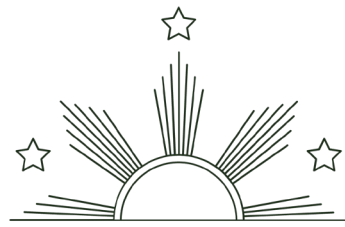




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SAADvocracy

OFFICIAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL AREA FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CORN-TASTIC YIELD

ZDN farmers earn Php 28K in three months of growing sweet corn



SMALL FARMERS TAKING BIG STEPS

Bingawan vegetable vendors earn Php 36K



LIFFACO IN LANA DEL NORTE

Generates over Php 860K by selling fresh bangus

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



It is with great pleasure to provide you with the latest version of SAADvocacy. As the National Director of the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program, I am deeply honored to witness the fruition of our collective efforts in fostering sustainable agricultural development across our nation.

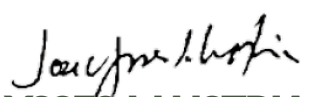
'SAADvocacy', which has now become a quarterly news magazine, stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to championing the cause of rural development and agricultural advancement. Through this platform, we aim to provide richer and more engaging content – giving our readers a deeper insight into the impactful activities and events moving the SAAD Program forward.

In this issue of our first-quarter news magazine, we are proud to showcase the impressive progress made by SAAD Phase 2 beneficiaries across 15 regions. From growing crops to raising livestock and poultry, and even diving into aquaculture, the farmers and fishers have shown their commitment and resilience in improving their lives.

Assisting farmers and fishers, particularly in remote areas, is vital. They play a crucial role in providing food for communities, and with the right support, they can thrive even in challenging circumstances. By assisting them with improved farming techniques and better access to markets, we empower them to succeed and improve their livelihoods. This not only ensures food security for everyone but also fosters economic growth and prosperity in rural areas.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our PRDC Unit, and to every writer and contributor for this edition, for your unwavering dedication and steadfast support in advancing the objectives of the SAAD Program.

Together, let us pave the way for a brighter tomorrow, rooted in the fertile soil of unity, innovation, and compassion.


ULYSSES J. LUSTRIA, JR.
Director, SAAD-NPMO

Eggs-panding business: Samar FA buys land, more RTL chickens for poultry project expansion

by Justine May Delloro | REGION 8



Business expansion has always been the goal of Polangi Farmers' Association (PFA) in Taft, Eastern Samar. Since their receipt of the FY 2020 Egg Layer Production Project from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program Phase 1, the group was able procure additional batches of laying hens and a parcel of land using their accumulated savings from trading fresh eggs in their community.

Organized in March 2021, the Polangi FA has 20 active members who depend on coconut and rice farming as well as backyard hog raising. Other members rely on labor work such as laundry and being household helpers.

On November 20, 2021, the farmer group received the Layer Egg Production Project funded under DA-SAAD's FY 2020 savings amounting to Php 780,500. It comprised 368 ready-to-lay (RTL) chickens, 200 bags of layer feeds, 1 unit of egg weighing scale, and 250 pieces of egg trays. The livelihood package also included a training on poultry production and management.

The group rented a parcel of land located in Barangay Polangi to build the poultry house. As a counterpart, each member contributed Php 200 for the purchase of construction materials. They agreed with the land owner that 5% of the group's monthly income (from 2021 to 2022) shall serve as rental fee.

The Polangi FA split up its members into five subgroups – each alternately managing their communal farm. The members on duty maintain cleanliness, harvest eggs, sort eggs into different sizes, deliver orders, and record sales and expenses. They facilitate weekly evaluations, sharing of accomplishments, sales and expenses. MeWetings also involve planning for upcoming weeks, including dialogues to address and collaboratively find solutions.

The group manages their finances by dividing their net income into various miscellaneous. They allot 25% to their savings and deposit it in a bank. Meanwhile, 50% is allocated for the replenishment of stocks, 10% for the repair and maintenance of the poultry farm, and the remaining 15% as incentive for the farmers on duty. For three years of managing their poultry and fresh vegetable trading business likewise their additional venture on swine production, the group accumulated Php 2,268,020 gross income. They deducted Php 1,699,870 worth of expenses for procurement of farm inputs, hauling fees, and incentives intended for each member. Finally, the group reported a net income of Php 568,150.

Navigating the Path to Business Growth

Currently, their goal to expand the egg retail business is a success, making them a model farm in the community. Two years after the program intervention, they acquired 0.75 hectares of land for additional ventures, including the extension of their poultry house. They have purchased 450 egg layers, with another 200 on the way this year. To further broaden their enterprise, they have ventured into hog fattening by procuring seven head worth Php 31,500.

“

With support from DA-SAAD, our gradual improvement is becoming increasingly visible. We obtained accreditation from various government agencies, acquired our communal production property, and diversified our sources of income.

CONRADA DORSAL - SESIO
Chairperson of Polangi FA

The Polangi FA aims to increase their egg layer population to 10,000 in the coming years and expand swine fattening to swine production. They are exploring the addition of shade houses for both egg layer and swine facilities to give ample space for their animals.



Bohol SAAD farmers establish communal vegetable garden, earn Php4K from first harvest

Twenty-five (25) farmer members of Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Basacdacu in Barangay Basacdacu, Alburquerque, Bohol established their communal garden after receiving agricultural inputs from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program Phase 2 project implementation.

The farmer association (FA) received vegetable seeds such as ampalaya, string beans, eggplant, okra and bell pepper which were distributed by SAAD including 10 grass cutters, 25 sacks of complete fertilizer, 10 bags muriate of potash, 50 water sprinklers, 25 pick mattocks, and 25 pieces plastic drums as part of the FY 2023 Integrated Cattle Fattening and High-Value Crop Production project, valued at Php 3,070,992.50.

In the past, each member grew vegetables for personal use. Now, they have collectively transformed a 5,000-square-meter idle land into a communal vegetable garden. With the help of the Municipal Agriculture Office staff Windyl N. Malaran and Erie S. Penticase, the group planted ampalaya on 961 square meters and string beans on 1,398.5 square meters, starting in October 2023. The FA has already started land preparation on the remaining area which is intended for planting squash which they expect to harvest in April or May.

Three months later, the group, Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Basacdacu, earned Php 4,665 by selling their first harvest – 62.29 kilograms of ampalaya and 6.1 kilograms of string beans – during the town's market day. All the earnings from the garden were added to the association's savings fund.

Led by FA President Chona Maria L. Ras, the initiative began as a team effort to address food security and livelihood challenges. During communal gardening, FA members worked together on tasks like preparing the land and growing seeds. They then divided into subgroups to manage the farm more efficiently, with each farmer handling chores like cleaning, watering, and harvesting twice a week.

"Nagpasalamat ko ug dako sa programa sa SAAD farmers nga kami ang napili sa ilang gitabangan kay dako kaayo ang tabang nga ilang nahatag kanamo. Sa ginagmay nga pang supporta sama sa mga gulay, kami dili na mamalit ug mga utanon sa merkado ug makaincome pa mi," Chona commented.

