

SPECIAL AREA FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
BANDILYO
(announcement)



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With SAAD-BFAR stories inside



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The SAAD *Bandilyo* is the official monthly publication of the **Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program 8**, Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office (DA-RFO) 8, Kanhuraw Hill, Tacloban City.

Formerly published as the quarterly newsletter, *Peryodikit*, the one-page maiden issue came out in March 2017. In January 2018, it morphed into a monthly newsletter. Then again, in May 2018 until December 2019, it became a two-page spread with an occasional feature story about farmer-beneficiaries.

In January 2020, *Bandilyo* (*Waray* for Announcement) has been reformatted into a twelve-page monthly magazine-type publication intended for the reading pleasure of SAAD Program management and decision makers, personnel and staff of DA-RFO 8, stakeholders, partner agencies, and the farmers themselves.

This periodical is a work of nonfiction. All of the people, events, and details described in its pages are real; there are no composite characters, fake names, invented quotes, or imagined conversations. Articles may be reproduced, in full or in part, provided appropriate acknowledgment is given.

From the Regional Focal Person's Desk..



I have always emphasized that SAAD Program's twin goals are: helping the 'poorest of the poor' farmers and attaining food security and sufficiency. Towards this end, we empower them through conduct of capability enhancement activities, provision of livelihood opportunities, and assistance in marketing their products, and to become entrepreneurs. This way, they are able to improve their productivity and increase their income, thereby uplifting them from the morass of poverty.

REGIONAL ASSESSMENT resolves UNSETTLED IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Bethzaida Genesis F. Girang, Project Evaluation Officer I, RPMSO



The 1st SAAD Regional Assessment for the Year 2021 was held at Sophia's Way, Tacloban City on March 11-12, 2021. Attended by Provincial/Area Coordinators, Information Technologists, and APCOs/Focal Persons of SAAD-covered provinces, DA-RFO 8 top management, and RPMSO staff, the activity tackled issues that have been hanging in the air that needed resolution and current concerns.

Important matters taken up are as follows:

1. In social preparation activities, other topics, which are not in the original program, could be included/inserted provided they still fall within schedule. In relation to this, the impact of values formation, capacity building, and other preparatory endeavors vs. performance of farmer-beneficiaries (FBs) will be determined in a future study.
2. The beneficiaries of various machineries and equipment should be responsible in the handling of the same. Monthly utilization report must be regularly prepared and submitted. Also, instill in the minds of farmers that they must sustain their enterprises even beyond project termination.
3. In the conduct of provincial assessments, district offices should be involved, such as the two districts of Samar, etc. MAOs and concerned LGUs should be updated in regard to activities/events happening in their respective areas.
4. To coordinate with the offices of PMED and Accounting when the lacking deliveries from previous years are finally dropped. Proper coordination should also be done always upon entering ELCAC areas.
5. Full documentation of FBs' status should be prepared pre- and post-SAAD Program implementation. Include their income before the program commenced to monitor their development through the years. All monitoring activities conducted should likewise be fully documented.
6. Preparation of project/activity proposals must coincide with the Annual Investment Plan (AIP) formulation.
7. In the procurement of ready-to-lay chicken, 16-week pullets with pre-laying and layer feeds are preferred; while for native chicken, Rhode Island Red breed is preferred.
8. As to rice production data, segregate data of irrigated lands for analysis. Unit of measure used should be consistent.
9. Ample preparation should be made for the conduct of SAAD Saga in November 2021 at Summit Hotel. In relation to this is the submission of scrapbooks for all SAAD-covered areas.

Overall strategies implemented:

1. Beneficiaries are notified early before going to their area. Small group meetings are conducted at the production site during monitoring activities to take up issues encountered by

the association. Engage FBs to discuss the financial status of their respective association.

2. Link successful SAAD FBs to banner programs.
3. Decisions should be market-driven.
4. Utilize dispersal agreements for the repopulation of swine in Eastern Samar.

