

IMPACT Stories

Stories of hope, resilience and
business acumen

FFP ASEAN 2015–2020



AGRICORD



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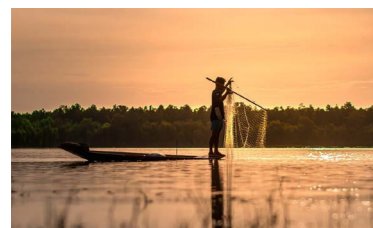
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Introduction

The nine stories of this publication illustrate what farmers and their organizations are capable of when they receive support in the form of technical assistance and funds to set up and strengthen their services. They produce, innovate and steer thriving businesses. They are the central actors in the food system transformation needed at the global scale and should be invested in as such.

Farmers Fighting Poverty ASEAN program – FFP ASEAN was a program for, by and with the farmers’ organizations. It was implemented in seven Southeast Asian countries during 2015–2020, and achieved tangible results, improving the lives of smallholders by strengthening their farmers’ organizations and cooperatives.

The program was built around three components:

1. Organizational and institutional strengthening
2. Enabling policy engagement
3. Developing economic services.

FFP ASEAN was focused on some key challenges:

- traceability and food safety standards
- establishing and scaling up agri-food businesses
- promoting sustainable production techniques
- improving access to local and regional markets
- mobilizing private and public investment for inclusive and sustainable agricultural growth.

There is no one-size-fits-all solutions for the diverse farmers’ organizations and their needs in the Southeast Asia. Synergies were sought with the regional lobby platforms and farmers’ associations and direct support given to national organizations, as well as to local cooperatives and associations at different stages of their lifecycles. This diversity driven approach allowed a big number of farmers, all the members of the supported farmers’ organizations, to indirectly benefit of the program’s results.

Climate change, in the form of unpredictable and extreme weather conditions, made its impacts known during the program implementation. Typhoons and floods destroyed almost ready harvest and disrupted planting seasons. The last year of the program implementation saw COVID-19 pandemic shake up societies and food systems around the world. Building farmers and their organization resilience – through adapting production techniques, through diversification, through greater financial autonomy, through improved risk preparedness – has been at the heart of the FFP ASEAN program. In 2020, within FFP ASEAN, farmers’ organizations embodied remarkable entrepreneurial spirit and adaptability among farmers’ organizations. They showed their willingness to persevere, to start over again and to build back better.



FFP ASEAN program, financed by the EU with a budget of 6,7 million EUR and with technical support from IFAD, was launched in 2016 to support farmers’ organizations’ initiatives to increase regional food security and to improve income and business opportunities for smallholders and their organizations and cooperatives. FFP ASEAN was a part of the ASEAN Farmers’ Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP), in which the other part was Phase II of the Medium Term Cooperation Programme (MTPC2), implemented by the consortium Asian Farmers’ Association -AFA and La Via Campesina.

FFP ASEAN was implemented by AgriCord and its agri-agencies and their farmers’ organization partners at local, subnational, national and regional levels. AgriCord is an alliance of 12 agri-agencies, mandated by farmers’ organizations and agricultural cooperatives, and has been working with farmers’ organizations in the global South since 2007. It uses an efficient joint delivery mechanism with specialized services to develop capacity of farmers’ organizations and cooperatives in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America.

A basket of hope and opportunity

PHILIPPINES



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Philippines

GDP per capita (current USD): 3,485.1 / Population: 108,116,615 inhabitants

1 FO supported: Tao-Kalikasan Foundation of the Philippines, Inc. (TKFPI)

6 local member organisations (+1 since the beginning of the project)

Labo-Capalonga Forest Reserve, Province of Camarines Norte, Philippines

Abaca

875 direct beneficiaries (532 women, 343 men and 143 youths)

Agri-Agency: TRIAS

TKFPI works to create economic opportunities for upland and lowland farmers, small scale entrepreneurs, fisher folks, indigenous people, women and youth.

TKFPI Inc. operates in communities around the Labo-Capalonga Forest Reserve, a 2,137-hectare timberland community-based forest management area awarded by the Government of the Philippines. Eighty percent of the population are upland farmers whose livelihoods largely depend on subsistence agriculture. To sustain the reforestation and improve the family wellbeing, farmers need a regular source of livelihood. Supported by FFP ASEAN, TKFPI strengthened its members, six farmer-led rural enterprises to stimulate inclusive economic growth and social community cohesion.

The handicraft business developed with the support of the project diversifies the income sources of the farmers and their families. There are now 230 women basket weavers, and 10 are women community basket consolidators. The basket enterprise provides between Php 2,000 to Php 10,000 per month income to the household.

TKFPI has won 16 Department of Environment and Natural Resources' reforestation and rehabilitation of timberland areas projects through competitive bidding. Supported by the FFP ASEAN project, TKFPI has also been adopting techniques to attain the soil and water conservation in its the community-based forest management area.

