expert panel discussed emerging trends like the role of consumers for enhanced transparency throughout the value chain and the need for sound corporate policy and practice. Challenges and solutions were identified included education, enhanced access to information, micro-finance opportunities for female smallholder farmers and international certification for consumer goods.

### Impact of Investment Solutions for Agriculture

Impact investment firms shared their experiences and insights of innovative financial instruments designed to advance the livelihoods of farmers and increase access to finance for rural communities. A key point that was noted is the difference in opportunity sets between Asia and Europe. Many of the smaller markets have a lot of innovation, but due to the lack of resources and information, innovators are moving out of their markets to larger ones to seek funding and support. The market in Asia needs to be developed to absorb the growing interest in this region and European innovators need a platform to help them bring their solutions to Asia, particularly in sectors such as cleantech and circular economy.

### Adapting Business Practices for Socially Responsible Consumers

Hosted in partnership with USAID Green Invest Asia, this session focused on sharing data and firsthand experience of how businesses are adjusting their sourcing and sustainability strategies to meet demand from conscious consumers and how these efforts can be monitored. The session started with findings from a new regional survey on drivers and patterns of sustainable consumption and investing, and included a presentation on 'Why are Women Championing Sustainability in Southeast Asia'. An expert panel discussed specific experience from small natural food businesses and multinational FMCG companies. The audience roundtable discussion focused on consumer priorities and sustainability strategies for companies.



## Partner's Side Events

### Roundtable on the Environment and Social Inclusion Stockholm Environment Institute

The Roundtable on the Environment and Social Inclusion was co-founded by Stockholm Environment Institute and Global Initiatives and engages organisations to exchange ideas, insights, tools, experience and needs for potential collaboration to co-develop innovative solutions that address environmental sustainability while integrating social inclusion and human rights-based approaches. The roundtable of RBF Thailand focused on value chains and how joint efforts by businesses, research, civil society and communities can make them fair and beneficial to all as well as environmentally sustainable. In particular, the roundtable focused on ways to make value chains transparent, traceable and responsible for consumers as well as small-scale producers and others along the value chain.

### Source, Validate and Market: Scaling AgTech in Frontier Markets

Winrock International

Winrock International and ANDE co-led a workshop to share resources from USAID Feed the Future's Asia Innovative Farmers Activity and to launch the #AsiaAgLab platform. Experts from Kasetsart University, Unlock Impact, and Winrock International shared practical experiences from disseminating AgTech in Asia over the last four years. Attendees participated in creative and interactive breakouts to identify activities that #AsiaAgLab could facilitate among members of the peer-driven platform to promote sustainable agricultural practices in Asia. Initial priorities selected included establishing a common technical validation process and publishing successful business models for scaling AgTech in rural markets.





## **ASEAN Safe, Nutritious Food PPP Initiative – Thailand Workshop**

Croplife Asia

The ‘ASEAN Safe, Nutritious Food PPP Initiative - Thailand workshop’ revolved around how the private sector and governments can work together to ensure food safety and nutrition. Multiple experts from the industry discussed topics related to crop technology to responsibly increase food production. Another topic covered was nutrition security in Thailand and methodologies to increase consumer awareness. Additionally, audience roundtable discussions brought forward opportunities for private-public partnerships for food safety and nutrition in Thailand.

## **Scaling ASEAN Impact for Food and Nature**

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

The workshop of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development identified approaches to build on recent scaling successes across the region, sources of finance and opportunities to scale and align with national policies on GHG mitigation and adaptation. Other topics discussed were a collaboration for sustainable land use models, corporate targets, and opportunities and challenges for sustainable landscapes.

## **Partnering with Agribusiness for SDG Action**

CSIRO

CSIRO organised a breakfast roundtable event on SDG reporting by agribusiness organisations. As there are currently no industry norms or globally recognised practices for evaluating and measuring sustainability efforts in agribusiness, CSIRO is aiming to understand what drives agribusiness companies to report on SDG's and what challenges they face. A CSIRO case study that explored what may be possible using science-based analyses was also presented.

## **Responsible Agricultural Investment in ASEAN**

GrowAsia

Grow Asia organised an invite-only Breakfast Roundtable which was attended by 60 stakeholders across the public, private and civil society sectors. The roundtable provided participants with an overview of the recently adopted ASEAN Guidelines on Responsible Agricultural Investment, and an opportunity to listen to unique perspectives on how the industry can enable responsible investments in food and agriculture.







## Speaker Highlights

“We need to triple the ambition for actions to meet national and international climate goals in all sectors, including food and agriculture.”

