

TUMAN

The Official Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Agriculture - Caraga Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program



Volume I
Issue II JUL-SEP 2020



Leading women: 5 management strategies from a farmer agripreneur

The United Nations Women Organization asserts that when more women work, economies grow. While this claim is broad and excessively forward, this is altogether true. Included in the list challenging the gender gaps in the world is Nenita Dalayan, a farmer-entrepreneur in Bayabas, Surigao del Sur.

Nenita, 51 years old, leads the Balete Chicken Growers' Association, a farmers' group engaging in the chicken production project (worth Php 833,136) funded through the Department of Agriculture's Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program.

Starting an association of already preoccupied farmers became Nenita's early challenge. While agricultural inputs are easily provided to the group, encouraging her 25 members' full involvement took her some time.

"Initially, my members are less committed, busy with their existing livelihood. It took me some time, primarily convincing them, before they understood that this project will serve as an additional source of income for all of us," shared Nenita.

Members' commitment, once a hurdle for Nenita, is now a thing of the past. BACGA, in terms of egg production, is thriving. From April to July 2020, their sales from eggs alone amounted to Php 19,580. While it is unfair to credit BACGA's performance to Nenita alone, we definitely can learn a thing or two from her.

Here are five management strategies Nenita and her members employ routinely:

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Aside from planting rice and corn, we now raise chicken and sell their eggs to earn additional income. This has been a big help to our association, especially since the community quarantine. **So far, we have already saved a portion of our income—from selling eggs—to our bank account.**

REZIE B. MOLLANEDA
President
Cancavan Corn Growers Association
Carmen, Surigao del Sur



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Before, it would take us a month to process our abaca harvest. With the advanced machines, in two to three days we can already sell our produce. **SAAD equipped us with resources needed for our ongoing abaca production** with agricultural inputs, machines, facilities such as UV plastic sheds, and production training.

SANTOS ESCALICAS
President
Muritula USAID Farmers' Association
San Luis, Agusan del Sur

DA-SAAD Region 13 expands goat production in Surigao del Sur



To expand the goat production in Surigao del Sur, the Department of Agriculture (DA) – Region 13 implemented a Php 4.5 million project under the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program for FY 2020.

Fifty-five (55) goats worth Php 484,000 were distributed to five associations in the

municipalities of Bayabas, Lingig, and Bislig City. The said associations were identified as among the people in areas with the highest poverty incidence in the region, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2015).

Each of the five associations, which members are mostly Manobos, received 10 does and 1 buck. They are the Riverside Panaosawon Farmers' Association (20 members), and the P-7 Panaosawon Farmers' Association (20 members) in Bayabas; the Pinanapatan Farmers' Association (20 members), and the North Mecaopee Farmers' Association (20 members) in Lingig; and the Goat Raisers' Association of Mabog (20 members) in Bislig City.

Other supplementary materials and facilities will be delivered this year. These include pasture grasses, drugs and biologics, goat housing with perimeter fence, vegetable seeds, water hose, bolo, hybrid yellow corn, complete fertilizer, among others.

In 2019, the associations initially received interventions with a total cost of Php 3,044,271.48 for the same project. This included the same number of goats (10 does and 1 buck) per association. Some of the goats gave birth and are now raising their kids except for the Riverside Panaosawon Farmers' Association, which recorded two fatalities. Both Pinanapatan Farmers' Association and Goat Raisers of Mabog have one kid while P-7 Panaosawon Farmers' Association and North Mecaopee Farmers' Association have 4 and 3 kids, respectively. With the additional goats, the associations hope to increase the number and become an enterprise.

The goat production projects are expected to start generating regular income by 2021. For this reason, DA-SAAD also included inputs such as vegetable seeds to the goat production projects so that each member of the association will be able to grow vegetables in their home lots for home consumption and additional income while they are looking after their goats. |



SAAD is a locally-funded program of the Department of Agriculture that is intended to help alleviate poverty among the marginalized sectors on agriculture and fishery.

VISION

By 2022, SAAD will be the leading agricultural development program and resource mobilization service of the Department of Agriculture, undertaking intensified social venture initiatives to increase food production and alleviate identified farmers and fisherfolk from poverty.

MISSION

We contribute to the poverty alleviation of 30 priority provinces with high poverty incidences and areas covered by Executive Order No. 70 (series of 2018) through: (1) social preparation that empowers marginalized farmers and fisherfolk; (2) intensified production and livelihood interventions responsive to assessed needs; and (3) partnerships with the local government units, private sector, and other government agencies and stakeholders.



SAAD responds to COVID-19 food threat in Caraga

True to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's call to increase the country's food supply at the height of the coronavirus disease 2019 (CoViD-19), the Department of Agriculture (DA) – Region 13 distributed corn seeds to 7 associations in Agusan del Sur (ADS) and Surigao del Sur (SDS) funded through the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program.

The associations received hybrid yellow corn seeds (33 bags), OPV white corn seeds (115 bags), and OPV yellow corn seeds (20 bags) worth Php 426,700 which will cover about 168 hectares of corn fields. The interventions will benefit a total of 265 individual farmers who will start planting this August 2020.