(I am very happy that we are chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the SAAD Program because it helped us a lot. Now, we [farmers] don't buy vegetables in the market anymore. We plant our food and we earn income from our plants).

Currently, the group has begun planting eggplant and bell pepper seeds provided by the Program. They anticipate harvesting ampalaya and string beans three times a week starting in January 2024. Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Basacdacu intends to use the initial earnings from their shared vegetable garden to expand their production by cultivating various crops. Additionally, they plan to establish a community-based enterprise under SAAD Phase 2.



SAAD FA in Davao Oriental inaugurates layer chicken project, reports Php 140K income



by James Brian Flaga | REGION 11

“Grabe ka bukid diri sa among area, mao nang sa way paglipod lipod, mga tao diri tung una, masa, NPA. Challenge ni sa amoa... among i-saad nga amo kining paga-ampingan nga mahimo ni nga generating income para makatabang sa among kalisod.”

- ERELYN SACAON
Chairperson of Mantunao Farmers Association

Mantunao Farmers Association, a locally-organized farmers group of Mandaya Indigenous Peoples, formally inaugurated their layer chicken project three months after distribution, reporting Php 140,997 gross income from selling eggs.

The inauguration and turnover, attended by SAAD Davao Region led by Regional Technical Director (RTD) and Assistant Focal Person Marila Corpuz, Davao Oriental's Provincial Agriculture Office (PAGRI) and Provincial Veterinarian's Office (PVET) led by Assistant Provincial Agriculturist Anasol Reintar and Provincial Veterinarian Dr. Eric Dagmang, and Cateel's municipal local government unit (MLGU) led by Mayor Emilou Nuñez, signified the FA's fervor to create a sustainable community-based enterprise (CBE) out of the project.

“Uban sa tanang miembro sa Mantunao FA, among ipaabot ang kinas-ing-kasing gayud nga pasalamat ug kamayo ngadto sa matag usa...sugod pa tung 2015 wala jud mi kadawat ug project, pero karon gidawat jud namo,” Chairperson Erellyn Sacaon said.

"Together with our members, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude towards all of you...since 2015 we couldn't receive government interventions, but this 2023, we were ready to receive. Our area is mountainous, that's why in all transparency, the people here at a time, were insurgents. This project is a challenge to us...we promise that we will take good care of it so that it becomes an instrument for us to generate income to help with poverty."

As of writing, Mantunao FA listed a gross income of a little more than Php 140,000, with a projection to double that amount in the next month or so. The FA collects 255-258 eggs per day, a production rate of 90-93% based on existing poultry of 276 chickens. As a standard, 80-90% egg production is considered excellent in the industry.

“Dili unta mapakyas atoang SAAD diri sa Mantunao, nahitabo man jud ning atoang saad diri, unta kitang mga miembro, dili nato pakyason kaning proyekto,” RTD Marila Corpuz emphasized to the members.

(We hope that our SAAD project here in Mantunao won't be a failure. We promise that we'll make this happen, so it's your responsibility now to turn the project into a success).was paired with a crop-based one, in the form of corn, fertilizers, and pesticides with a project cost of Php 1 million.

SAAD Davao Region's Layer Chicken Project

SAAD Davao Region's layer chicken project included 300 layer chickens with a cage module system, 90 sacks of feeds, and various veterinary drugs. For Mantunao FA, the animal-based project of layer chicken was paired with a crop-based one, in the form of corn, fertilizers, and pesticides with a project cost of Php 1 million.

Cateel's MLGU under Mayor Nuñez provided for the shed of the association through the initiative of the FA and local MAGRO, with a building cost of Php 180,000. Mantunao FA was previously selected to receive SAAD interventions with the recommendation of MLGU and the Philippine Army through the 661B in Davao Oriental.

“I'm very grateful to have been here today, because I've only seen this project through the papers I needed to sign, but being here is a different kind of satisfaction. Let's be grateful for the people that pushed for this project,” Mayor Nuñez encouraged.

For 2024, the FA will receive the same projects from the SAAD program, corn and layer chicken, to further boost production and imbibe expertise among members.

“Out of 16 barangays diri sa Cateel, kamo nakareceive. Ang SAAD para sa mga kabus, ug espesyal kini kay package atoang ginahatag, kompletos rekados, pati na mga trainings ug capacitation sa mga members,” Alternate Assistant Naomi C. Lamata said.

(Out of 16 barangays here in Cateel, you were chosen. SAAD is for the poorest of the poor, and it's a special project because the project packages given are complete, together with training and capacitation.)



LIFFACO in Lanao del Norte generates over Php 860K by selling fresh bangus

by Christine Lyn Viajante| BFAR 10

A growing cooperative of farmers and fishers in Lanao del Norte, the Linamon Farmers and Fisherfolk Agriculture Cooperative (LIFFACO), has harvested its first cultured milkfish under the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program Phase 2, earning more than Php 860,000 gross income.

The initial cropping of LIFFACO is a result of the Bangus Culture in Cage initiative supported by SAAD. As part of this project, 15,000 bangus fingerlings and 540 bags of bangus feeds were distributed, alongside training sessions on fish cage management. This endeavor is focused on ensuring effective livelihood project management which is essential for fostering sustainable and positive outcomes within communities.

In the grow-out phase in July of this year, 12,200 out of the initially dispersed 15,000 bangus fingerlings, constituting 81.33 percent, successfully thrived. This successful harvest contributes to the Northern Mindanao population's nutritional needs and generates income for LIFFACO.

Trucks of fish carriers from Tubod, Lanao del Norte were loaded to transport the freshly harvested bangus to three big cities of the region namely, Cagayan de Oro, Iligan, and Valencia adding to seafood sufficiency.

LIFFACO chairperson, Dominador Comeda Jr., expressed gratitude to the bureau, particularly the SAAD personnel who helped them in this achievement.

“Dili g’yud ni namo matagbaw ang ingon ani ka-dakong ginansya nga musulod sa kooperatiba ug dili tungod sa mga proyekto nga gipasalig ninyo (BFAR-10) sa amo. Busa dako kaayo amung pasalamat sa BFAR, labi na sa SAAD nga nag-agak sa amo aron magmalampuson kini.



(We can't reach this profit for the cooperative if it weren't for the projects you (BFAR-10) entrusted to us. That's why I am greatly thankful for the BFAR, especially to SAAD who guided us to this success.)

Mr. Comeda also shared the cooperative's plan for their profit, “Plano namo nga unta madagdagan ni ang amung fish cage aron ma-doble pa g’yud ang pwede namong maginansya” [We plan on investing our profit for another fish cage to double our profit], he added.

During the field day, cooperative members demonstrated the techniques and methods they learned through the SAAD program, highlighting the proper cage management, feeding strategies, and disease prevention measures. This knowledge transfer is a crucial aspect of the program, ensuring that the community becomes self-reliant and capable of sustaining their livelihoods independently.

Chief Statistical Specialist of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in Lanao del Norte, Osler M. Mejares was present at the activity to witness the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the harvest considering that this contributes to the overall understanding and development of the aquaculture sector.

