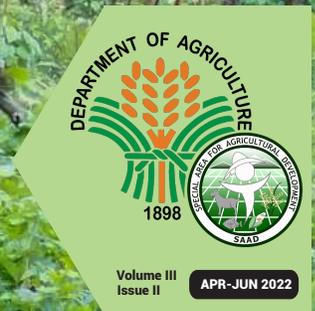


# TUMAN

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



## AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT PROCESSING EQUIPMENT:

### Answer to Manobo farmers' camote derivatives enterprising

The Mag-uumang Manobo sa Hinapoyan Association (MAMASAH), a Manobo-led association in Carmen, Surigao del Sur with 98 members, is adept at growing rice, corn, and root crops, which are among the plants that can tolerate the rainy season experienced in the province from November to February.

Consistent among municipalities in Surigao del Sur, Heavy flooding, however, is a challenge to the group, threatening their production and their extra harvest to waste if not processed in time.

Addressing this concern, the SAAD Program which helps to transition its farmer-partners from subsistence to market-oriented farming, provided assistance through provision of various agricultural inputs since 2019.

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## DA-SAAD Caraga, stakeholders craft project sustainability plan



DA Regional Technical Director for Operations Rebecca R. Atega introduced the OneDA Framework to the SAAD farmers during the Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting in Agusan del Sur, April 4.

Thirty-two farmers' associations assisted by the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program participated in a week-long stakeholders' consultation meeting held in San Francisco, Agusan del Sur from April 4 to 5 and Tandag City, Surigao del Sur from April 7 to 8.

Sixty-four representatives from the 32-assisted associations of the Program participated in the activity. They come from the eight priority cities and municipalities of the program, which include Rosario, San Luis, Talacogon, and Vuela in Agusan del Sur; and Bayabas, Carmen, Lingig, and Bislig City in Surigao del Sur.

These 1,105 FA members are engaging in poultry and crop production projects (high-value and industrial) provided by SAAD from 2019 to 2022. At present, the majority of these groups are already generating additional income from selling poultry products (live weight chicken, eggs, and chicks), raw and value-added ube and camote products, and high-quality abaca fibers, among others.

With the assistance of the SAAD staff, all 32 FAs developed a sustainability plan for their livelihood projects in the succeeding years, following the program's input support ending this 2022. The plan was drafted in line with the results of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis.

DA Agriculture Center Chiefs Ma. Teresa C. Espenido (Agusan del Sur) and June Anthony S. Ouano (Surigao del Sur) facilitated the workshop.

The sustainability plan of the FAs includes funding proposals for relevant farm machines and facilities, especially for rice farmers. Technical support, such as training and forums, was also included to continue developing their management and entrepreneurial skills.

Realizing the advantage of organizational strengthening, most of the FAs also aim to register as cooperatives to access additional support from other DA and attached agencies.

Since the SAAD Program Phase 1 (FY 2019-2022) is culminating this year, the meeting was among the preparatory activities designed to help secure the sustainability of the projects before turning them over to the local government units in 2023.



Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, April 8.



San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, April 5.

## SAAD Caraga staff undergo 'community organizing' refresher course



"As community organizers, we have to remember that the farmers are our partners for development and not just mere recipients of government interventions. We can do this by helping them realize that we have a shared goal," she added.

To improve the competencies of staff in community organizing and needs assessment, 14 regional and provincial staff of the DA Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program underwent a refresher course training on May 30-31 in Dottie's Place Hotel, Butuan City, Agusan del Norte.

Community organizing is central to the groundwork of the SAAD Program. It is among the recurring field activities under the Social Preparation component to address the needs of the farmers.

The training organized by the regional office, reintroduced the basic concepts of organizing communities and various tools for assessing their needs. Planning and budgeting for a livelihood project was also tackled as SAAD heads towards community based enterprise establishment.

Resource person Ms. Marisol D. Tusó, a development communication practitioner and an instructional system specialist, emphasized the goal of effective community organizing, which is to assist the farmers in empowerment, to overcome various endeavors, which includes managing the project, and the organization.

Ms. Tusó highlighted that the center of the development are the farmers' as partners of the program. This way, the community members' agency is fostered as well as grassroots-led development is fostered.

In her welcome message, Regional Technical Director Rebecca Atega encouraged the SAAD staff to internalize the fundamentals of community organizing.

"May this refresher course help us, the program, in improving our field processes. With this, I encourage you all to truly internalize, by heart, the importance of community organizing and assessing the needs of our clientele so that we can better serve them," said Regional Technical Director Atega.

Five area coordinators of the program underwent similar training in 2018. Aligned with the OneDA Reform Agenda, the training is among the continuous efforts of the DA to further hone the technical skills of its personnel. By capacitating them, farmers will effectively contribute to transforming the agriculture sector in their communities.