**Dechen Tsering,**  
Director, Asia and the Pacific Office,  
UN Environment



“The only way we can double the amount of food to feed everyone on the planet while preserving nature is through technology.”

**Eva Gladek**  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer,  
Metabolic



“A best practice is to stop buying raw materials from non-certified suppliers for transparency throughout the value chain.”

**Noppadol Dej-Udom**  
Chief Sustainability Officer, Charoen  
Pokphand Group (CP Group)



“Hunger is a problem of imbalance and poor distribution.”

**Akkharawit Kanjana-Opas**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
FoodInnopolis



“There is a 1.2 trillion dollar opportunity for nutrition. If that’s not an opportunity, nothing else will be.”

**Kamel Chida**  
Deputy Director, Private Sector Partnership  
Development for Nutrition, Bill and Melinda  
Gates Foundation



“We need value chains that increase the nutrient density of foods and make them healthier available, affordable and desirable.”

**Brad Ridoutt**  
Principal Research Scientist,  
Agriculture and Food, CSIRO

## Speaker Highlights



“We as business leaders need to rethink our role to create climate change resilience through value chains.”

**Diane Holdorf**

Managing Director, Food & Nature,  
World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)



“Smallholder farmers should be engaged in their own capacity to make them invest further in technology.”

**William Sparks**

Project Director, Winrock International



“From a financial perspective, food loss and waste represent 940 billion dollars of economic loss every year.”

**Ruth Thomas**

Director, Global Agribusiness Alliance



“To support long term food sustainability, we have to strengthen government will.”

**Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham**

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Forestry,  
Lao PDR



“Last year sustainability linked loans, that aim to facilitate environmental, social and economic activity and growth, issued approx. 36 billion dollars globally.”

**Christy Owen**

Chief of Party, USAID Green Invest Asia



“Traceability can support smallholder farmers in applying for microfinance by building data and increasing the credibility of the farm.”

**Krishna Kumar**

Founder and Chief Executive Officer,  
CropIn Technology





“The trust between technology, innovation and society needs to be strengthened.”

**Siang Hee Tan**

Executive Director, CropLife Asia



“Farmers should be seen as entrepreneurs to enhance access to technology and funding, and achieve increased productivity and profits.”

**Elizabeth Hernandez**

Head of Government and Industry Affairs,  
APAC, Corteva Agriscience



“In terms of collaboration for food and nutrition security, we need to bring in green activists and supermarket chains because they drive the change.”

**Sushama Srikandath**

Managing Director, AVT McCormick  
Ingredients



“We need to think beyond individual issues for multi-stakeholder solutions throughout the value chain”

**Grahame Dixie**

Executive Director, Grow Asia



“The private sector and market-driven solutions are the way forward for development aid”

**Jeffrey Spence**

Deputy Mission Director, Regional  
Development Mission for Asia, USAID



“Traceability helps farmers raise a standard and get certifications, which results in more demand and satisfaction from consumers, hence more profits”

**Bruce Blakeman**

Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Cargill



“As a multinational company, you need to use local lenses to grow with local demands.”

**Hendro Poedjono**

Director, Corporate Affairs, AMEA,  
FrieslandCampina



“A good partnership for nutrition should focus on a consistent message about what is healthy and what is not.”

**Tod Gimbel**

Senior Vice President, Global Government  
Affairs, Herbalife Nutrition



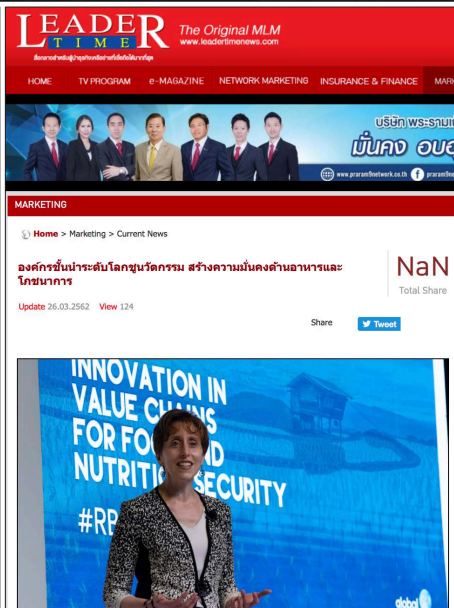
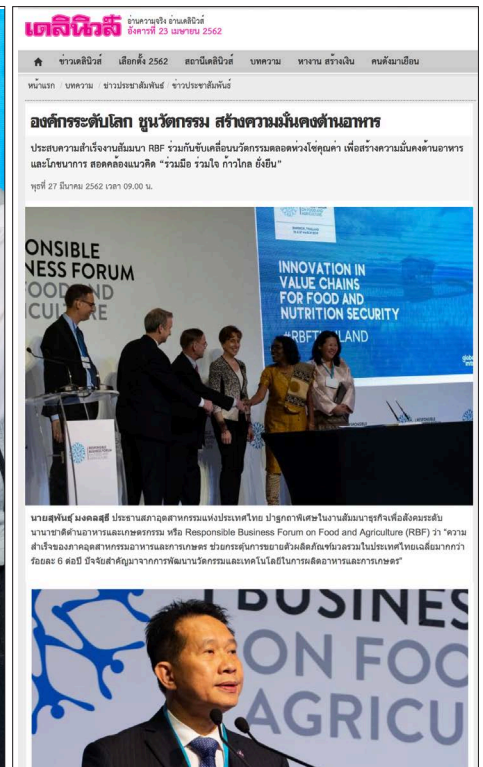
“We need to look closer at how the SDG's interact to make sure that when one problem is solved, we are not creating another problem.”