Avenues for progress

For the subsequent cropping, the cooperative plans to invest its earnings to establish another fish cage unit in addition to the one unit provided by BFAR-SAAD to increase its milkfish production and income. They plan to start the next cycle in March 2024 for the 2 units of fish cages.

Moreover, the cooperative plans to set up a mini grocery store within the Community Fish Landing Center (CFLC), offering a range of fishing supplies, fisheries products, and grocery items to diversify their income streams.

The cooperative intends to share dividends to its members in February 2024. The distribution will be equitable, with each member receiving an equal share of the dividend, taking into account their identical contributions to the cooperative's share capital. The allocation of the cooperative surplus will adhere to the established rules and regulations outlined in their cooperative by-laws, which have been approved by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA).



Small farmers taking big steps: Bingawan vegetable vendors earn Php 36K



by Cedie Bataga | REGION 6

A small group of farmers in the small town of Bingawan, Iloilo found it rewarding to sow the seeds of fast-growing vegetables and get a harvest in such a short period. Planting eggplant, squash, pechay, okra, tomato, pepper, ampalaya, and pole sitao provided Sitio Maganhop Farmers Association (SOMAFA) rapid results by earning Php 36,247 in three months.

Under SAAD Phase 2 Corn and Vegetable Project, the group accepted 450 packs of assorted vegetable seeds, various farm tools and materials, 65 bags inorganic fertilizer, and 16 liters of agrochemicals consisting of herbicide and insecticide. They also received 30 bags of corn seeds being the main project intended for the group.

In August, the crops were cultivated on a 0.25-hectare (ha) communal garden with SOMAFA members ensuring consistent care during growth. In November, the group realized the profitability potential of vegetable farming which provided them a source of livelihood.

During harvest, they gather all the fresh vegetables and sell them in bulk to a member who then hauls their produce in the local market.

From their communal garden, however, the group follows a sharing policy where 25% from their net income shall be returned to the association whereas the remaining 75% shall be divided among the members (50%) who are actively participating in the group's farming activities and for the landowner (25%).

Apart from their communal production area, the seeds were likewise distributed to individual growers who chose to plant in their backyards and farms. They were given the leeway to plant however they seemed fit, provided that they returned a 10% share to the association from their net income. This is to ensure that the association has a circulating fund and savings for the group to utilize by the end of each cropping.

Former Farmers Association (FA) President Nida Canonero, called by many as "Nanay Nida", who now serves as the group's treasurer, considers the program as a big boost for small farmers like herself: "Para kanakon, hanggud guid katama ang ini nga proyekto, luvvas sa pangabuhian nga nahatag sini sa tanan nga miyembro sang SOMAFA, nakatustos guid ini sa amon pang adlaw-adlaw nga gasto kag nakabulig man sa allowance sing akon mga apo."

[For me, this vegetable project is of great help. Apart from the livelihood it provided to the members of SOMAFA, it has also supported our daily expenses and helped me provide allowance to my grandchildren.]



With SAAD's provision of farm inputs and implements, the group wanted to continue what they believed they should have done before – to embrace and carefully manage the project entrusted to them. This is another big step the farmers of Sitio Maganhop vowed to pursue as it entails receipt of not just its benefits, but also the responsibility it brings.

"Sa pagsulod sang SAAD diri sa amon sitio, nakabulig guid ini sa amon pangkonsumo sa adlaw-adlaw. Imbes na baklon namon ang utan, ang bilin sa amon ma harvest pwede pa namon lutuon. Amo gane, gahandum guid ako nga mag sige-sige ang amon asosasyon sa pagtanom kag kabay pa nga mag-ugyon ang tanan nga miyembro agud sa dalayon, makakuha kami pwesto sa merkado para may bagsakan na kami sing amon produkto kag maka-supply man kami sa iban nga banwa sa sagwa sang Bingawan," echoed newly-elected FA President Larry Patanao in an exclusive interview.

[When SAAD entered our community, it helped us with our day-to-day needs. Instead of buying vegetables, we can cook the surplus from our harvest. I am hoping that our production will continue and that the members will cooperate for us to achieve our goal of acquiring a stall in the town's market and transporting our produce to other towns outside of Bingawan].

Today, the group continues to monitor their crops and successional harvests from their individual and communal areas, of which most of their yield is being sold in the town market while the rejects and surplus are shared among its members. They also plan to expand their communal area to 0.125ha of land owned by one of the SOMAFA members which they will utilize for ampalaya production.



MIMAROPA FAs start earning from DA-SAAD's poultry production projects

by Melissa Lingco | MIMAROPA Region



A few months after the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) MIMAROPA provided poultry production projects to farmers associations (FAs) in Romblon and Palawan, four (4) out of seven FAs have recorded a gross sales total of Php 224,402, resulting in a net income of Php 157,035 as of January 2024.

Supported by generous landowners who provided free access to communal farms, the associations worked diligently to implement sustainable practices, including careful breeding and monitoring flock health, starting project operations promptly. The 7 FAs – Poblacion Poultry and Livestock Association (PPLA), Diit Farmers Association (DFA), Villa Sol Farmers Association (VSFA), Abagat, Bangcal, Cambian Farmers Association (AbBaCa FA), Rizal Rural Improvement Club (RRIC), Rizal-Lucbuan Farmers Livelihood Association (RLFLA), and Tubigon Planters Association (TBA) – received the poultry stocks, chicken cages, feeds, and drugs and biologics worth Php 3,883,510 from October to December 2023 (Table 1).

This initiative, guided by the Beneficiary Needs Assessment (BNA) results, aimed to address the consistent demand for chicken meat and eggs in the municipalities. The associations are optimistic about the potential alternative income that poultry production can provide, given the persistent demand for chicken products particularly in their municipalities where there are few poultry farmers.

This is also part of the Department of Agriculture's efforts to address the existing insufficiency in chicken meat and egg. Based on the PSA 2023 Open Statistics Data, there is a 74.08% insufficiency in chicken meat and 4.41% egg insufficiency in MIMAROPA in 2022, further emphasizing the need to enhance local production.

Earning from RTL Chicken (Egg) Production

In January 2024, four (4) of the 7 FAs started earning from their ventures. The Tubigon Planters Association began harvesting eggs two weeks after receiving ready-to-lay Dekalb breed chickens. They successfully sold 138 trays, priced between Php 200 and Php 230 per tray. In these early stages, most of the harvested eggs are of average size, with some being smaller.

SAAD Catanduanes FAs generate Php 22k sales at the 78th Catandungan Festival Trade and Tourism Fair

by Jovinel Gianan | Region 5



The Rizal Rural Improvement Club achieved successful marketing of 231 trays, with prices ranging from Php 160 to Php 270 based on egg sizes, from pewee to large. Meanwhile, the Rizal-Lucbuan Farmers Livelihood Association sold 239 trays with different egg sizes, ranging from small to jumbo, at prices from Php 150 to Php 330 per tray. Additionally, individual eggs were sold for Php 7 to Php 11 per piece.

The AbBaCa FA sold 305 trays of eggs priced at Php 250 to Php 320 per tray, varying in size from small to large.