The diversification of farmer families' income sources has increased the resilience of farmer families and their farmer led businesses and the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices has contributed to creating more resilient landscapes. As the household entrepreneurs need working capital, and TKFPI has limited financial resources, TKFPI organized village savings and loan association of basket weavers and workers for enterprise expansion and planned and unplanned life events.

Achievements

- > Membership increased by 313 farmers of which 162 women
- > Creation of 875 new jobs (532 women, 143 youth)
- > Raw abaca supplies total Php 2.9 million (€ 51,800)
- > Production of 37,536 sets of baskets (2017–2020) with total sales of P4.727 million (2017), P5.764 million (2018)
- > and P6.538 million (€ 116,750) (2019)
- > Increased production and sales of basket and citronella by 15% over the year
- > Increased members/household monthly income from abaca from 60 Euro to 200
- > 6 VSLAs with 376 members (231 women, 66 youth)

Services provided by TRIAS

- Organizational Strengthening and capacity building, particularly in the fields of:
- > Business Development Services
 - > Inclusion of women, youth, and subsistence farmers
 - > Enterprise management systems
 - > Market integration Village Savings and Loan Associations.



Ginalyn Calosa, 37, pioneer of basket weaving and inspiration for her community

Mrs. Ginalyn Calosa is one of the pioneers of basket weaving in TKFPI. She is 37 years old, married and mother of two-children. Ginalyn and her husband have been coconut farmers for 20 years. However, the income generated by the farming was not sufficient to provide regular meals for the family or to meet the needs of the two children.

Encouraged by her husband and by the president of TKFPI, Ginalyn participated in training in basket weaving organized by TKFPI. She produces now 10 sets of baskets per week and earns Php 10,000 (175 Euros) per month additional income for the family, which allows the two children to continue their schooling.

Ginalyn has been able to open a savings account in a village savings and loans association organized with the support of TKFPI. Ginalyn participates also in the governance of the VSLA.

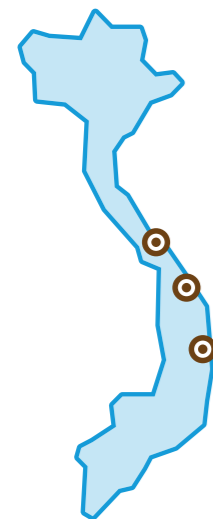
Ginalyn aspires to serve as an inspiration to other women in her community. She has trained already four other women in the neighborhood in basket weaving and has also become a local basket consolidator of TKFPI. Gynalin's neighbor, Waway Miranda, says that since Ginalyn taught her how to make baskets, she has been able to provide extra income for her family.

Sustainable smallholder plantation forestry improve rural livelihoods



VIETNAM

© FFD



Vietnam

GDP per capita (USD): 2,715.3 / Population: 96,462,106 inhabitants

3 provincial cooperative alliances supported (TTHCA, QNCA and PYCA)

10 local cooperatives (+2 since the beginning of the project)

Thua Thuen Hue, Quang Ngai and Phu Yen Regions, Vietnam

Acacia logs and woodchips

Direct beneficiaries 1.800 households

Agri-agency: Food and Forest Development Finland (FFD)

Integrating forest services into farmers' organizations is gaining more attention in Vietnam.

With the support of FFP-ASEAN, cooperatives deliver efficient services for profitable and sustainable smallholder forestry through improved forest management and forest certification.

Through collaboration of FFD and cooperative alliances, the project has been able to integrate forest services into farmers' cooperatives, increase income generation opportunities of cooperatives and their members, strengthen the role of smallholder farmers as important players in the forest sector, develop farmers' income generation opportunities, increase the availability of certified seedling material and ensure adoption of sustainable forest management practices. In addition, the project succeeded to pilot the national forest certification scheme, VSFC, build cooperative alliances capacity in managing forest certification data and processes and certify economic forests of smallholders, thereby increasing the market opportunities for cooperatives and forest growers. The total number of beneficiaries in 2019 were 9867 (out of which 34% women, 19% youth).

Throughout the project, smallholders' awareness and understanding of forest certification as well as certification of chain-of custody (CoC) has increased. Forestry cooperatives and their members learnt about the requirements, processes and benefits of forest certification schemes, such as VSFC and PEFC. Trainings, communication material and demonstration plots have helped the forest owners in understanding the importance of applying silvicultural techniques in forest production. TTHCA received the forest certificate (VFCS) concerning 124 forest management units (851.89 ha forest area).

The training courses have provided the local people with knowledge of high value timber forests and methods of sustainable forest management, low impact forest exploitation, thereby limiting deforestation agents.