**Niall O'Connor**

Director, Asia Centre, Stockholm  
Environment Institute

# Media Highlights

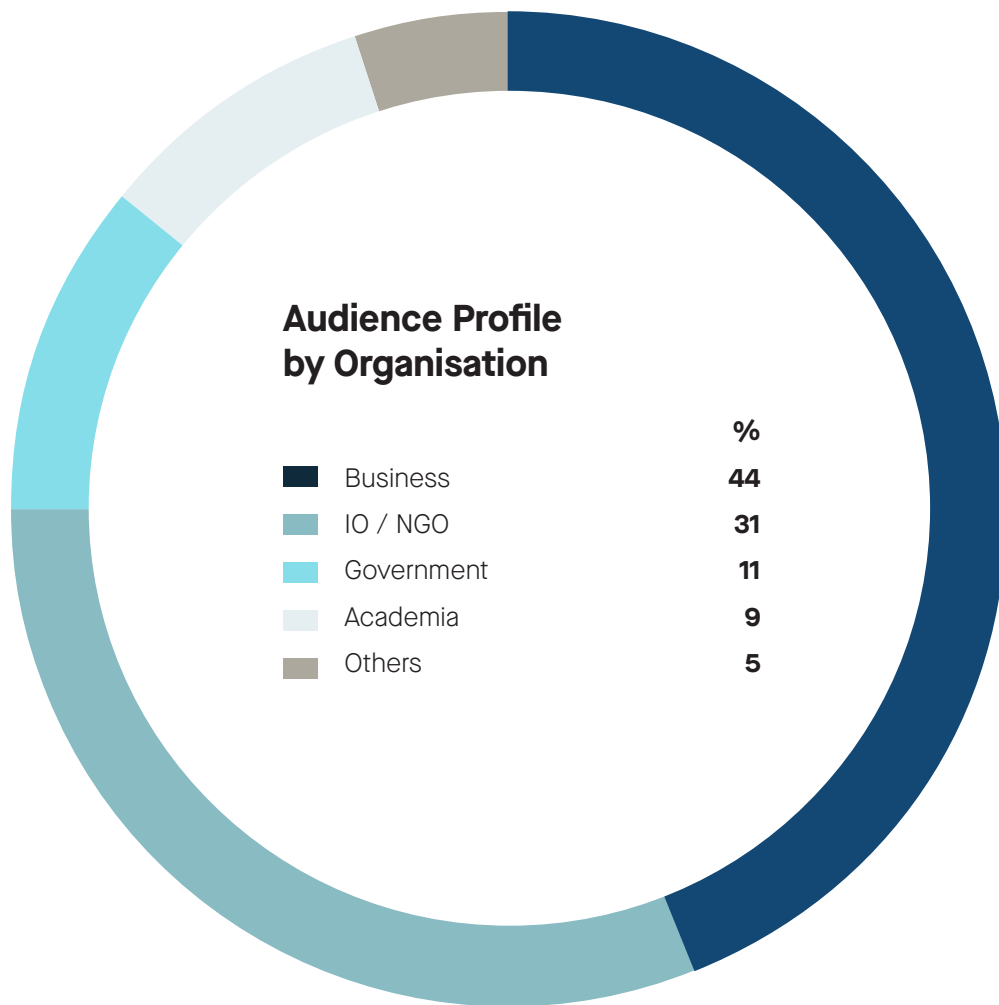
RBF on Food and Agriculture, Thailand 2019 received significant media coverage, with top tier publications, journalists, and broadcasters present at the event. Key discussion points by speakers and delegates were featured in a number of prominent print and online media, such as Dailynews, News Plus, and Agri Plus. Interviews of government officials, business personnel and NGO leaders were also conducted by media.