The associations tracked production expenses, including labor costs, tray expenditures, business permits, and other miscellaneous outlays. After deducting these expenses, they achieved substantial net incomes.

RRIC, RLFLA, and AbBaCa FA were delighted to provide their communities with farm-fresh eggs. The primary sources of eggs for Agutaya and Magsaysay are Iloilo and Manila, and the extended travel hours occasionally impact the egg quality.

Chairman Berardo C. Biarcas of RLFLA shared that consumers eagerly anticipate their eggs, appreciating their freshness compared to supplies from other provinces that undergo lengthy journeys before reaching Magsaysay. He expressed gratitude to the Department of Agriculture and the SAAD Program for their invaluable support in the project.

"Napakalaking biyaya ang proyektong ito mula sa Department of Agriculture para sa aming mga maliliit na magsasaka at mangingisda. Malaking tulong ito sa aming komunidad upang ma-address ang kakulangan sa suplay ng itlog. Lubos kaming nagpapasalamat. Ito ang proyektong maaalala ko, na talagang ibinigay mismo sa amin," he said.

(The Department of Agriculture's project is a tremendous blessing for us, small farmers and fisherfolk. It greatly helps our community address the shortage of egg supply. We are truly thankful. This is the project I will distinctly remember, given directly to us.)

The FAs plan to sustain their projects by implementing strategic measures for replenishing poultry stocks which include implementing careful breeding practices for free-range chicken production, monitoring the health and growth of existing flocks, and saving their income to purchase new poultry stocks once the old ones cease egg production.

Furthermore, these FAs are encouraged to concentrate on improving the overall livelihoods of their members by not only sustaining these poultry projects but also transforming them into community-based enterprises.



Scan QR to see Romblon and Palawan FA's production income and expenses income

Bilang parte ng programa na ibinigay sa amin, kailangan din namin ng mga pamamaraan ng pagbenta upang magkaroon ng magandang kita. Salamat at may ganitong mga aktibidad, dahil dito hindi lang kami kumikita, nakikilala rin kami bilang SAAD farmers, na tunay na natutulungan ng programang ito.

CATHERINE LOR
Chairperson of Sibol Farmers Association

As part of the program's marketing initiatives to support farmer-beneficiaries in maintaining a sustainable source of income, twelve (12) farmers associations (FAs) under the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program participated at the 78th Catandungan Festival Trade and Tourism Fair at the Provincial Capitol grounds in Virac, Catanduanes.

Through continuous monitoring activities and partnership with the Provincial Local Government Unit (PLGU), SAAD Phase 1 and Phase 2 beneficiaries were able to showcase their products in the said festival resulting in sales amounting to Php 23,158.00. Exhibited products came from the program's poultry, High Value Crops (HVC), rice, and organic agriculture production packages which were distributed to the associations.

The Catandungan Festival Trade and Tourism Fair is part of the province of Catanduanes' founding anniversary celebration. The event serves as a platform for local exhibitors to showcase their products, providing a vibrant display of the rich cultural and economic growth of the province, through the collaborative efforts of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)-Catanduanes, the Provincial Tourism Office, and the Provincial Governor's Office.



Sibol Farmers Association president, Catherine T. Lor expressed her delight for the income they received during the two-day event. According to her, the trade fair boosted their income and became an avenue to showcase their locally-grown products.

As beneficiaries of this program, we recognize the importance of effective marketing strategy to ensure a good profit. We express our gratitude for initiatives such as the Trade Fair, which not only contributes to our financial gains but also elevates our identity as SAAD farmers. This program has truly helped us in our success, and we appreciate the opportunities it has provided.

Moreover, the FAs plan to harvest more of their products in the coming months and will be anticipating more marketing initiatives such as trade fairs and exhibits in Catanduanes. SAAD Program regularly conducts monitoring activities for these Phase 1 and Phase 2 associations to better guide them in their production and marketing endeavors.



Scan QR to Catanduanes Phase 1 and 2 FA's production income

From coop to cash: Discover how Tapan farmers grow from raising poultry to earning profit

by Cedic Bataga | Region 6



Income from free-range delivers improved livelihood change

After receiving the Native Chicken Production Project from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Western Visayas, the Tapan Farmers Association in Batad, Iloilo, initially earned Php 29,415 from the sale of native chickens and eggs.

The project, worth Php 368,214.73 was distributed sequentially with four pieces (pcs) of water drums and four sets of feeding waterer on May 26, followed by 230 native chickens, six sets of drugs and biologics, and feeds two months later on July 28 as support inputs. The native chicken housing was later built on August 29, 2023, in the group's 0.5-hectare communal poultry farm.

The fence around their area was built through a dagyaw (community-shared effort) where members contributed financially and with labor in four Saturdays throughout June. The group also solicited 20 pcs. of bitlag (bamboo split) and one poste (bamboo post) from each member, partnered with in-kind donations in the form of materials.

After almost four months of rearing chickens, the group then started selling liveweight at prices ranging from Php 210-240, which brought in Php 18,576; while the eggs sold at Php 7-10/pc provided them Php 10,839 income. Despite facing challenges such as the loss of 35 chickens due to poultry disease and unpredictable weather conditions, the group remains committed to their poultry venture. They even made an investment in a 60-sitter egg incubator purchased from a local supplier at a cost of Php 3,000, which they paid for in installments.

Woman Farmer Leader

Also attesting to the positive impact of the livelihood program is BAFA President Ms. Julie Villaflores, who leads her association with humility. She remains continually engaged in the group's farming activities to stir member's participation.

Yet, managing a group becomes challenging as time passes. There are a few who resigned when the group required each one to work and devote their time to participating in their field activities, but this did not hamper them to continue with their implementation.

Seeing that the incubator they first purchased brings convenience and guarantee a higher hatching rate, Villaflores initiated buying an additional unit with 30-sitter capacity.

She continued on with the plan – believing that investing for another unit would maximize their productivity and optimize the hatching rates of the eggs. Her bold move reaped positive results as 147 eggs were hatched from the 200 eggs incubated in their unit investment from October 10 to November 20.

They were also able to build their own brooder pen with incurred expenses of Php 6,610 used in the construction of the cages and other items such as lights and wiring, feeder and waterer, old magazine, and chicken booster feeds.

While the program continues working for its cause in uplifting the lives of its beneficiaries it has also molded characters of goodwill amongst its recipients. Depending solely on their income from farm labor, and rice and corn farming as their main livelihood prior to the SAAD project, they showed appreciation to the several improvements in their lives brought by the project.

"Ginakabig guid namon nga dako nga bulig kag pribilihiyo ang nag-abot sa amon nga proyekto, indi siling nga puro lang responsibilidad. Although, kung imo tan-awon, may kaakibat ini nga responsibilidad. Bilang naga umpisa pa lang kami, indi pa kami kabalo paano magpalakad sang isa ka asosasyon. Pag-abot na sang native chicken nga proyekto, didto lang kami nagkaroon sang kahigayunan nga mapasanyog pa namon ang amon kinaadman sa pagsagud sang sini nga klase sang manok," said Marlon Ganadores, TAFA Auditor.