In ADS, OPV white corn (registered seeds) were distributed among four associations including San Luis' Cecelia Abaca Corn Planters' Association (21 bags); Veruela's Caigangan Abaca Farmers' Association (25 bags), Candiis SAAD Farmers Association (25 bags); and Rosario's Cosep People Organization (44 bags).

Meanwhile in SDS, the 33 bags of yellow hybrid corn seeds were divided among Carmen's Chicken Raisers' Association of Burboanan (3 bags for 20 members); Goat Raisers' Association of Mabog (10 bags for 20 members); and Cancavan Corn Growers' Association (20 bags for 20 members) aside from receiving additional 20 bags of OPV yellow corn seeds.

Enabling the vulnerable groups

The threats of CoViD-19 are unparalleled. Equally important with safety protocols is food security alongside financial stability, especially among the vulnerable groups of people.

This, however, is not new to DA-SAAD. Since 2019, the program has been providing income-generating interventions to farmers' groups in ADS and SDS. They are people belonging to areas in Region 13 that are classified by the Philippine Statistics Authority (2015) with the highest poverty incidence.

In 2019, the same associations in ADS received abaca and cacao production projects, while native chicken and goat production were funded in SDS.

While some of these projects have been generating relative income, abaca, cacao and goat production will take years before producing marketable goods. As such, this intervention is relevant, especially as a response to the threat of the pandemic.

This year alone, the program allotted Php 9.4 million worth of interventions to include seeds, animals, feeds, drugs and biologics, and relevant Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to be distributed within the year.

Since the regional lockdown in March, access to food sources has been limited. This initiative of DA-SAAD echoes the indispensable call to mitigate the impact of the pandemic by addressing food security. |



Abaca farmers in Agusan del Sur aided with backyard poultry project

Amid the height of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Department of Agriculture (DA) – Region 13, through the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program, distributed 880 upgraded native chickens worth Php 440,000.00 to a farmer’s association in Barangay Muritula, San Luis.

The Muritula USAID Farmers’ Association (80 members) obtained 11 chickens each, complete with feeds and vitamins, as part of the FY 2020 Native Chicken Production Project amounting to Php 3.42 million.

According to association president Santos Almonicar Escalisas, native chickens are intended to be raised at home, which proves to be advantageous given that chickens raised in backyards require less investment and cost of feeds, but with a rapid return on investment.

He also expressed gratitude for the provision that he deemed as a side project for his members. *“We are grateful to DA – SAAD Region 13 for these native chickens. Aside from tending to our abaca plantation and our weekly banana exports, we now have an additional, manageable project. We are more than excited because we get to raise the chickens on our own, in our very own backyards,”* Escalisas said.

The association, which has grown from 60 members in 2019 to 80 in 2020, is also a recipient of the SAAD-funded Abaca Production Project in 2019 with inputs, such as abaca plantlets, fertilizers, pesticides, carabaos, and machinery and equipment worth to Php 2.46 million.

DA Regional Executive Director Abel James I. Monteagudo, in a statement, assured that the Department is one with its beneficiaries in alleviating poverty and in attaining food security in the region.

“DA-Region 13, through the SAAD Program, lives on with its mission to help address poverty in Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur. We recognize the needs of our partners, and, in turn, commit to provide what they need to generate income and also produce food for the region. With the pandemic becoming more threatening, our farmers need our support more than ever,” Director Monteagudo added.

The native chicken production is a component of the Php 9.4 million worth of interventions SAAD has allotted for 2020 in Region 13 to continue establishing income-generating projects to 34 farmers’ associations in Agusan del Sur (10) and Surigao del Sur (22). The interventions include seeds, animals, feeds, drugs and biologics, and relevant Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to be distributed within the year. |

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1. Delegate tasks

Farming, the major livelihood in the area, is laborious but manageable. Considering her members' personal endeavors, as well as her full-time job as a barangay health worker, dividing the workload among her members was Nenita's top priority.

"As soon as the chickens arrived, we grouped ourselves into 5 groups. One group is assigned every day. Some members guard the site in the morning while the remainder spend the night in the hut we constructed on the site. We make sure that the site is guarded at all times," Nenita added.

3. Carry out immediate solutions

In sustaining any project, there's no room for delayed actions. Being the group leader, Nenita consolidates her members' concerns and presents the issues to them during their monthly meeting.

"I am a health worker, my job is demanding. But I know how much my members need me. We hold a monthly meeting every last Sunday of the month. As soon as we congregate, we address the problems all together," Nenita said.

2. Keep an inclusive recording system

Nenita, even without prior experience in project management, is well aware of how transparency builds and guarantees trust. BACGA started selling eggs for Php 210/ tray in May 2020. With the money growing, they came up with a recording system and adopted a Physical and Financial Report from the SAAD coordinator.

"All our income and expenses are recorded. We have developed a recording sheet for our sales, with details including the name of the buyer, the quantity sold, and the amount paid. Area Coordinator Rosemyr Bulatin also provided us a form that sums up our finances in a month. We never miss filling out those forms because they are important," Nenita shared.