Issues/Concerns and Recommendations:

1. For defective equipment, such as incubators, they should be coordinated with the supplier (if still within the warranty period); and check and have them repaired (if the warranty period had already passed). As to defective ICT supplies, new printers should be procured.
2. For damaged feeds, try converting them to cash by lowering their prices for immediate disposal. Issue a voucher for notification to supplier on their timely delivery. If they are already moldy or severely damaged, dispose the feeds.
3. As to decrease in production of vegetables and rootcrops due to heavy rainfall, mitigating actions should be put in place, such as construction of rain shelter and canals in areas where there is water lag. In regard to high incidence of mortality in *kalamansi* seedlings, full documentation and immediate reporting should be made from the time the seedlings were delivered.
4. Whenever partnership issues arise, conduct reorientation with LGUs on their responsibilities towards the program. Communication letters to LGUs regarding 2021 projects should be signed by RTD Larry U. Sultan as Regional Focal Person; at the same time, they should be well-coordinated with LCEs.
5. With the worsening ASF situation, it is important to sustain the green areas through good animal husbandry practices, such as regular disinfection of affected areas.
6. With lack of communication during deliveries, it's case-to-case basis, but there should always be close monitoring and coordination with concerned staff/personnel.
7. The schedule of 2021 caterings is still being processed with procurement. Likewise, inorganic (foliar) fertilizers for 2020 corn and vegetable projects are still being procured as replacement for damaged or expired agri-inputs.
8. In regard to the MOA or usufruct for ORIORICA, schedule a meeting with the municipal mayor. If the land agreement doesn't push through, advise the association to transfer to another lot. Area Coordinators should closely monitor the FBs.

There being no other matters discussed, the activity was adjourned with a Closing Message by Ms. Ferlynn V. Basañez who urged the SAAD field officers to maintain close coordination with RPMSO as regards issues encountered, so proper and timely action could be done to mitigate untoward repercussions on the farmers.



EMPOWERING WOMEN FARMERS, changing lives

Michael F. Dabuet, Information Officer, RPMSO



More than a year has passed since COVID19 hit the country, causing job losses and increasing poverty levels. Sadly, this has impacted people unevenly, particularly women, youth, the poor, and informal sector workers. Health protocols have constrained the mobility of family members, forcing them to be at home most of the time with limited or no income at all, especially among semi-skilled men and women.

Sustainable recovery requires building back better in new ways. To do so, we need to work collaboratively. There is a need to promote competitive, innovative endeavors and advance productive employment, but it must be accompanied by upskilling or reskilling work forces – particularly those most impacted by COVID19 or changes to traditional work.

It is deeply rooted in our social structure that puts a higher premium on patriarchy and the dominance of male roles, as seen in how men are viewed as “protectors” and “heroes.” This same social structure also puts in a box the female role as “subservient.” It is fortunate that in this part of the country, it is not widely perceived to be true, because women are now accorded the respect they deserve. In majority of households, women share in the responsibility of decision-making and earning income, aside from the traditional norm of taking care of the home and children.

This may be credited in part to values formation and other capability enhancement activities that teach values around gender sensitivity and respect for diverse gender identities. Values are deeply instilled in farmer-beneficiaries against trivializing the role of women and normalizing violence against them and all other gender identities. In this, we can say the program has succeeded in addressing women's issues in the best possible way it can.

In the recently-concluded *Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita* market fair held at Robinsons North, Tacloban City, it showcased the participation of mostly women farmers who proudly promoted their livelihood products during the two (2) four-day events held on March 19-22 and 26-29, 2021. At the SAAD Program booth, the following farmers' associations displayed their products:

1. Mahayagnon Farmers Association, New Mahayag, Catbalogan

- | City |
|--|
| 2. Hilaba Farmers Association, Brgy. Amambucale, Marabut, Samar |
| 3. Cantongtong United Youth Association, Brgy. Cantongtong, Jibong, Samar |
| 4. Cantongtong Agrarian Rice Farmers Association, Brgy. Cantongtong, Jibong, Samar |
| 5. Caluyahan Farmers Association, Brgy. Caluyahan, Motiong, Samar |
| 6. San Nicholas Farmers Association, Brgy. San Nicholas, San Jose de Buan, Samar |
| 7. Patong Integrated Farmers Association, Brgy. Patong, San Miguel, Leyte |
| 8. Maragondong Farmers Association, Brgy. Maragondong, Dagami, Leyte |
| 9. Capiñahan Farmers Association, Brgy. Capiñahan, San Isidro, Leyte |
| 10. Balena Livelihood Entrepreneur Association, Brgy. Basud, San Isidro, Leyte |
| 11. Bulod Farmers Association, Brgy. Bulod, Sta. Fe, Leyte |
| 12. Dapdap Badiang Farmers and Fisherfolk Association, Brgy. Dapdap Badiang, Capoocan, Leyte |

A variety of products were made available to the consuming public. These include fresh eggs, native chicken eggs, mallard duck salted eggs, *Kalinayan* aromatic rice, sticky rice (white and *tapul* varieties), pop rice, *ube* (yam) (*Kinampay* and *Inoringnon* varieties), cassava, and the choicest vegetables fresh from the farm.

During the first week, total sales reached PhP45,822.00 and, on the second week, sales shot up to PhP70,693.00, making SAAD Program booth the overall highest-earning outlet of farm products. The test market boosted the confidence and self-esteem of the farmers, and they looked forward to more avenues such as this wherein they could promote their products to a broader market. The exercise also encouraged the food producers to upgrade the quality and packaging of their products to make them more attractive and salable.

After more than a year of fighting COVID19, a gripping sense of futility engulfs the country, especially at a time when the morbidity and mortality cases are spiking. While the pandemic has caused one of the greatest disruptions of all time, these small recovery efforts, such as the *Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita*, offer a unique opportunity to change the course of development in the Philippines towards a human-centered, greener future and leave a legacy for the next generations of Filipinos.



Orientation on ELCAC at SAN JOSE DE BUAN, SAMAR

Roy A. Tabontabon, Area Coordinator II, PPMSO- Samar



The Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program penetrated the farthest and remotest barangay in Samar, located within an insurgency area in the municipality of San Jose de Buan. The program simply cannot stop helping farmer communities elevate their socioeconomic status even at the risk of the field implementors' safety.

Mr. Joel Pedraza, APCO/SAAD Focal Person of Samar, attended the Orientation on End Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC) on February 17, 2021 at the Municipal Session Building, San Jose de Buan, Samar. Said orientation was participated in by members of the Gusa Farmers Association, majority of which are rebel returnees. Mayor Joaquin Elizalde, AFP staff represented by Sgt. Danilo L. Silagan (INF) PA CMO, NCO Alpha Company, 87IB, Municipal Agriculturist Nimfa C. Reyes, and SAAD Provincial Coordinator Kristine Dorothea T. Danago were also present.

The Gusa Farmers Association is a recipient of the FY 2021 Egg Layer with Vegetable Production Project. It was organized by the Armed Forces of the Philippines in September 2019. It also a recipient of the *Greenlihood* Project of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) Samar.

APCO Pedraza discussed important factors that could help in managing the association. He likewise emphasized that the Department of Agriculture is always ready to help farmers through its regular and special programs, like SAAD, by reaching out to far-flung communities. He also encouraged them to nurture and manage the projects well. For her part, PC Kristine Dorothea T. Danago presented the SAAD guidelines of implementation.

Mayor Joaquin Elizalde gave a short but encouraging message to members of the association. He underscored the importance of the project which would enable families to increase their income, if managed well. Furthermore, the good Mayor promised to provide materials for the construction of the association members' housing.