[We consider the project both as an aid and a privilege, not a responsibility. Though if you look at it, it also entails a fair share of responsibility. Since we are just starting, we still lack knowledge on how to properly manage an association. When the native chicken project was finally delivered to us, that's when we realized that we are given an opportunity where we can enhance our knowledge on native chicken raising.]

As of the moment, the group plans to breed chicken, raise capital, and use their existing net income as their circulating fund. In the long run, they want to sell dressed chicken and penetrate the markets of neighboring municipalities such that of San Dionisio, Estancia, and Batad.



SAAD Caraga launches educational booklet to farmers from Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte

by Shena Mae Pabia | Caraga Region

To provide valuable information, guidance, and resources to farmers associations (FAs), the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Caraga distributed a booklet containing topics aimed at enhancing the capabilities of FAs.

The distribution took place from January 6 to 8, in various municipalities of Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte. Recipients were Balangbalang Farmers Organization (BAFO) in Remedios T. Romualdez, San Juan Abaca Farmers Association (SJFA) and United Farmers Association of Camp Edward (UFACE) in Alegria, California Farmers Association (CFA) and Union SAAD Farmers Association (USFA) in Tagana-an, and Biyabid SAAD Farmers Association (BISAF) and Tagbayani SAAD Farmers Association (TAGSAFA) in Sison.

The locally translated booklet has three modules, 1) What is Farmers Association, 2) Internal and External causes that will affect the success of Farmers Association, and 3) Resolving disagreements. This involves topics on reviewing and presenting programs and policies

of the associations, consolidating interests and addressing arguments among members, assisting members with financial needs, organizing and developing other organizations, sharing expertise and knowledge, disseminating valid information, applying good practices for development, and engaging in trade fairs and exhibits for active participation.

The regional program management targeted to provide information, education, and communication materials to 625 members of farmer associations (FAs) in Caraga. So far, 225 hard copies have been distributed, with ongoing efforts to deliver the booklets to the remaining farmers. Each booklet represented a step toward empowering these farmers and improving their livelihoods.

Overall, the initiative to create a booklet for farmers is a valuable investment in agricultural development, livelihood improvement, and community empowerment. It equips farmers with the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to succeed and thrive in their farming endeavors.

Sevilla farmers earn Php 163K from SAAD's vegetable production project

by Jessica Alvero | Region 7

Six (6) months after receiving agricultural inputs from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Central Visayas, two (2) members of Cambagui United Farmers Association (CUFA) recorded a total of Php 163,801 gross income from selling fresh vegetables.

Mr. Leonilo Cabusao and Mr. Frances Ronquillo are among the 30 members of CUFA from Barangay Cambagui, Sevilla, Bohol who became beneficiaries of SAAD Phase 2's Vegetable Production for FY 2023.

Before getting the support in June of last year, group members agreed to grow the vegetable seeds in their gardens, each spanning 2,000 to 6,000 square meters, as their plots are spread out. In return, as part of the group's policy, FA members will contribute Php 100 to the association after each harvest.

That same month, each member simultaneously planted ampalaya, string beans, and eggplant. After seven months (July to January), Cabusao and Ronquillo reported abundant harvests, generating a gross income of Php 163,801 from selling 2,053 kilograms (kg) of fresh vegetables in the local market. They sold ampalaya for Php 40-50/kg, eggplant for Php 30-40/kg, and string beans for Php 30-40/kg.

The rest of the CUFA members also reported gross sales ranging between Php 5,000 – 30,000. But these farmers incurred damage to their crops due to unpredictable weather during pre-harvest periods resulting in a decrease in yield and subsequently impacting their income.



“

Nagpasalamat ko og daku sa SAAD ky dakog tabang sa akoang panginabuhian. Salamat sa mga benepisyo nga gihatag sa mga miyembro sama sa libreng binhi, fertilizer, medisina ug uban pang panginahanlan sa pagpananom og gulay. Salamat pud sa gipaambit nga kaalaman sa miyembro sama sa paagi sa pagpananom, mga peste ug sakit, ug medesina nga angay gamiton.

LEONILO CABUSAO

Member of Cambagui United Farmers Association

In an interview, Cabusao was happy to share the outcome of the livelihood project provided to them.

I am thankful to the SAAD Program for the livelihood assistance. Thank you for the benefits given to the members such as seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and other necessary inputs for vegetable production. Also, thank you for the knowledge imparted to us in the specialized training which include crop management and pest control.

Ronquillo also shared his sincere gratitude and wished that more marginalized farmers would be assisted by the program.

“Nagpasalamat kami sa SAAD Program nga kami nahatagan og hinabang para sa mga mag-uuma. Hinaot unta nga daghan pa ang matabangan sa SAAD,” he said.

[We are thankful to the SAAD program for the livelihood assistance provided to us farmers. I hope there will be more recipients that will also benefit from SAAD, too.]

Currently, Ronquillo and the rest of the CUFA members have started preparing the land for the subsequent vegetable cropping season. He also shared his best practices with other farmers. Cabusao, on the other hand, plans to save a portion of his income to be used for future farm labor expenses. Like the rest of the FA members who reported accumulated sales ranging between Php 5,000 – 30,000, the two contribute Php 100 each from their total profit to the association fund every month. To date, the association has accumulated Php 15,000 in savings.



Sarangani Island FA earns 140k from SAAD’s chicken project, provides employment to locals

by James Brian Flaga | Region 11

“

Dako ang tabang sa amoa aning proyekto... 'tung wala kuy trabaho, walay makaon, karon nakatabang sa amoang pangunsumo.

ELPEDIO SINGCOY
Member of PALACACA Farmers, Fisherfolks, Vendors Association



Five (5) months after receiving the layer chicken project distributed by the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD), twenty-five (25) farmers in Sarangani reported Php 140,280 gross income from selling eggs.

In November 2023, the PALACACA Farmers, Fisherfolks, Vendors Association received Php 2 million worth of inputs which includes layer chicken project and cardava banana project.

The layer chicken project consisted of 300 layer chickens with a cage system, 90 sacks of feeds, and various veterinary drugs, while the cardava banana project provided the farmers association with 15,000 cardava plantlets, 189 sacks of fertilizers, 15 bottles/packs of pesticides, 20 blue drums and 200 plastic crates.

Prior to project distribution, the members of the FA underwent beneficiary needs assessment (BNA) to identify project suitability.

While providing locally-grown and accessible table eggs for the locality, the project also paved the way for new income opportunities for local farmers. Elpedio Singcoy, 66, was hired as caretaker to oversee the project’s day-to-day operations.

[It’s been a great help, this project. When I was out of work, we couldn’t eat, it helped in terms of day-to-day sustenance.]

The FA collects 7-8 trays of eggs per day, totaling to about 210-240 eggs per day. At peak production, Singcoy said that chicken layers could yield up to 9 trays. Two hundred and seventy-nine (279) birds remain after 21 mortalities.