4. Seek community support

Livelihood programs, while directly impacting the beneficiary-farmers, need as much community support there is. According to Nenita, they can't afford to depend on supplies from the SAAD Program all the time. Good thing that their community is more than willing to support.

"Our community is overjoyed with the poultry in the locality. Our barangay captain contributed some materials for the construction of our mini hut and comfort room. While SAAD has provided us more than what we have imagined, there is a lot to put up in the site, such as a comfort room. We solicited from our community, and the rest we financed with our funds," Nenita shared.

5. Be innovative

Aside from producing eggs, BACGA aims to supply chickens to local buyers and food establishments in Bayabas. They already have prospect buyers to which they will deliver chicks and live chickens once available.

"All our earnings as of August 2020 came from selling eggs. Upon the arrival of the incubator from SAAD we readily started incubating 210 eggs. Sure, eggs are marketable, but if we want to progress financially we need to start investing in chick production," said Nenita.

By 2022, Nenita and members will be established agripreneurs. But for now, Nenita and her members are taking their time establishing a reputable name in the poultry industry. *"We're taking things slowly. Soon enough, we'll get there." |*

female members of BACGA

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August 14, 2020 | **Delivery of 880 upgraded native chickens to Muritula USAD Farmers Association in San Luis, ADS.**



August 27, 2020 | **Delivery of 550 upgraded native chickens to Caigangan Abaca Farmers' Association in Veruela, ADS.**

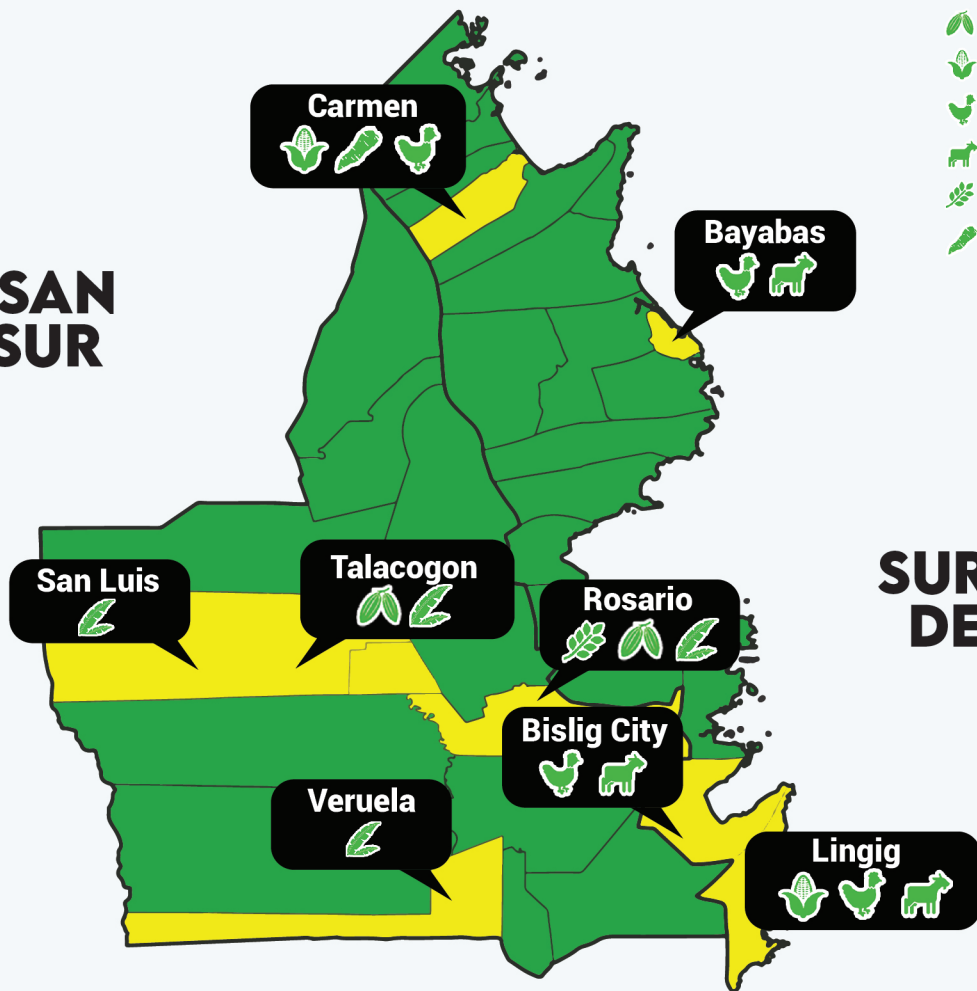


September 10, 2020 | **Delivery of 440 upgraded native chickens to Culiram SAAD Abaca Farmers Association in Talacogon, ADS.**

SAAD PRIORITY AREAS IN CARAGA

AGUSAN DEL SUR

SURIGAO DEL SUR



Legend:

- abaca
- cacao
- corn
- chicken
- goat
- rice
- ubi

32 beneficiary association

1016 individuals reached

358 indigenous peoples reached



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