

# conference

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROME

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## Twenty-fifth Session

Rome, 11-30 November 1989

### PRESENTATION OF THE B.R. SEN AWARDS (1988 and 1989)

1. The B.R. Sen Award was established in pursuance of Resolution 33/67 of the Fourteenth Session of the Conference, as a permanent feature. The Award, which is conferred annually, is named after a former Director-General of FAO, Mr B.R. Sen, and is directed towards the goals he served. Any officer who has served in the year for which the Award is made, in a field post on any of the activities of FAO, is eligible for the Award. The recipient of the Award must have a minimum of two years' continuous service in the field and must have made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the country or countries to which he/she was assigned. This contribution must be clearly identifiable with assignments such as technical innovations in agriculture, fisheries or forestry; institutional or development support improvements; discoveries of new resources as a result of surveys or other investigations; establishment of training and research institutions.
2. The Award Consists of:
  - (i) a medal carrying the name of the recipient;
  - (ii) a scroll describing achievements of the recipient;
  - (iii) a cash prize of US\$ 5 000;
  - (iv) a round-trip fare to Rome for the recipient and spouse.

#### Selection of Award Recipients

3. The B.R. Sen Award Review Committee, consisting of all the Assistant Directors-General at Headquarters, the Director of the Field Programme Development Division, and the Director of the Personnel Division, reviews nominations received from Regional Representatives, FAO Representatives and Department Heads, and establishes a short-list. The final selection of the award recipients is made by the Director-General, jointly with the Independent Chairman of the Council and the Chairmen of the Programme and the Finance Committees from the short-list drawn up by the Review Committee supplemented by the views of the Governments where the nominees are serving or have served.

Conferment of Awards

4. The Awards are conferred by the Chairman of the Conference at a special ceremony during the first week of each regular session of the FAO Conference. At the Twenty-fifth Session of the Conference, the presentation ceremony will be held for the 1988 and 1989 Award winners.
5. For 1988, the recipient of the Award is Mr Henry R. Stennett of Jamaica. For 1989, the recipient of the Award is Mr Everest Santiago Funes of Argentina. Brief notes on the two recipients and on their achievements are given below.

Mr Henry R. Stennett

Mr Henry R. Stennett was born in Camrose (St. James), Jamaica in 1932 and obtained a B.Sc. degree in Agriculture from the Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, United States of America, with emphasis on soil physics, land use and classification, and soil conservation.

Mr Stennett has had twenty-five years of professional service in Jamaica in progressively responsible positions in land and water management. He worked as Development Officer in the key area of rural extension among farmers, including land use and farm management from 1955 to 1967. As a Watershed Investigation Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture from 1967 to 1973 where he was responsible for the physical appraisal of watersheds he made positive contributions in the preparation and implementation of management plans to restore productive capacities of highly degraded watershed areas.

In 1973, Mr Stennett rose to the position of Chief Soil Conservation Officer in the same Ministry and until 1977 was responsible for the national task of establishing the Soil Conservation Division. In recognition of his services, he was appointed in 1977 to the position of Director, Soil Conservation Division, which post he later relinquished to become National Manager to the FAO/UNDP Strengthening of the National Soil Conservation Programme for Integrated Watershed Development project.

In this important post he liaised with international organizations in joint cooperative efforts, and among his main responsibilities he assisted in developing a national programme for soil conservation and watershed management, in planning watershed development programmes for the eastern region of the country and in implementing watershed management activities in various watershed areas.

With this background and valuable experience, Mr Stennett joined FAO in 1981 and was assigned to serve in a very different ecological, social and cultural environment: the severely degraded Himalayan watersheds in the Kingdom of Nepal.

In addition to his catalytic role in developing the national programme, Mr Stennett contributed decisively to the success of the three projects in Nepal executed with the assistance of FAO:

- Watershed management and conservation education project during the period 1981-1987 with a budget of \$2.3 million which assisted in drafting the Soil Conservation Act and subsidiary legislation; in the preparation of the National Conservation Strategy and the inputs to the sixth and seventh five-year national development plans and the necessary policy support; in building the new Headquarters and two regional centres for the Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management; in demonstration work in two pilot watersheds: Phewa Tal near Pokhara and Kulekhani - the latter to protect the most vital hydropower facility in the country. The project provided the basis for the production of a film (the "Fragile Mountain" shown on television in many countries) and produced other materials for extension, and training of national staff. These outputs are now being used as training and demonstration models in Asia.

- Watershed management project - a follow-up to the previous one, with a budget of \$2.0 million during the period 1988-1989, which assisted in the preparation of watershed development plans and national, district and watershed level - including the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector - and project proposals presented to various donors with a view to promoting additional investment; in the preparation of guides, extension material and training aids, focusing on how to promote grassroots involvement through the establishment of Panchayat Communal Conservation Committees; and in the decentralization process.