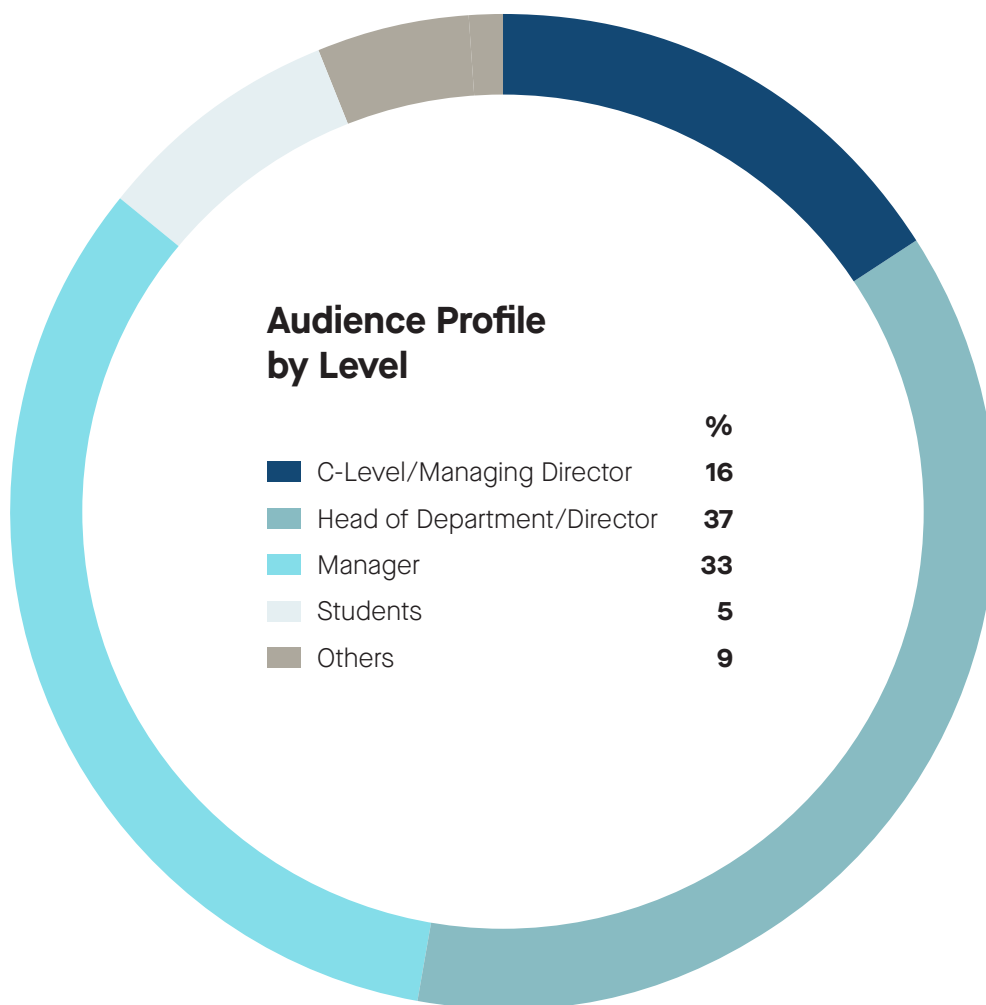
No	Media Name	Published Date	Type
1	<a href="#">Enjoy Jam</a>	26 Mar	News Blogger
2	<a href="#">Hoon Inside</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
3	<a href="#">Intv</a>	26 Mar	News Agency
4	<a href="#">Leader Time</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
5	<a href="#">Lok Wannee</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
6	<a href="#">Matichon Sentangsedtee</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
7	<a href="#">Phujadkarn</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
8	<a href="#">Pim Thai Times</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
9	<a href="#">Technology Chaoban</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
10	<a href="#">Thailand Plus</a>	26 Mar	Trade News Agency
11	<a href="#">Thai MLM</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
12	<a href="#">Transport Journal</a>	26 Mar	Newspaper Online
13	<a href="#">Dailynews</a>	27 Mar	Newspaper Online
14	<a href="#">News Plus</a>	27 Mar	News Agency
15	<a href="#">PR Matter</a>	27 Mar	News Portal
16	<a href="#">PR Matter Facebook</a>	27 Mar	Social Media
17	<a href="#">Siam Rath</a>	27 Mar	Newspaper
18	<a href="#">Today Highlight News</a>	29 Mar	News Portal
19	<a href="#">Siam Thurakij</a>	30 Mar	Newspaper
1	<a href="#">Agri Plus</a>	28 Mar	Magazine Online
2	<a href="#">Hoon Inside</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
3	<a href="#">Intv</a>	28 Mar	News Agency
4	<a href="#">Isra News</a>	28 Mar	News Agency Online
5	<a href="#">Kasettumkin</a>	28 Mar	Magazine Online
6	<a href="#">Kasettumkin Facebook</a>	28 Mar	Social Media
7	<a href="#">Konkao</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
8	<a href="#">Leader Time</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
9	<a href="#">Line Today</a>	28 Mar	News Portal /Social Media
10	<a href="#">Lok Wannee</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
11	<a href="#">Matichon Sentangsedtee</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
12	<a href="#">News Data Today</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
13	<a href="#">OrBoTo Online</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
14	<a href="#">Phujadkarn</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
15	<a href="#">Phujadkarn</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
16	<a href="#">Pim Thai Times</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
17	<a href="#">Pracha Pijarn</a>	28 Mar	News Portal
18	<a href="#">Siam Rath</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
19	<a href="#">Siam Thurakij</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
20	<a href="#">Talk News Online</a>	28 Mar	News Agency
21	<a href="#">Thai MLM</a>	28 Mar	Newspaper Online
22	<a href="#">Dailynews</a>	29 Mar	Newspaper Online
23	<a href="#">Phujadkarn</a>	29 Mar	Newspaper Online
24	<a href="#">Phujadkarn</a>	29 Mar	Newspaper Online
25	<a href="#">Today Highlight News</a>	29 Mar	News Portal
26	<a href="#">Agri Plus</a>	30 Mar	Magazine Online
27	<a href="#">Salika</a>	30 Mar	Social Media
28	<a href="#">PR Matter</a>	31 Mar	News Portal
29	<a href="#">Transport Journal</a>	1 APR	Newspaper
30	<a href="#">Siamthurakij</a>	6 APR	Newspaper