During the conversation with Fernando R. Lazarra, Vice President of Gusa FA and a former rebel, he related that this is the first time ever that the farmers will receive help from the government. According to him, *"This is the start of a new life for us with assistance coming from the government. To say thanks doesn't come close to expressing our gratitude. It has to manifest in our thinking, attitudes, and actions. Hence, we will do our best to take good care of the project so it will be sustained because our passion in life is to make the future of our families happy and secured."*

Hope DESPITE THE ASF THREAT

Jeric M. Afable, Area Coordinator II, PPMSO-Samar

In the province of Samar, it is widely known that swine production is a primary source of income of farmers. After an average of 3 months, they can already dispose their hog fatteners in the market at prices ranging from PhP9,000.00-12,000.00, depending on the animals' liveweight. This is a really big help for farmers in providing for their needs and covering their expenses.

This is what the Department of Agriculture through SAAD Program has aimed – to help poor farmers and fishermen by giving them projects, which are suitable to their expertise and adaptable to local resources. SAAD Program has various projects for qualified associations. One of these is the Swine Production Project that is in a way directed to increase production of hogs in Samar province.

The Mambo Farmers' Credit Cooperative, based in Brgy. Mambo, Pinabacda, Samar, was organized in 2016. It has 39 active members, and was a beneficiary of the FY 2020 Swine Production Project, wherein they received a total of 8 gilts, 122 bags feeds, and drugs/ biologics. Total project cost was PhP710,404.00.

Mr. Silveriano Cabueñas is the President of the cooperative. Being a leader is a big challenge for him, especially at this time that the African Swine Fever (ASF) has spread and infested the hog population in nearby Leyte. But with the help of the Pinabacda Municipal Agriculture Office, headed by Municipal Agriculturist Dante Gabatbat, the community has so far prevented the entry of the virus through implementation of strict biosecurity measures, surveillance, and monitoring in piggery and backyard farms in the municipality.

Most of the cooperative members are women, for it is their husbands who work in the fields and engage in menial jobs, such as carpentry work or *habal-habal* driver, to earn for the family's daily subsistence. Women in Brgy. Mambo voluntarily joined the association because they wanted to change the traditional mindset of the community about them. They wanted acknowledgement that women are also hardworking and resilient, giving due importance to their role in the group.

On February 23, 2021, one of the sows farrowed 18 piglets. The cooperative then decided to sell the piglets upon weaning. As of March 2021, a total of 6 gilts are pregnant and the project recipients are really exhilarated and have high hopes for the future.

ASF is surely a threat to hog raisers like the women of Mambo Farmers' Credit Cooperative, but with the support of Pinabacda LGU, DA-RFO 8, and the community, the cooperative believes they can avoid the virus and continue reaching for their goals as an organization. The members are likewise confident that through the SAAD project granted to them, it will result in a positive outcome and benefit every member of the organization. Despite the double whammy, that is, the ASF and COVID19 pandemic happening in the country, these hog farmers continue to engage in the business. It is a huge opportunity for them due to the high demand for pork meat and its increasing price in the market.



GENDER *not a* HINDRANCE TO SUCCESS

Jacquenette P. Tondo, Area Coordinator II, PPMSO- Samar



The Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program under the Department of Agriculture aims to alleviate poverty and focuses on uplifting the lives of the 'poorest of the poor' farmers in the country. Its underlying goal is to increase farmers' and fisherfolk's income and productivity, consistent with the agriculture agency's battle cry, *Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita*. Many marginalized individual farmers in the Province of Samar have already availed of and benefited from the program. In year 2019, it started giving interventions to groups/associations of farmers.

The municipality of Matuguinao is a landlocked 5th class municipality of Samar. It is also known for being rebel-infested. Among the municipalities of the province, Matuguinao has the highest poverty incidence reported, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). SAAD Program started to provide interventions in the municipality in year 2017 up to the present.