- Shivapuri watershed management and fuelwood plantation project during the period 1985-1989 - a spin-off from the above UNDP-supported projects with a donor input of \$1.3 million by Norway - which protects the sources of water supply to the city of Kathmandu; assisted in solving the needs for fuelwood and fodder of the communities living in and around the forest reserve and has contributed to diversify their revenue and employment. In fact, a breakthrough has been achieved in meeting the acute scarcity for fodder in this watershed with the successful production and dissemination of napier grass for fresh forage, and attempts are now afoot to introduce silage making with surplus fodder for the winter months, a long felt need.

Mr Stennett managed these complex, large-scale projects in close consultation with national counterparts, enhancing national capabilities to plan and manage projects in this field and mobilizing significant funding from the donor community. In this latter connection, he has served to set a precedent in developing the management of individual watersheds using funds-in-trust given to the Organization.

By virtue of his technical competence, high-level managerial skill, tact and understanding, pursued with perseverance and zeal, Mr Stennett was also entrusted the duties of FAO Representative ad interim during the period January 1986 to September 1987 with acquiescence of all parties, without affecting in any way during that period the performance of the two projects then under his responsibility.

All this was only possible because of Mr Stennett's qualities of hard work, devotion and sacrifice - qualities which His Majesty's Government of Nepal has recognized. His dedication brings honour to FAO and its field programme and constitutes an example for all of its staff.

Mr Everest Santiago Funes

Mr Everest Santiago Funes was born in Rio Cuarto, Argentina, in 1943 and holds a degree in Modern Literature from the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature of the University of Cordoba, Argentina.

Mr Funes began his professional career by holding courses in educational television at the University of Buenos Aires and then worked in publishing in Argentina.

In 1971, Mr Funes joined FAO as a rural communication specialist to serve in Chile, and thereafter worked in several countries of Latin America to apply communication methods and technology to increase community participation in rural development programmes, to provide information as a basis for change and innovation and to share knowledge and skills with small farmers and their families.

Mr Funes is presently Chief Technical Advisor of the FAO trust fund project in Mexico - Communication and Training for the Development of the Tropical Wetlands - PRODERITH II<sup>1</sup>, Instituto Mexicano de Tecnología del Agua, with financing from the World Bank. The project provides assistance to the Government of Mexico's Integrated Rural Development Programme for the Tropical Wetlands (PRODERITH) to improve agricultural production and living standards for rural communities in the country's tropical wetlands. PRODERITH provides technical assistance in an area of over 1 400 000 hectares. Because of its concern for the involvement of the local population and the need to improve the quality and outreach of its technical assistance activities, the Government of Mexico included communication as an essential component of the PRODERITH rural development programme.

The rural communication system developed by Mr Funes applies a multi-media approach coupled with face-to-face communication, and makes use of traditional media, community radio, video, slidesets and simple illustrated printed materials. Over 700 audio-visual programmes, primarily video, have been produced for training at grass-roots level, for research and situation analysis and for reporting and establishing links with other related national institutions and sectors. Over 200 000 farmers from 300 rural communities and 250 technicians - 90% of which are field workers - have received training through the rural communication system. In this connection, the system has been responsible for the generalized adoption of improved soil conservation practices and for the increase in the use of fertilizers in the area of Tantoan-Santa Clara, from 1 000 hectares to 10 000 hectares.

Mr Funes has also succeeded in building up national capacity and has trained a team of national communication specialists, of which half are women. The rural communication system is now being decentralized, with communication units being established in different regions to meet local needs. And, more important, the use of the communication system, when appropriate, is being transferred to the peasant organizations. Farmers - both men and women - are now being trained to produce and use their own simple communication materials for increased participation, motivation and transfer of technology.

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1 "Comunicación y Capacitación para el Desarrollo del Trópico - PRODERITH II".

Both the Government of Mexico and the World Bank have acknowledged that the rural communication system developed by Mr Funes has been instrumental to the success of the entire integrated rural development programme. Moreover, as a result of the achievements of the communication project, the World Bank was prompted to finance another project to establish a similar rural communication system to enhance the use of water management and irrigation facilities in Mexico. The professional qualities of Mr Funes were also given clear recognition by his being associated with the design of this projet and his future responsibility for its implementation.

Without doubt, the Mexican experience in development communication is a model for other countries in Latin America and in developing countries generally. Rarely has communication been so well integrated into a development programme, been so crucial in programme planning and implementation, and led to such a participatory process with the local population. The credit goes to Mr Funes whose personal commitment, enthusiasm and initiative bring honour to FAO and its Field Programme and constitute an example for all of its staff.