

FACTCHECK 2016 #1

Agricultural and Fisheries Development and Agrarian Reform

While considered an agricultural country, the Philippines' agriculture sector is in dismal state. The share of agriculture in the economy has continuously decreased from 25% in 1985 to 11% in 2012, even if this sector consists a third of the country's labor force. It is no surprising, hence, that a big significant percentage of the 11 million farmers and fishermen in the country post the highest poverty incidence among the sectors.

This FactCheck covers the position, platform and track record of presidential and vice presidential candidates on agricultural and fisheries development and the continuation of agrarian reform or CARPER.

Presidential Candidates

All candidates support the land distribution program. Jejomar Binay and Grace Poe are against the continuation of land tenure improvement (LTI) or the continuation of land acquisition and distribution to farmers after CARPER. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, while supportive of CARPER in 2010, has no clear pronouncements recently on extending the program, except in calling that the alleged Binay hacienda should be subjected to CARPER.

All candidates express the need to provide support to the agricultural sector through various mechanisms—Binay will create more jobs in the agricultural sector, Rodrigo Duterte to give priority and support to farmers, Poe to increase mechanization and farm to market roads, Mar Roxas to create easy access to credit for farmers and access to market, and Santiago to increase allocation more in the agricultural sector.

Based on the records, no candidate specifically mentioned their position on fisheries reforms.

Duterte and Binay mentioned agrarian reform in their platforms: Binay through re-engineering CARP into an agri-agra development program to allow beneficiaries to sell their usufruct rights and Duterte through ensuring that farmers will benefit from the land under CARPER.

All candidates have platform/proposals for supporting farmers through various mechanisms: Binay proposes to create more job opportunities and modernize the agricultural sector through opening to foreign funding, and correct inefficiencies in the supply chain by cutting middlemen. Duterte proposes agri-financing reforms to be passed and free the irrigation for the farmers.

Poe stated on her platform that she will improve the irrigation system and mechanize agriculture. Roxas, based on his platform, will allot greater allocation in the investments of the infrastructure of the agricultural sector. Defensor-Santiago, on the other hand, will prioritize investment in the agricultural sector through public infrastructure and political institutions.

No candidate specifically mentioned in their official platform/priorities fisheries reform and development, although a report of Inquirer indicates that Binay, Duterte and Santiago have respective platform on fisheries development. Duterte is for the creation of a Department of Fisheries and Marine Resource Management separate from the Department of Agriculture. Binay states that the government must implement capacity building programs to improve credit-worthiness of farmers, fisher-folks and their organizations to enable them to obtain financial loans and there is a need for modernization of agriculture and fisheries through establishing infrastructures. Santiago states the need to improve CCT to become a more direct form of support for the agricultural (farmers and fisher-folks) sector by providing incentives to more productive households.

While all candidates have agricultural development in their platforms, based on records, only Poe and Defensor-Santiago have concrete track record in promoting agriculture/fisheries reform and development through several bills that they authored or co-authored. Duterte's track record on agricultural development is in account of his role as former local chief executive of Davao City, which has regular agricultural development programs.

Vice Presidential Candidates

Gregorio Honasan, Allan Peter Cayetano, Leni Robredo and Antonio Trillanes are in favor on continuing the distribution of lands under CARP, while Francis Escudero and Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. are not in favor of land distribution. Trillanes believes that it should be through farmer's cooperatives and not individual farmers. Cayetano, Honasan, and Robredo believe that land distribution should be complimented with support to farmers. Escudero believes that the focus of government should be on supporting farmers. Marcos asserts that agrarian reform has been completed under his father's term as the president.

All candidates agree to the provision of support to farmers through various mechanisms. They also agree on the importance of the fisheries sector and that it should be given proper attention.

No candidate specifically mentioned agrarian reform in their platform.

Only Robredo and Marcos have agricultural development in their platform, as Marcos maintains that agriculture is the key to economic development while Robredo's platform is to revitalize agriculture through targeted infrastructure, farmer clustering for effective access to services, and have owner-cultivatorship as foundation of agriculture. The rest of the vice presidential candidates have no concrete platform with regards to agricultural development. No vice presidentiable have mentioned concrete platform on fisheries development.

Honasan and Robredo have concrete track record in pushing for agrarian reform, as Honasan sponsored the bill for the continuation of the bill and authored the act to strengthened CARP, while Robredo sponsored a bill that supports the creation of committee that will safeguard CARP from alleged corruption. Cayetano and Escudero supported the measure in Senate with reservations. Marcos does not support agrarian reform measures. There was no information found on Trillanes with regards to this issue.

With the exception of Cayetano, all candidates have varying track records on promoting

agricultural development and support to farmers. Honasan called for the immediate implementation of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act and the release of the Coco Levy Fund. Escudero issued a statement in the Senate that called on the administration not to underspend in agriculture and filed two (2) senate bills in relation to the development of the agricultural sector. Robredo authored two house bills that promote support for farmers and the agricultural sector. Marcos and Trillanes were members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food (16th congress). Marcos filed six (6) senate bills that promote the improvement of agriculture. Trillanes filed three (3) senate bills that promote the improvement of support and program for the farmers.