Achievements

- > Forest yield has increased by about 15 – 20% forest volumes
- > More jobs have been created for women and youth (90% of nurseries employees are women)
- > Increased understanding of climate change mitigation opportunities in smallholder forestry
- > Availability to participate in forest certification of local communities has reached about 85%.
- > 5 nurseries have been certified in 3 provinces, 2 new nurseries were established
- > Development of a wood traceability software
- > Development by Vietnam Cooperative Alliance of a forestry strategy in support of smallholders

Services provided by FFD

- > Organizational/institutional development
- > Capacity building,
- > Improving efficiency of forest production,
- > Forest certification
- > Forest business development
- > Support to advocacy and multi-stakeholder collaboration
- > Project management and M&E



Nguyen Thi Minh Hang, 40, cooperative member, farmer and mother of 2

Ms. Nguyen Thi Minh Hang, mother of two and cooperative member since 1999, started farming in 2010. She is now the owner of 3400 m2 of rice field and 3,4 ha of acacia plantation.

In 2017, Ms. Hang started planting trees following the instructions for PEFC certification. She has received a lot of supporting services from the project, such as training courses and access to cheaper inputs. Forestry has given her a more stable life, while reinforcing her status in the cooperative. In turn, Ms. Hang is actively supporting other women in the cooperative to participate in producing qualified sapling by expanding nursery garden, introducing new variety, looking for output market.

Pham Van Noi, 23, young farmer entrepreneur from an ethnic minority group

With supports from the project, Mr. Noi and two other persons established the Nghia Son forestry cooperative in 2016. The cooperative has now 125 members and supports the community livelihoods by diversification into forestry.

Indigenous communities thrive by getting organised

PHILIPPINES



Philippines

GDP per capita (current USD): 3,485.1 / Population: 108,116,615 inhabitants

1 FO supported: The Foundation for Agrarian Reform Cooperatives in Mindanao (FARMCOOP)

12 local members organizations

Davao Region (Davao de Oro, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, and Davao City) and Caraga Region (Agusan del Sur)

Coconut, cacao, coffee and banana

Direct beneficiaries: 1598, of which 824 women

Agri-Agency: We Effect

Diversification creates new economic opportunities.

Poverty rates are high among farmers planting coconut, cacao, coffee, and banana despite the huge domestic and global demand for these products. The indigenous populations are in especially precarious situation owing to poverty made worse by insurgency, land conflicts and very poor services delivery due to geographical isolation. Farming is unprofitable due to lack of access to capital technology and reliable market. Foundation for Agrarian Cooperatives in Mindanao (FARMCOOP) received FFP ASEAN funds to improve the livelihoods and wellbeing among marginalized ethnic minority and women farmers through a set of value chain development interventions.

Supported by We Effect, FARMCOOP provided training and other services to strengthen 12 of its member FOs involved in cacao, coffee, coconut, and banana value chains. One of the supported cooperatives in the ancestral domain of indigenous peoples of Sibulan, Davao, started intercropping cacao and coffee to diversify their income and have initiated processing activities to produce cacao nibs, tablea and coffee powder. In the same domain, two cooperatives transitioned into organic banana production to benefit from an export opportunity rising from FARMCOOP's market linkaging. Inspired by the entrepreneurship training provided within the project, another small farmers' association is now creating value out of downgraded bananas by processing them into banana chips and vinegar.

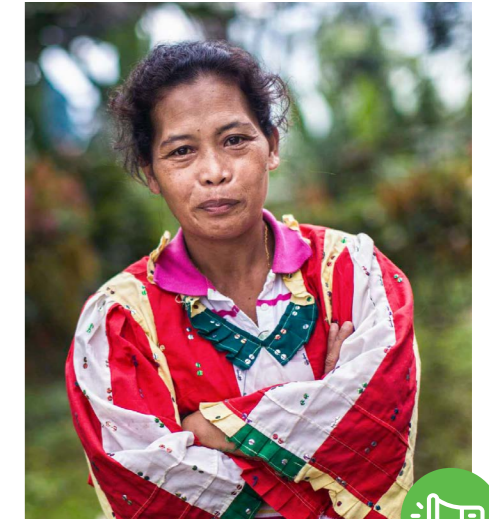
In Agusan del Sur, FARMCOOP supported an agrarian reform cooperative in its transition from monoculture of palm into diversifying to organic banana and cacao. In the same region, a women's association was accompanied to start up the processing of banana chips, banana vinegar and tablea.

Achievements

- Enhanced participation of 1,598 farmers (774 men/ 824 women) in the value chains of cacao, coffee, coconut, and banana.
- Establishment of four new processing enterprises: SIBOFPA (Banana), SADOPCO (Cacao and Coffee) Processing, BCVOFPWA (Banana and Cacao Processing) and BASCOFACO (Coconut)
- 824 women trained and participating in the value chains
- Better access to financing for women
- 1,650 hectares of ancestral domain in Barangay Sibulan declared as organic zone thanks to extensive lobby by FARMCOOP.