MAMASAHI's camote chips sold at P20/pack



### From raw to chips

The group cultivates camote all-year-round starting in March, with each cropping lasting 4 to 5 months. On average, the FA harvests an estimated 3,000kg per cropping. Raw camote is sold at Php 25/kg.

For them to sell their camote for more than they cost to produce, they ventured into processing their harvests into chips.

Prior to their, the FA underwent training on processing and marketing of camote chips and fries in 2020, along with product packaging, labeling, and pricing in 2021. The series of training was facilitated by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Their processing happens once a month. A 50kg raw camote can produce 500 to 600 packs of chips valued at Php 10 to Php 20/ pack.

During pandemic, the FA sold their camote chips to retailers in the community at discounted prices. From time to time, they also allow non-members to rent their processing equipment to encourage them to engage in value-adding.



(from Page 1)

### Project Implementation

In 2019, SAAD provided them 600 bundles of camote cuttings (200/bundle) to cover a 3ha of their production area.

In 2020, with the aim to expand their production, they also received processing machines which will allow them to process their camote harvest into chips. This project includes a chipping machine, fryer, vacuum pack sealer, and start-up materials for packaging and labeling of their camote chips.

Funded in 2021, the FA is yet to receive the processing facility with materials for packaging and labeling to boost their production and comply with the production standards in 2022.

In total, MAMASAHI already received Php 1,924,548.45 worth of project interventions from the program.

"The interventions from the SAAD Program are a big help to us," said association president Venancio Meniano, "especially the machines that allow us to process raw, large camote into chips. They are not very appealing in our local market (raw camote). But now they are marketable as chips).



Mag-uumang Manobo sa Hinapoyan  
Carmen, Surigao del Sur  
98 members

### Key Results

Growing camote is common at Brgy. Hinapoyan but it was MAMASAHI that first ventured into value-adding by making camote chips. This activity provided its members additional income.

With the planting materials they obtained from the Program in 2019, the FA was able to cultivate 3 ha-wide camote plantation.

The harvests are sold directly to a local market, while some are saved for chips processing. The said plantation also became a source of additional planting materials (cuttings), which they used for their other mother gardens.

According to Mr. Meniano, it does not take them a day to sell their chips buyers in the locality. Aside from regular walk-in buyers in the community, they display their products at a farmers' market in their town and deliver the rest to buyers in Madrid and Surigao City.

"Kusog ang halin sa chips dire lang daan sa barangay. Kada semana makaluto mi tag 50 kilo nga kamote unya mo abot na og 500-600 ka bags. Amo nang baligya og Php 5 ug Php 10,

(We make camote chips once a week with at least 50kg of raw camote that will yield around 500 to 600 bags. They are in demand, selling fast at Php 5 and Php 10)" the FA president shared.

They accumulated an income of Php 206,697 from selling raw camote and chips from January-November 2021.

As a sharing policy, the group apportioned 36% of their gross income for the members while the remaining money went to the FA's fund. They also allowed rental of their hand tractor, chipping machine, and fryer at Php 500 per transaction. Seven producers were served, providing the association a Php 3,500 income.

### Plans

"Tungod sa tabang sa SAAD, nagsugod na gayud kami og kaangat kay aduna naman kami income. Dakong tabang gyud ang mga processing machine. Mas ganado pami nga maningkamot sa among pag panguma," said Venancio.

(Through the help of the SAAD Program, we are earning more. The processing machines are a big help. Now, we are determined to produce more).

According to Mr. Venancio, they envision becoming a stable producer of raw camote and chips in Carmen and the rest of the province.

As of 2021, the FA is already producing two of its three target product lines: raw camote and camote chips. With the processing facility in place by 2022, they will start producing camote fries.

# SAAD national conducts RBMERA in Caraga



DA and BFAR-SAAD personnel convened for the exit conference of the Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation Rapid Appraisal (RBMERA) in Caraga on June 23, 2022

Supplementing farmers' management skills and linkage development through local government units were underscored during the Result-based Monitoring and Evaluation Rapid Appraisal (RBMERA) conducted by the Department of Agriculture- Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) in Caraga from June 13 to 24, 2022.

The national-led RBMERA sought to identify and recognize the challenges in the field implementation and provide solutions, involving focus group discussions (FGDs) with farmers and fisherfolk beneficiaries and meetings with Program staff as data-gathering methods.

The participants received projects under the agriculture sector which include native chicken, goat, cacao, and abaca production, and milkfish and tilapia production projects under the fishery sector.

Representatives from sixteen (16) farmers and fisherfolk associations from Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur who received various livelihood assistance from the DA and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)-Caraga were tapped for the two-week monitoring aimed at uncovering points of improvement in the implementation process

The national team also reviewed the respective process flows of the regional and provincial offices and validated the data and farmers' profiles submitted to the national office from 2019 to 2021.