Honasan, Escudero, Robredo, and Marcos have concrete proposals and actions for fisheries reform and development, mainly focusing on the improvement of the state of fisherfolks in the country and the fisheries law. No information was found on Trillanes.

What is FactCheck 2016?

FactCheck is a continuing project of the Ateneo School of Government (ASoG), through its Political Democracy Reforms (PODER) and Government Watch (G-Watch) programs, that provides verified information on candidate's position, platform and track record as a voter's basis in making their decisions on who to vote and what issues and agenda to further advance. Now on its third cycle, the 2016 FactCheck, as in the previous 2010 and 2013 elections, probes candidate's position, platform and track record on key issues and agenda identified through consultations with organizations at the local and national levels. It highlights and mainstreams critical issues in the election agenda to contribute in making elections issue- and platform-oriented.

FactCheck 2016 focuses on 10 issues:

- Agriculture, fisheries development and agrarian reform
- Participatory and pro-poor budgeting (BuB)
- The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)
- Political and Electoral Reforms

- Meaningful youth participation
- Education and Health Services to Vulnerable Sectors
- Social Justice for the Bangsamoro and the Indigenous Peoples (IPs)
- Urban Development
- Environmental-ecological Protection and disaster risk and reduction management (DRRM)
- Anti-corruption

The following process was undertaken in coming up with the FactChecks:

- Formal letters were sent out to all the candidates requesting for their position, platform and track record on the agenda we identified.
- Based on the input from the candidates, we did the ‘fact-checking’ by checking on official reports and documents and reports from credible newspapers/ online media. For the candidates who did not send their inputs, our take off point was their official website.
- We then processed the data using a processing table and following our measures and indicators.

***Factcheck 2016
Measures and Indicators***

Position refers to the candidates’ pronouncements about the agenda that can be found in printed materials like news, statements or online. We determine whether the candidate is for, against or neutral.

Platform refers to the candidates’ plans in tackling the agenda as stated in their official platform. We determine whether the agenda is mentioned, not mentioned in the platform.

Track record refers to the direct action taken by the candidates in advancing/ realizing the agenda. We determine whether the candidates’ track record is concrete, not concrete, no record or opposition based on whether the candidates has taken direct action in terms of bills filed, laws passed, decisions

made, programs/ projects personally/ directly championed as stated in official or reliable/ verifiable records. We mark the candidates’ track record ‘opposition’ if s/he has taken an opposition position on the agenda.

- After a researcher prepared the data processing table, at least two other researchers peer reviewed the data and the briefer. We then prepared the infographics and finalized the briefer for posting on FactCheck 2016 Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/factcheck2016/>).
- The final checking was crowdsourced. We allowed anyone using the online platform (Facebook) to point to us any credible source that would correct any wrong data on our FactCheck. Upon receiving such feedback, we checked the source, verified it and corrected the FactCheck (if needed), indicating the correction we made.

Note: The data and figures can still be updated and we are open to additional sources from anyone. Please contact us through our FB page.

PODER/ G-Watch deems FactCheck 2016 mainly as a platform to mainstream critical issues and agenda identified through studies and consultations of PODER/ G-Watch and to facilitate the exchange of citizens and politicians on these issues and agenda.

Sources:

www.bilangpilipino.com
<http://www.mb.com.ph/is-grace-poe-good-for-business/>
<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/124354/to-help-farmers--binay-promises-to-modernize-ph-agriculture-poe-promises-to-use-coco-levy-fund>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/105026-grace-poe-leader-i-want>
https://www.senate.gov.ph/16th_congress/ctte_notice/Agri_0215.pdf
<http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/02/08/Duterte-promises-free-irrigation-to-farmers-if-elected-president.htm>
<http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/02/09/duterte-platforms-tondo.html>
<http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/02/18/Duterte-Cayetano-priority-agriculture.html>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/118670-rodri-go-duterte-alan-cayetano-platform>
<http://gracepoe-greenmonitor.weebly.com/platform.html>
<http://marroxas.com/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7G59VSrrS4>
<http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/02/12/presidential-candidates-platform-of-government-elections.html>

<http://blog.marroxas.com/2016/02/09/ang-panata-sa-pamilyang-pilipino-the-roxas-robredo-platform-of-governance/>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/101081-marroxas-leader-i-want>
<http://miriam.com.ph/newsblog/2010/08/09/miriam-on-agrarian-reform/>
<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/124354/to-help-farmers--binay-promises-to-modernize-ph-agriculture-poe-promises-to-use-coco-levy-fund>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/97964-jejomar-binay-leader-i-want>
<http://ovp.gov.ph/index.php/21-press-release/trades-industry/612-maximize-use-of-p6-6m-pesticide-analysis-equipment-to-help-farmers-binay-camp>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/111582-alan-peter-cayetano-leader-i-want>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/106049-chiz-escudero-leader-i-want-2016>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/112654-bongbong-marcos-leader-i-want>
<http://blog.marroxas.com/2016/02/09/ang-panata-sa-pamilyang-pilipino-the-roxas-robredo-platform-of-governance/>
<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/108938-gringo-honasan-leader-i-want>
Copies of platform from offices of Marcos, Poe, Roxas and Duterte.