One of the pilot recipients is the Bag-otan Farmers Association. It was organized as an association in October 2019. Most of the members are engaged in crops, livestock, and poultry. Being unified into an association was a novel approach for the farmers because from being aloof and individualistic, they began to interact with each other. The members are mostly women who usually stayed at home, did household chores, and took care of children, while their husbands looked for work in order to survive. The women then decided to become part of the association, not only to help their families, but also for society to become aware of the important role and potential of women in planning, decision-making, management, and leadership. Their main purpose in establishing an association was because they believed that through it, they could access government and non-government organizations' help and request for livelihood programs. It was also their ingenious way of engaging the community into society for a more rewarding participation in governance. Luckily, the association qualified as a recipient of the Egg Layer Production Project in FY 2020.

Like other associations, the association had also its share of trials. Its former president, Mr. Lawrence Ayong, decided to resign due to health problems. The association then elected Ms. Precious Gem de la Cruz as new president. The formerly plain housewife became the strength of the association. She embraced all the duties and

responsibilities inherent in the position, believing in the slogan that says, "Ang kaya ni Juan ay kaya ni Juana." (What Juan is capable of doing, Juana is equally capable to do).

When the pandemic became a worldwide phenomenon, many of its members left the association for they chose to focus on their families' welfare. The quarantine restrictions caused them to struggle to look for stable income. However, this did not hinder the remaining 18 members to continue and take risk on the project, especially in constructing the housing for the layers. They contributed building materials and cash for the construction, while some members solicited from private individuals. The Matuguinao LGU and AFP had been a great help, for as a start-up association, it didn't have the capacity, much less to shoulder the total expenses for the construction.

On September 8, 2020, 384 heads ready-to-lay chicken, cages, and feeds were delivered to the association. The total project cost was PhP942,600.00. The package of interventions consisted of the following:

1. 384 heads RTL chicken
2. 170 bags layers feeds
3. 1 unit weighing scale
4. Drugs and biologics

From September–December 2020, the project produced an average of 85%, or 10–11 trays fresh eggs, daily. The association's gross income reached PhP143,404.00, per given production data for the period. The project helped the members in more ways than one, because in December 2020 they equally shared among themselves a percentage of their net income. It was indeed a joyful celebration for their families during the yuletide season.

As of March 2021, the association recorded a low mortality rate of 4% on their layers. The Egg Layer Production Project in Matuguinao plays a very significant role, for not only does it cater fresh eggs in the locality, but buyers get them cheaper. The association plans to expand the project using the income they will earn in year 2021, because demand for eggs is still not sufficient for the community and outlying areas, hence, expansion is really a must. Bag-otan Farmers Association looks forward to a better future, with more support from the government through SAAD Program.

A Journey from PhP10 to PhP300K

Perlis C. Ramos, Area Coordinator II, PPMSO- Northern Samar



On May 8, 2014, thirty-five (35) empowered women, bound by their desire to generate livelihood in the community and help their husbands earn extra income, organized themselves into the Rural Improvement Club-Libas of Lavezares, Northern Samar, with the help of the Municipal Agriculture Office. The initial starting capital of PhP10.00 was the contribution of each member.

With technical trainings provided to the group, the members were able to learn how to make peanut butter, pili delicacies, and dried *danggit*. Soon, they extended their activities to vegetable production, and finally, the construction of their own office building.

In year 2017, when the Department of Agriculture launched the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program in the province of Northern Samar, RIC-Libas was chosen as beneficiary of the FY 2017 Swine Fattening Project, where each of the thirty-five (35) members received three (3) heads fatter and various feeds.

All through the years, RIC-Libas was able to sustain the project with astounding success, which qualified it as contender for the 2019 SAAD Saga Most Outstanding Group category. Eventually, it bagged the 3rd place, receiving the prize of One Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP100,000.00) worth of projects.

In support to the Swine Fattening Project, the association proposed for a Mini-Agrivet Project from the reward it received. Hence, a total of one hundred forty (140) bags various feeds were delivered to the association. It was soon distributed to its partner sari-sari store owners for faster disposal.

At present, the association extended its activities into lending, with 3% interest on the principal, open to all members of the association. It also plans to diversify its operations by opening a sari-sari store for additional income.