## Audience profile





Delegates from the **Food, Beverage & Agriculture** industry represented approximately **50%** of the Forum Delegates. Other industries present included Banking & Finance, Environmental Services & Renewables, Consumer Goods & Services, Forestry & Paper, Electronics and Telecommunications, and Transport and Logistics.



Delegates were drawn from **25 countries**, with **64% from Thailand** and the others from countries including: Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Kenya, Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA, and Vietnam.

## Audience Engagement

In line with our efforts to limit the waste generated at all RBFs, for the third year in a row, the RBF Connect App was instrumental in providing an integrated digital experience for our delegates. With access to the agenda, speakers & sponsor details and attendee lists, RBF Connect was well utilised by the participants at the forum. Delegates had important forum information at their fingertips, and live updates on the schedule. The app also worked as a digital concierge in arranging meetings between the delegates at the forum and helped maximise networking and discussion opportunities. The app provided a platform for delegates to interact with the speakers through the Q&A feature, as well as participate in the polls and survey. Lastly, RBF Connect was successful in providing a space for delegates to share their updates, images, new relationships and backstage preparation from the forum.



Activity Views

**4,592**  
views

Agenda

**4,141**  
views

Active Users

**427**  
users

## Youth Engagement

About 35 students from various universities in Thailand worked closely with the Global Initiatives team and lent their time to assist with registering guests and speakers and taking notes, photos and quotes from all of the Forum's sessions. The students came from a range of academic backgrounds including law, economics, business studies and international relations and were instrumental in adding a youth perspective to each of the workshops and plenary discussions. Global Initiatives is grateful for the students and volunteer support and looks forward to hosting even more students next year.





## Social media

### #RBFTHAILAND ON TWITTER

**473,255**  
REACH

**109**  
TWEETS POSTED

**49,300**  
IMPRESSIONS

**88**  
RETWEETS

### FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMING

**45,674**  
PEOPLE REACHED

**9,839**  
LIVESTREAM VIEWERS

# Thank You!

Global Initiatives would like to thank our sponsors for supporting the Responsible Business Forum on Food and Agriculture Thailand 2019. We look forward to welcoming you to the next forum.

**Responsible Business Forum on Sustainable Development 2019**  
Singapore, 18-19 November 2019. Gardens by the Bay, Singapore

**Responsible Business Forum on Sustainable Development 2019**  
Nairobi, Kenya, 3-5 December 2019

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