The recommendations include harmonizing the process flows of the region down to the province. With a consolidated flow, future job transitions will also be smoother.

The DA and BFAR-SAAD staff from national and provincial offices convened to discuss the results of the RBMERA during the exit conference on June 23 in Tandag City, Surigao del Sur where SAAD National Program and Monitoring Office (NPMO) Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (PME) Unit Head Darwin Pamatmat presented the outcomes of the two-week activity.

Problems involving the lack of farm-to-market roads and successive typhoons that affected the production of the beneficiaries were among the issues that emerged.

The national team also presented their recommendations for the improvement of the field processes, which included capacitating the farmers and fisherfolk assisted by the program towards enterprise management, securing written agreements for land tenure, and identifying long-term markets for abaca and cacao products.

These recommendations will be closely monitored by the program until matters are addressed to fully equip staff and partner farmers. As SAAD Phase 1 concludes this year, securing the sustainability of livelihood projects through formal turnover to the local government units was also suggested.

## Participating associations:

### Agriculture:

1. Cosep Peoples' Organization, Bayugan 3, Rosario, ADS
2. Buenaswerte Cosep Farmers' Association, Bayugan 3, Rosario, ADS
3. Desamparados SAAD Cacao Farmers' Association, Desamparados, Talacogon, ADS
4. Goat Raisers Association of Mabog, San Roque, Bislig City, SDS
5. Chicken Raisers Association of Burbuanan, Burbuanan, Bislig City, SDS
6. Pamian Timberland Farmers Association, Bogak, Lingig, SDS
7. Cabugo Chicken Production Association, Cabugo, Bayabas, SDS

### Fisheries:

1. Nato Rural Improvement Club, Bayugan 3, Rosario, ADS
2. Nato Fish Grower Association, Bayugan 3, Rosario, ADS
3. Nato Tilapia Producer, Desamparados, Talacogon, ADS
4. Dakong Napo Fisherfolk Association, Piglawigan, Esperanza, ADS
5. ISAPA Fisherfolk Association, Piglawigan, Esperanza, ADS
6. Soong Fisherfolk Association 1, Purisima, Tago, SDS
7. Soong Fisherfolk Association 2, Purisima, Tago, SDS
8. Barangay Amontay Small Fisherfolk Association, Amontay, Marihatag, SDS
9. Barobo Federations of Persons with Disability, Wakat, Barobo, SDS



Brgy. Cabugo, Bayabas, Surigao del Sur



Brgy. Bayugan-3, Rosario, Agusan del Sur



Brgy. Desamparados, Talacogon, Agusan del Sur



Brgy. Nato, Esperanza, Agusan del Sur



Brgy. Wakat, Barobo, Surigao del Sur



Brgy. Burbuanan, Bislig City

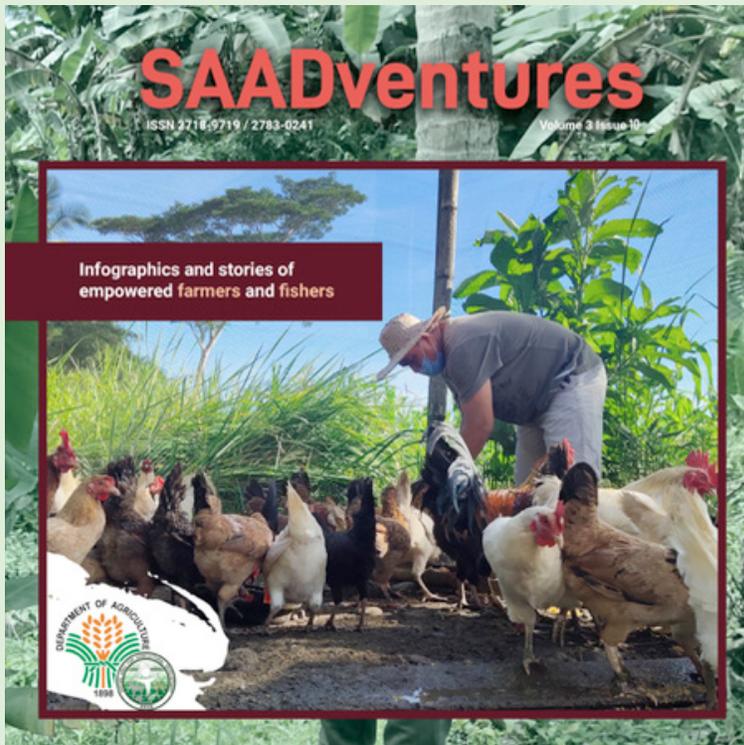


Brgy. Bogak, Lingig, Surigao del Sur

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SAAD RBMERA**

# SAADVENTURES

## VOLUME III



**SAADventures** is a monthly feature magazine of the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program.

This issue includes stories and infographics of the empowered farmers and fishers assisted by the Program in the Caraga Region.



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