From thirty-five (35) original members, RIC-Libas has grown into more or less fifty (50) members, as of press time. The members agreed to give new members one (1) head gilt each as starting capital through a raffle during special meetings.

Currently, they have cash on hand amounting to Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP300,000.00), and a total of sixty-seven (67) heads swine fatteners among the members.

Despite all the challenges this group of amazing women are going through right now, they believe that their dreams for a better life must continue, despite the pandemic.

"Juana Laban sa Pandemya: Kaya!" One snappy salute to the women of RIC-Libas. Happy Women's Month!

Resiliency towards Profitability IN THE MUSSEL INDUSTRY

"May pera sa dagat." (There is money in the sea)

Note: With permission to reprint the article from BFAR 8



devastation in the area, resulting in more than half a million worth of damage to the cultivation lines and expected volume of harvest.

Born with innate resilience, the association did not waver and soon after found alternative ways of reusing the materials and reinstalling their culture lines. "An kada usa nga miyembro kanya-kanya nala hin diskarte, an maupay nga pamaagui nga mabalik namon ha dati an amon tahongan. Karon, aada, nahabalik na, an iba nakaharvest-ay na gad man," said Mr. Ronaldo Boy Duran, President of the association. (Each member became resourceful in looking for alternative ways to reinstall the culture lines, so we could rehabilitate the mussel project. Now, we were able to recover and some had even been able to harvest already.)

Although faced with hindrances brought by the calamity, they were still able to harvest a total of 388.5 kg. mussel from the reinstalled culture lines in May and June 2020. In August, they closely monitored their culture lines for a potential harvest of 7.5 tons with an estimated market value of PhP142,500.00. "Mga sunod-sunod liwat nga bulan, kaluy-an han Guinoo, kun di hiya baga abton hin kalamidad, makaka-harvest kami ngan makakapulos na an amon tagsa-tagsa nga pamilya," SAAD beneficiary Mrs. Dimna Duran shared words of hope. (In the coming months, through the grace of God, should there be no calamities, we will again be harvesting [mussels] and our respective families will now benefit from it.)

The members of the association envision to invest more in mussel culture and continue to practice the use of longline method to sustainably earn and manage the relevant resources in Leyte, Leyte. Some of their plans include procurement of appropriate floaters, since the existing jug floaters gradually subside when too many spats are attached to them. "An amon income para man ito pangastos ha balay, katapos an iba liwat gamiton ko ngadton pagpalit han materyales han spat collector para han tahongan," said another member of the association, Mr. Raymundo Duran. (We will be using our income for our daily sustenance at home, while some of it will

be used in buying materials for mussel spat collectors.)

The association members also echoed their interest to learn about climate-resilient culture designs for mussel production to lessen damages brought by typhoons, and ensure durability and longevity of materials. They anticipate to apply an adaptive design for areas, like Eastern Visayas, which are frequently visited by typhoons.

Nevertheless, the SAAD beneficiaries of Sitio Sangitsangit expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the program and committed to fulfill the *saad* (promise) of being responsible fisherfolk who stand for resiliency, while aiming for profitability for the progress of the burgeoning mussel industry.



Mrs. Dimna Duran, a SAAD beneficiary in Leyte, Leyte takes her turn at cleaning the green mussels to ensure good quality of their produce to potential buyers.



Mr. Raymundo Duran, a member of the association who used to be a blue collar worker before the pandemic, now focuses on monitoring his installed mussel longlines and fish corral as his immediate source of income.

Sitio Sangitsangit Tahong Growers Association of Leyte, Leyte continues to be resilient in monitoring and marketing their products amidst the unseen threat of the pandemic.



THE SEA THAT empowers

Note: With permission to reprint the article from BFAR 8



The fishing town where Mr. Diosdado Cristo resides in.

