



The SAAD: A Promise Being Fulfilled

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Background

Spoiled eggs. This is a problem that the townspeople of Salug in Zamboanga del Norte endure most of the time. Eggs supplied in the area are already spoiled when sold, considering the 2-3 days' delivery time from Dipolog City and Cagayan de Oro.

In 2017, the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) started its implementation, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Salug seized the opportunity and prepared the proposal for the Layer Chicken Egg Production Project. The project was then implemented with two associations of marginalized farmers from Barangays Liguac and Pacuhan. The said farmers' organizations adopted a series of social preparation activities resulting to a community-enterprise development by and for the members.

One of the organizations is the Liguac Farmers' Association (LFA) which traces its beginnings in 2013. After becoming inactive for two years, LFA was rebuilt with the hope of supporting its 33 members through poultry farming. SAAD facilitated LFA's access to eighteen (18) units of egg machines, including a two-month supply of feeds, as well as veterinary drugs and biologics. Each egg machine consists of forty-eight (48) heads of ready-to-lay pullets.

SAAD provided members of LFA access to financial and program management, policy formulation, and production recording to enhance business management capacities. Aside from Salug, the rest of the municipalities of Zamboanga del Norte is also covered by the SAAD Program. By 2022, SAAD targets to have covered poorest 30 provinces in 11 regions of the Philippines.

Innovations / Good Practices

The egg machines were constructed on the 7th of April 2018. Even though it was delayed, the group's eagerness to pursue the project was evident. *Bayanihan* was done when their only supply of water was removed by the owner, who is a former barangay official, after losing the elections. Also, according to the Office of the Municipal Mayor, water supply in the town is truly inadequate. The townspeople's most common sources of water are open and deep wells.

Some farmers donated water while most of them volunteered in fetching water from the Poblacion (central barangay). They also used their personal earnings to buy water. They continued doing this for two months. Some farmers also willingly brought egg trays—a sign that they will do everything for the project's success.

The association also manages their earnings very well as they religiously kept records of their cost and production. The income from the project is deposited in their bank account. They only pay for

feeds, wages for two caretakers (also members who have unstable income), as well as water and electricity bills.

The farmers don't just rely on the project. They also do communal vegetable gardening, supported by the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO), to supplement their financial needs.

The farmers are also focused on expanding the egg machines to attain their vision of supplying the entire municipality with fresh eggs. They also hope to market their produce in nearby towns, such as Leon Postigo.

Status

LFA can now be dubbed as "*agripreneurs*" as they manage the egg machines. A day after the distribution of the egg machines, the group already earned around P1,500.00. After two months of production, they got an amount of P60,000.00. At present, they have saved a total of P127,000 in their bank account.

Facilitating Factors / Challenges

The facilitating factors are the organization's unity (*bayanihan*), and the presence of the SAAD, LGUs, and UNDP. Lack of water supply is not the group's only problem. Calamities, such as typhoons and earthquakes, are also their uncontrollable challenges. The catastrophes often affect the well-being of the chickens, contributing to their stress.

An animal called *maral*, actually a Visayan leopard cat, is also something that they keep watching out. It allegedly feeds on the chickens. In fact, ten (10) chickens recently died due to stress brought by calamities and probably by the said animal.

Impact

The project's beneficiaries from the LFA have reached thirty-three (33) households, who are earning below the poverty threshold. Most of them are also recipients of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

The project will 1) provide a viable, profit-making business for the poor farmers; 2) create job opportunities in the future; and 3) produce enough fresh eggs for the people.

Policy/Programme/Cooperation Implication:

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) partnered with LFA to construct four (4) water pumps that will benefit not only the project but also other people in the community.