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Policy focus on pro-poor Food Value Chain Development

April 17, 2016, 6:24 pm

by Sanath Nanayakkare

The Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) recently brought together professionals from the fields of agriculture, fisheries, livestock, trade, health, nutrition and finance of various ministries, universities, private sector, NGOs and civil society to develop strategies for sustainable food value chains integrating poor producers into them.

A concept paper of their recent workshop pointed out that the most challenging question for development policy today is to develop suitable value chains in a socially inclusive and pro-poor way improving the position of small enterprises and farmers as well as the working poor,

This national workshop on Food Value Chain Development was organized by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) and the Ministry of Primary Industries with the support from International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) at the IPS Auditorium.

The main objectives of this workshop were to facilitate a dialogue on value chain developments in agro-food industries and to develop a Food Value Chain Development Plan for Primary Industries with four sub-sectors Development Programme.

The IPS concept paper further states: Approximately 5.1 million or one in five is undernourished (in terms of dietary energy supply) in Sri Lanka today. FAO and UNICEF statistics indicate that 26.3 percent of children below age five do not have the recommended weight for age and 21.4 percent and 14.7 percent are suffering from stunting and wasting in 2012. The depth of the food deficit is about 216 Kcal/capita/day in 2014.

Agricultural sector and the food industry are the major sources of employment and livelihood in Sri Lanka. Hence, there is a significant role for these two sectors in terms of ensuring food security and sustainable development in Sri Lanka.

The new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25th September 2015, recognizes the pivotal role of food in achieving sustainable development and in ensuring Zero Hunger. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, making sure all people, especially the more vulnerable, have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round.

Food value chain development is expected to play an important role in achieving sustainable development and there is a felt need to design a National Food Value Chain Development Plan to implement public policy instruments advocated in National Agricultural and Food Policies and the SDG agenda.

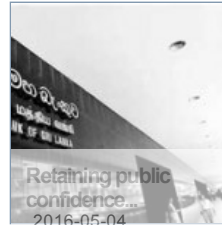
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