PALACACA is the first SAAD beneficiary FA in the municipality of Sarangani which received two production projects in 2023 from SAAD Davao Region. This year, the program added another FA, a women’s group to receive separate projects.

SAAD Davao Region’s Layer Chicken Project

Last year, SAAD Davao Region distributed its layer chicken production project to 14 pilot FAs across 4 provinces in the region. Each FA received 300 layer chickens with a cage module system, 90 sacks of feeds, and various veterinary drugs.

This year, the program targets to deliver the same project with added enhancements such as improvement in the cage system to facilitate community-based enterprise (CBE) formation among the beneficiary groups.

“Kinahanglan ni sa atong mga napiling maguuma nga padayon atong pagsuporta sa ilaha, dili lang kaisa o kaduha. Ang tumong sa SAAD karon, nga ang mga FAs nato makabarog na sila paghawa sa SAAD,” said SAAD Davao Region Associate Project Officer II for Social Preparation and Program Management Bernalyn Briones.

[Our identified farmers groups need this continuing support in terms of agri-related projects, not just in one or two tranches. What SAAD goals now is for the FAs to be sustainable financially once the program ends.]

The layer chicken production project will span up to 2025, which will then be reviewed for its merits to determine its continuance for the last three years of SAAD Phase in 2026-2028.

Corn-tastic yield: ZDN farmers earn Php 28K in three months of growing sweet corn

by Aimee Lou Madjus | Region 9

In the bucolic town of Rizal, Zamboanga del Norte, the Sipaon Farmers' Association (FA) with 30 members made a sweet deal, raking in Php 28,332 from 1,123 kilograms of freshly plucked corn from their one-hectare communal farm over two harvests from October to December 2023.

Sipaon FA is a beneficiary of the FY 2023 Sweet Corn Production Project worth Php 1, 701,000 from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Phase 2.

They received 90 bags of corn seeds, 90 bags of inorganic fertilizers, 20 pieces of insecticides, and some farm tools including 10 units wheelbarrow, 30 units plastic crates, 10 units knapsack sprayers, and 10 units of plastic drums. Before the interventions were distributed, a technical training on corn production management was conducted.

Sipaon FA President Richard Tormis said they planted sweet corn in their communal garden during their first cropping on October 14 last year. The crops were harvested and marketed from December 20-31, giving the group earnings worth Php 16,280. For the second cropping, the group earned Php 12,052 from selling 496 kilos of sweet corn. The harvest was sold per kilo at two different prices based on the classification of the sweet corn – Class A is sold at Php 33 while class B is at Php 25.

Tormis recognized the importance of combining hard work and perseverance to sustain a project.

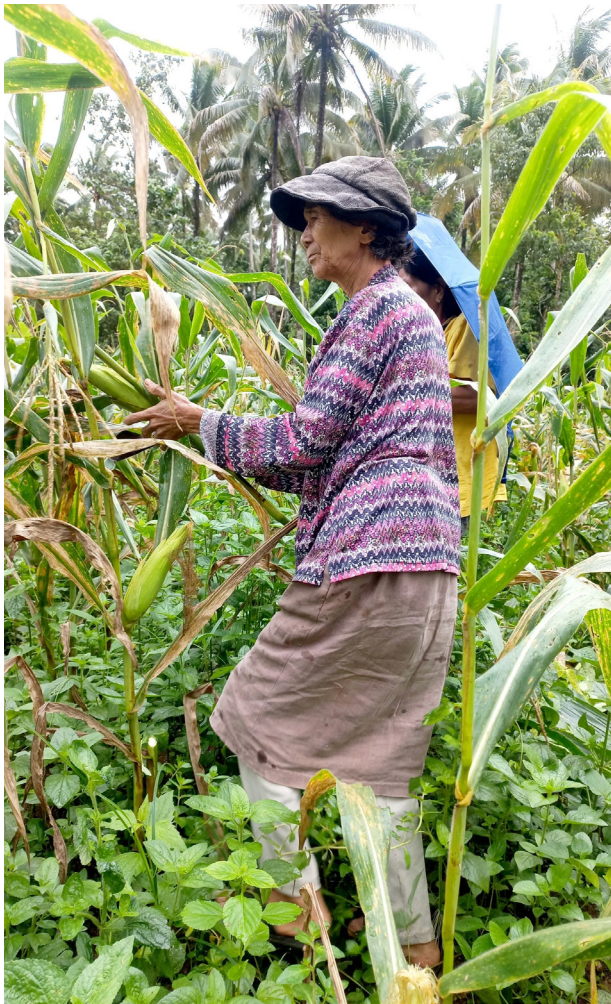
"Makaingon gyud ko nga ang amoang grupo ga-tinabangay ug ga paniguro nga molahutay ni nga proyekto gikan sa SAAD, kay bisan pa man nga aduna mi mga responsibilidad sa among balay, maningkamot mi nga maka tambong matag Sabado para mag atiman sa area," he said.

[I can say that our group helps one another and we strive to sustain this project from SAAD, because even though we have individual responsibilities at home, we make sure to report every Saturday to monitor the area.]

The FA follows a sustainability scheme where 40% will be saved for the association's fund, while 60% of it will be distributed to the members, based on the attendance during their "pintakasi" where they will visit, clean and monitor the farm every Saturday.

Since the harvest is enough for the community's consumption, the group did not have a hard time selling the produce in their neighboring households. The group also tried selling it in the local market of Rizal but it was sold immediately.

It was noted that the group was the subject for pilot testing in market identification conducted by the program led by the National Program Management Office (NPMO). Since the association targets to expand the area to three (3) hectares, the MAED unit identified possible market outlets once the quantity of produce increases.



Maeling Poultry Farmers Association thrives with a 1.1 million pesos gross income from July to December egg harvest

by Gennadiy Duque | Region 3

In a noteworthy testament to the impact of targeted agricultural support, the Maeling Poultry Farmers Association in Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija, operating under the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) has achieved a significant gross income of 1.1 million pesos from its July to December 2023 egg harvest.

After seven months of engaging in poultry farming, the venture is proving to be highly lucrative. The association has already amassed a total revenue of 1.1 million pesos. This success not only underscores the dedication and hard work of the poultry farmers, but also highlights the crucial role that SAAD plays in fostering sustainable livelihoods within the agricultural sector.

In May 2023, the SAAD program facilitated the distribution of 2,000 chickens to the Maeling Poultry Farmers Association allocated among the 20 members of the association, corresponding to 100 chickens per member. This initiative resulted in

the remarkable financial success achieved within a relatively short time frame.

Delmar Vicente, member of Maeling Poultry Farmers Association said that the SAAD program was a big help to their daily expenses.

"Pa-sideline sideline lang po ako dati sa construction, pero dahil po may ibinigay ang SAAD na manok ay nakatutulong po ito sa pang araw-araw na gastusin" [I only have a part-time job as a construction worker but because of the chicken from the SAAD program, it significantly contributes to covering our daily expenses], said Vicente.

