



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN

PRESS RELEASE

Australian academics return to Brunei to deliver 2nd Workshop on Facilitating Agribusiness Development in Brunei Darussalam 30 January – 2 February 2017, Horticulture Business Centre, Rimba

Australian High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam, H.E. Nicola Rosenblum was honoured to open the Second Workshop on Facilitating Agribusiness Development in Brunei Darussalam at the Horticulture Business Centre, Rimba on 30 January. The opening was also attended by Deputy Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, YM Awang Wardi bin Haji Mohammad Ali.

The four day workshop will build on the outcomes of the First Workshop on Facilitating Agribusiness Development in Brunei Darussalam held in Bandar Seri Begawan in April 2016. Australian academics Professor Peter Batt, Dr Nazrul Islam, and Dr Amin Mugera of the University of Western Australia's (UWA) Institute of Agriculture have returned to Brunei Darussalam to share their extensive expertise with 50 participants from both the government and private sectors. The program has been designed to be responsive to the capacity needs and interests identified by participants and decision-makers during the April workshop.

In her welcoming remarks at the opening, H.E. Ms Rosenblum said "The Australian Government is pleased to support Brunei's economic vision and mission to accelerate growth, increase productivity, sustainability and explore export markets in order to increase gross domestic product (GDP) through its support for Brunei's Agribusiness sector. It is wonderful that the University of Western Australia team is able to return to Brunei Darussalam to continue their dialogue with the Department of Agriculture and Agrifood and to build on the outcomes of the April workshop."

The Workshop has been funded by the Australian Government through the Australia-ASEAN Council (AAC). The AAC aims to enhance awareness, understanding and links between people and institutions of Australia and ASEAN, including Brunei Darussalam. Projects funded by the Council range from supporting collaborations in the fine arts, facilitating knowledge sharing in disaster relief and financial integration, and programs to support female participation in sport at the elite level.

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The University of Western Australia Expert Biographies

Professor Peter J. Batt is passionate about food and the means by which smallholder producers can be integrated into global value chains. With an undergraduate degree in Horticultural Science and postgraduate qualifications in marketing, Peter is in a unique position to offer advice on the production, postharvest and marketing of both fresh and processed agricultural products to institutional users and consumers. Cognisant of the opportunities that marketing offers smallholder producers to escape rural poverty, Peter has led a number of rural development projects funded by the Government of Australia to assist smallholder producers in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

Peter has worked for a number of private and public sector organisations including CTA, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, International Finance Corporation and the University of the South Pacific. With an extensive list of journal publications, book chapters and conference publications, he is a global authority in food and agribusiness marketing, agricultural cooperatives, quality management, buyer-seller relationships and value chains. Peter is currently Chair of the Commission of Economics and Management for the International Society of Horticulture Science, a Board member of the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association and a member of the UN Economics and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Sustainable Business Network, Food and Agriculture Task Force. Peter is an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow within UWA Institute of Agriculture.

Dr Nazrul Islam is an Agricultural and Resource Economist researching on the measurement and analysis of sustainable and efficient agriculture and food production systems. He is an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow within UWA Institute of Agriculture. His primary research focus is on the development and application of appropriate analytical models (such as productivity, value-chain, supply-chain, input-output and general equilibrium modelling) for strategic development planning and decision making.

He has worked in senior positions in a number of government, non-government and academic organisations both in Australia and overseas. He has more than 35 years of extensive experience in socio-economic studies of farmers' behaviour and in developing economic models related to agriculture and food systems for practical policy formulation and decision-making.

Dr. Amin Mugera is an agricultural economist and agribusiness specialist at the School of Agriculture and Resource Economics and UWA Institute of Agriculture, University of Western Australia. Mugera has extensive research, teaching and training experience in farm management, rural development, and agribusiness. His research has focused on the economics of innovation and growth in the farming sector and strategic management of agribusiness firms along the food value chain. He has investigated the profitability, productivity and competitive advantage of farm enterprises, management of risks associated with people in agricultural firms, drivers of farm labour productivity growth, micro-credit constraints facing women in rural developing countries and agricultural technology adoption and its welfare effects among others.

His research is empirical in nature with a strong policy focus. More recently, Mugerger has been a socio-economist for ACIAR funded project on dryland farming in Syria and Iraq. Mugerger's research has a global perspective cutting across Africa, North America, Southern Asia, and Middle East in countries like Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, United States, Australia, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Syria and China.