Mr. Diosdado Cristo, Mano Baoy to family and friends, was born and raised believing that the sea is generous as it is also daunting with its rich and vibrant resources. Being a fisherman is one of the noblest professions and, as such, he is privileged to be called one of our countryside heroes.

True enough, within fishermen's hands lie the great responsibility of ensuring the basic survival of a nation, and like other frontliners in the war against COVID19 pandemic, they continually risk their lives to ensure that we get nutritious, wholesome food available in our homes. They work tirelessly beginning from dusk till dawn and brave the wild seas to deliver their fresh catch. However, unlike other professions, stability is not a given in their work for it is oftentimes risky and the odds could either make or break them.

Mano Baoy has seen various facets of the sea, and while he knows the risk, he believes that the blue waters are his greener pastures. He has worked tirelessly his whole life, and through his deep-sea voyages, he managed to provide a good life for his family and sent his eight children to school. Six are college graduates and professionals in their respective fields, while the remaining two are still studying. His love for the fishery sector must have made a good impression on his children, because the youngest two ended up studying it as a way of giving back to the industry that has nurtured them.

Inevitably, the bravery and perseverance of Mano Baoy also inspired fisherfolk in the locality to be strong like him, seeing the profession not just as a way to sustain their daily needs, but as

entrepreneurial venture benefiting not only them but also their community. Soon enough, fishermen in San Julian elected him to various posts, specifically as President of the Barangay Fisherfolk Association, Vice President of the Provincial Fisherfolk Association in Eastern Samar, and President of San Julian Fisherfolk Association.

Seeing the confidence, courage, and leadership that Mano Baoy exhibited, he was selected as one of the beneficiaries of SAAD Program in Eastern Samar, further serving as means to improve the dire situation of fisherfolk in the locality. The association he was involved in was given three (3) units *payao* (fish pen) during the 2017 implementation of SAAD Program. These *payaos* further increased the income of the association and provided incentives to the members. Accordingly, they set out for their *payaos* four times a week. Their catch is usually an assortment of yellowfin tuna, skipjack tuna, dolphin fish, round scad tuna, and on luckier days, they manage to catch blue marlin.

In 2018, they were given a 30-footer fiberglass reinforced boat with a 16Hp motor engine. The following year, 2019, the Provincial Fishery Office of Eastern Samar through SAAD Program granted them with materials for the construction of a fish cage so they could venture into aquaculture and somehow lessen the fishing pressure. 5,000 milkfish fingerlings were stocked and 185 sacks feeds were provided for the project's continuity.

"Dako it ak pagtapod nga ha sustainability hini magkakamaya hin kaupayan iton kada miyembro namon," Mano Baoy said. (I have strong faith that through the project's sustainability, each member could expect good things to happen in the future.)

Mano Baoy declared that with SAAD's thrust towards sustainability coupled with the members' commitment and intent towards the project, it is just a matter of time before they become successful entrepreneurs.

Earnings from a single fishing trip range from a minimum of PhP5,000.00–10,000.00, which he divides equally among members who join the trip, while allotting a portion for their association funds.

Meanwhile, from the fish cage, they were able to harvest 1,350 kg, which they sold locally at Php180.00 per kilo, for a total earning of almost PhP250,000.00. The fund is currently in the association's savings account, and what has only been deducted are incentives for members who helped in the preparation of the fish cage and caretakers who took charge of the maintenance, monitoring, and other daily operational needs during the four-month culture period. With proceeds coming from both fish cage and *payaos*, they expect higher dividends to be distributed among members by the end of 2020.

At present, association members are preparing their fish cage for the 2nd cropping with fingerlings from the Provincial Government of Eastern Samar. They plan to hold a general assembly to inform all members of the proposals for the expansion and development of their aquaculture and capture fisheries ventures.



Mr. Diosdado Cristo, SAAD Program beneficiary of San Julian, Eastern Samar.



Bangus Harvest on May 2020

Mano Baoy promised that the trust given to them will not be wasted, and pretty soon theirs will become a progressive fisherfolk community.



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