“
Nabigyan po kami ng tulong ng SAAD, dati po single lang ang motor namin, ngayon may sidecar na po. Nakabili rin po kami ng robin, (makinarya pampatubig) nang dahil sa itlog po, at ngayon po nakapaglabas ulit kami ng bagong motor ng dahil sa SAAD po.

MARLYN DEL ROSARIO



Marlyn del Rosario, the wife of Elmar del Rosario, who serves as the Chairman of the Association, emphasized the significant impact of poultry farming on their lives.

She highlighted that not only does it contribute to covering daily expenses, but it also provides them with a daily source of food. In fact, the success in poultry farming has enabled Del Rosario to acquire a new motorcycle, showcasing the tangible benefits derived from their engagement in this agricultural venture.

Alongside the provision of ready-to-lay chickens, the association was further equipped with 40 cages, ensuring each member received two cages for their poultry. Moreover, the association received 388 sacks of Ready-to-Lay (RTL) chicken feeds, distributed among its members.

Furthermore, the association actively participated in poultry layer production training designed to educate members on the optimal care and management practices for poultry, enhancing their skills and understanding of efficient poultry farming.

SAAD Bohol FAs report chicken farming growth with Php 52K gross income

by Jessica R. Alvero | Region 7



Two months after getting support from the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program, six (6) farmer associations (FAs) in Bohol sold a total of 8,179 chicken eggs for Php 6-9 per piece, providing them with Php 52,340.07 gross sales in two months.

After monitoring SAAD Ready-to-Lay (RTL) projects supervised by Bohol Assistant Provincial Municipal Coordinator Ian Egam, farmers associations from several municipalities reported their production income.

The San Roque Cortes Farmers Association in Cortes collected 1,487 eggs, earning a gross income of Php 9,825.07. They sold eggs of various sizes, including pewee, small, medium, large, extra-large, and jumbo, along with some cracked eggs. Also in Cortes, the New Lourdes Farmers Association harvested 3,342 eggs, returning the group with Php 19,801 in gross income.

In Clarin, the Bontud Farmers Association sold 1,941 chicken eggs for Php 12,666. The Jambawan

Farmers Association gained Php 4,856 from selling 607 eggs.

Meanwhile, the Bangon Dangay Farmers Association in Albuquerque reported sales of Php 2,660 from 380 eggs, and the Tangcasan Sur Farmers Association sold 422 eggs for Php 2,532.

These FAs received thirty-two (32) modules or 1,632 RTL chickens worth Php 2,352,800 including other inputs needed in chicken farming such as 593 bags of chicken layer feeds, shovel, range net, and wheelbarrow among others.

See previous article here: <https://saad.da.gov.ph/2024/01/bohol-fas-start-chicken-farming-after-da-saads-poultry-assistance>

Prior to the distribution of inputs, using the association's funds and other support construction materials from the Local Government Units (LGUs), the FAs built chicken housing in their communal poultry farms as their counterpart to the RTL project.

For poultry management, each FA hired a farm worker to take care of daily tasks like feeding, providing water, and collecting eggs except for Bangon Dangay FA members who volunteered to handle the daily tasks like collecting manure and cleaning the poultry as scheduled to each group. The said initiative helps prevent contamination and keeps the chickens healthy.

As recipients of the FY 2023 Chicken Egg Production projects, the 6 FAs attended a specialized training on Chicken Egg Production and Health Nutrition Management in June 2023 to equip them with knowledge and prepare them for a sustainable livelihood project management.

"Malipayon mi ug labaw sa tanan mapasalamaton tungod kay gihatagan kami og panginabuhian nga kumpleto gikan sa RTL ug naa pud feeds ug uban pang gamit. Dako kaayo ni nga tabang sa among asosasyon," expressed Nestor Sarco, San Roque Cortes FA chairperson.

[We are happy and grateful to receive these complete livelihood interventions, from RTL chicken to layer feeds and other necessary things. This would surely be a big help to our association.]

Currently, all the income from the chicken egg sales is being kept by group, going into the association funds. Once the chickens reach their peak production, the farmers plan to set aside some of their earnings to expand their operations, aiming for a more stable income in the future.



From fungi to fortune: The inspiring journey of Balusbos Farmers Association in mushroom cultivation and beyond

by Cedic C. Bataga | Region 6

Over three months, after they accepted the mushroom project inputs, the Balusbos Farmers Association (BAFA) from Buruanga, Aklan, generated Php 36,612 solely from the sale of nutritious fungus as of January 2024.

In 2023, BAFA with 44 active members was selected as beneficiary of the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program to augment their income apart from their existing rice, fish, and livestock livelihoods.

Under the FY 2023 Mushroom Production Project, the group received 1,500 fruiting bags, 50 polypropylene bags, 3 pcs fruiting bag molders, cooking materials for spawn making, 10 bags rice bran, 2 bags crack corn, 5 bags agricultural lime, 10 bags sawdust, and various farm tools and materials.

Aside from the raw materials they received, they were also provided with training on production technologies which include low-cost propagation

techniques and value-adding opportunities. With the mushroom’s growing market potential and the public’s increasing awareness of its benefits, continued production can provide farmers with sustainable income as revenue can be generated from the venture monthly.

Shortly after the delivery of the interventions, the group cultivated the mushroom in their growing area which they built through dayyaw. Serving as the group’s counterpart, the building of their mushroom house incurred them expenses on additional housing materials such as tire wire, nipa roofing, and wood. They have recorded a total expense of Php 12,635 from the housing materials, additional spawn, plastic bags, tarpaulin, hauling costs, and gasoline.

Management of highly sensitive fungus means imposing strict precautionary measures. As such, the group decided to leave the frequent monitoring and harvesting to the hands of the two members who served as the caretakers. Observing this strategic precaution will lessen the risk of contamination coming from external factors. To market their product, the group turned to Facebook

page posting to reach more buyers.

They made use of hardwood sawdust which were initially provided by the program and those that they collected from hardware stores. Not only did they reduce production costs, it also helped in lessening environmental wastes. For their fruiting bags, however, they were provided with high-grade polypropylene plastic to serve as grow bags which they hung inside their growing house.

The group accumulated a total harvest of 108.23 kilograms (kgs) from September 12 to December 31, 2023 which they sold at Php 250-300/kg in the local market, within their barangay and the neighboring barangays. They generated Php 36,612 gross income from September 12, 2023 to January 31, 2024.

BAFA President Mr. Roland Acosta also serves as caretaker together with two of his members who frequently monitor the area. In an interview, Acosta shared the importance of using the correct substrate and fruiting bags to ensure that the mushrooms will grow abundantly.

Being first timers in this type of venture, he shared that they still undergo a process of experimentation. Various attempts in fermentation and pasteurization were considered a failure, as the group failed to follow correct bagging and steaming procedures. Some of their spawned bags were also contaminated with microorganisms, eaten dry until hollow. So, they opted to reprocess the contaminated bags and separated the infected from the newly processed ones.

Following the group’s policy, profits from the project will be distributed on a 60-40 profit-sharing scheme. The 60% share will go directly to the association’s fund and to be divided in five separate fund categories: 1) product development and innovation, 2) operation, maintenance, and development, 3) sales and marketing, 4) office space fund, and 5) emergency. The remaining 40% will be deposited directly into the FA’s bank account intended for educational, association development, and members’ benefit funds.

Ms. Editha Villacarlos, BAFA member and the group’s topseller, was able to sell abroad through her hard work. She tirelessly sells delicacies around the municipality such as banana que (deep-fried banana skewers) and turon (fried banana wrap) and seeks potential buyers for their mushroom harvest.



It was through her earnest effort to sell that she was able to find a buyer in Canada through word of mouth. The group was also able to market their produce to Manila and some locals became their suki with repeat orders.

No matter how painstaking the process is in growing these tiny fungi only to harvest as little as 0.4kg, the group still perseveres and remains hopeful that their production will continue as they plan to expand their mushroom growing area and venture into value-adding, with interest in making chili paste and chicharon.

This plan was deemed necessary by the group in order to sustain their existing production. They believe that through mushroom cultivation, they can gradually step up from their current state of living as progress is still progress no matter how slow.



Thriving livestock communities: SAAD's impact and continuing support in MIMAROPA

by Melissa Lingco | MIMAROPA Region



In MIMAROPA, the Department of Agriculture's Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program Phase 2 has seen success in enhancing local livestock production. After more than three months, livestock distributed to seven associations have started producing offspring, marking a significant milestone. Last year, DA-SAAD MIMAROPA provided interventions worth Php 5,773,310 to 140 marginalized farmers in Occidental Mindoro, Romblon, and Palawan.

Goat Raising

Five out of the seven SAAD-assisted farmers associations (FAs) in MIMAROPA have been beneficiaries of the Goat Production Project. In total, 166 native goats and 125 rolls of cyclone wire, valued at Php 2,973,500, were distributed. These resources were allocated to the following associations of Talaotao Farmers Association (TFA) in Looc, Occidental Mindoro; Rural Improvement Club Caguisan (RIC Caguisan) and Carwang Danglis

Maubas Farmers Association (CARDAMA FA) in Balabac, Palawan; Kalipunan ng Liping Pilipina San Jose, Romblon Municipal Federation (KALIPI) in San Jose, Romblon; and Samahan ng Magsasaka ng Sampong (SAMASA) in Concepcion, Romblon.

Members of KALIPI, SAMASA, RIC Caguisan, and CARDAMA FA are collectively managing their goats at communal farms, while those in TFA are personally tending to their goats due to limited grass availability on their farm. The said groups have organized their members to ensure proper care for the goats and to supply them with adequate grass for their sustenance.

Presently, the goats have produced 18 kids, with an additional 12 expected to give birth between March and June. The associations are dedicated to expanding the goat population before considering selling them in local markets.

“

sa DA at sa SAAD, maraming - maraming salamat po sa inyo. Napakalaking tulong po ito sa amin lalo na sa mga member. Maraming - maraming salamat po na nabigyan kami ng ganitong project. Pinapangako ko po bilang president ng asosasyon na pangangalagaan namin itong project na binigay ng SAAD.

MR. CARL FABREGAS, SAMASA Chairperson

Swine Raising

Meanwhile, the San Jose Swine Raisers Association (SJSRA) in Barangay Lanas, San Jose, Romblon, has also received interventions valued at Php 1,758,410 under the Swine Production Project. These interventions comprise 20 gilt heads, one boar, 200 bags of feed, 80 liters of veterinary medicine and vitamins, and a swine housing. As of February 28, the association has 39 piglets, with four gilts currently pregnant.

With the support of the local government of San Jose, facilitated through the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO), the association is steadfast in safeguarding their swine from African Swine Fever (ASF), especially with nearby islands like Tablas and Mindoro being affected by ASF. They have implemented stringent measures, including prohibiting the entry of pork and pork meat products to Carabao Island, while diligently attending to the pigs.

Their objective is to boost the swine population within their municipality to meet pork product demands, extend assistance to neighboring islands, and participate in repopulation efforts whenever feasible.

Cattle Raising

To complete the interventions, SAAD MIMAROPA allocated Php 1,041,400 worth of interventions for the Cattle Production Project, benefiting the Samahan ng Magsasaka ng Bulacan (SMB) in Barangay Bulacan, Looc, Occidental Mindoro, which included 25 head of cattle.

However, due to insufficient grass caused by dry weather in their grazing area, members are individually attending to the cattle. Since the arrival of the cattle last year, the association has welcomed four new calves, with three cattle suspected to be pregnant.

SMB's goal is to establish a multiplier farm, enhance the livestock population, and contribute to food



self-sufficiency in their community. Beyond Bulacan, the association plans to market its produce to neighboring islands such as Talaotao, Ambil, and Lubang.

Farmers are thankful to the SAAD Program for offering them chances to enhance their livestock production. According to Mr. Carl Fabregas, president of SAMASA, this project offers them an alternative source of income.

[To DA and to SAAD, thank you very much. This is a huge help for us, especially for our members. Thank you very much for giving us this kind of project. I promise as the president of the association that we will take care of this project given by SAAD.]

In addition to livestock support, these farmers will also receive various project assistance from SAAD MIMAROPA. This includes crops specifically grown to feed animals, assistance with cultivating vegetables, provision of meat processing equipment, and training on effective marketing strategies to sell their products in the market. These initiatives aim to empower farmers to become agripreneurs, equipped with the skills and resources needed to succeed in agricultural entrepreneurship.

Meet our Team

Let's get to know our SAADvocacy members.

Ulysses J. Lustria, Jr.
Pedro S. Dumaraos, Jr. PhD

Advisers

Joash David L. Ricanor

Editor-in-Chief

Christ John B. Gamarcha
Eloisa A. Mariano
Jennifer A. Valcobero

NPMO Writers

Jennifer A. Valcobero

Layout Artist

Contributors in this issue

DA-SAAD Region 3
DA-SAAD MIMAROPA
DA-SAAD Region 5
DA-SAAD Region 6
DA-SAAD Region 7
DA-SAAD Region 8
DA-SAAD Region 9
BFAR-SAAD Region 10
DA-SAAD Region 11
DA-SAAD Region 13

about SAADvocacy

SAADvocacy is previously a monthly newsletter produced by the SAAD Program to provide an overview and information on the program's important activities and events toward realizing its goal of contributing to poverty reduction of farmers and fisherfolk groups in the 56 provinces (619 municipalities with 5th-6th income classification, and top third with highest poverty incidence rates) covered by SAAD.

This 2024, the Program is transitioning from a newsletter to a magazine format, all while retaining the same name but instead of monthly, changing it to quarterly. The motivation behind this potential shift is to enhance the overall reader experience, providing a more comprehensive and visually engaging content while maintaining the familiarity associated with SAADvocacy.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit and finalize all stories prior to publication.

For comments and suggestions, reach us at (02) 8929-7349 or via email address at saad@da.gov.ph.



3rd Floor, DA New Bldg
Elliptical Road, Diliman,
Quezon City, 1101 Metro
Manila

Telephone: (02) 8929 7349
Email: saad@da.gov.ph



www.saad.da.gov.ph



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