Services provided by We Effect

- Organizational development
- Capacity building (Business Development Services (BDS))
- Sustainable Production
- Advocacy and Lobbying
- Gender Equality



Nancy Masicampo, 46, mother of six: indigenous woman inspiring women

The project has generated significant impact on the lives of Bagobo-Tagabawa women. Among them is Nancy Masicampo, founding members and secretary of an organic producer cooperative SADOPCO as well as chapter leader of Sitio Mamaon.

Through her membership in the cooperative, she has acquired a number of skills through the different trainings conducted by FARMCOOP: leadership; cooperative management; climate change and disaster resiliency; agro-forestry; cacao processing and tablea making, as well as product quality/standard operating procedure competencies. According to her daughter, "Nancy inspires other women".

On the community level, FARMCOOP has empowered women both economically and as active members and leaders of the farmers' organisation and other community associations. This has led to more equality also within households. Men have started recognizing women's capacity to lead and women are given more responsibilities. Thanks to their farming activities and microenterprises, women can have their own income, afford to pay health care and save money for children's education. Consequently, men have become more involved in caretaking and other family domestic roles.

Increasing the income of peasants by promoting the development of agricultural cooperatives

CAMBODIA



Cambodia



GDP per capita (current USD): 1,643.1 / Population: 16,486,542 inhabitants
1 FO supported: FAEC (Federation of Farmer Association Promoting Family Agriculture Enterprise in Cambodia)
5 local cooperatives supported
Svay Rieng, Battambang and Takeo Provinces, Cambodia
Rice, vegetables, fruits, fish, chicken, pig, cow
666 direct beneficiaries of which 34% are women
Agri-Agency: AFDI

With the right support, farmers can lay the foundations for economic growth, which in turn will offer new opportunities to young women and men, creating vibrant, prosperous and sustainable rural communities.

FAEC is a national farmer organization federation in Cambodia that works closely with sub-national farmer organizations, including farmer associations and agriculture cooperatives. FAEC works to raise and secure farmers' income while developing and structuring cooperatives and agricultural supply chains. With the FFP ASEAN support, FAEC focused on raising interests of young farmers in family farming through professionalizing and improving economic sustainability of farming. Farmers were also encouraged to diversify their production in order to ensure a sustainable livelihood.

The supported cooperatives developed new activities in the chicken breeding value chain and established relationships with microfinancing institutions and strengthened their services to provide farmers with a better access to inputs.

Thanks to training and mentoring on poultry and mushroom production, five young farmers' groups managed to prepare a successful business plan for developing these value chains.

Achievements

- > As a pilot for stimulating youth integration into agriculture, 27 young farmers received a start-up grant for developing a new activity in poultry and mushrooms value chains.
- > Establishing contacts between cooperatives, their members and microfinance institutions
- > An interesting group dynamic among the young people (exchanges, encouragement, ideas) and the integration of some in the governance bodies of their cooperative.

Services provided by AFDI

- Exchange missions France-Cambodia contributed to:
 - > FAEC's strategic document for improved services to young farmers
 - > Support for young farmers starting their farming business
 - > Understanding how important it is to ensure that youth is integrated in farmers' organisations



Lyna Yim, 33, investor in mushroom cultivation

Lyna Yim is a member of Sandor association. Her family farm (with her parents) is mainly focused on rice production (1.5ha) During FAEC's meetings and training sessions in 2019, she had the opportunity to strengthen her technical and commercial abilities. She received a grant from her farmers' association (Sandor association) that enabled her to invest in mushroom growing. After only 5 months of activity, she has collected and sold between 300kg and 600kg of mushroom per month (depending on weather conditions), that she sells directly on the local market at a good price (1,25\$/kg). Now she shares her technical knowledge among her young farmers' group and other farmers who want to learn in the village.

Soy Saray, 31, young farmer and single mother resilient to the pandemic

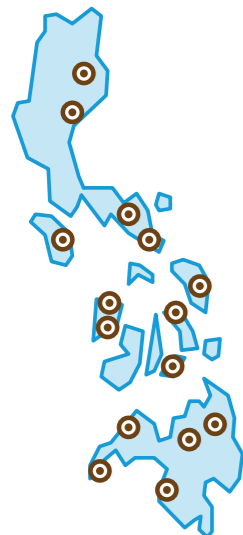
In Spring 2020, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, Soy Saray lost her job in a garment factory. With training and supports from FAEC, Soy Saray can now ensure the food security of her 2 children. She reduced her expenses and multiplied her income by 2.5 to reach \$250 per month.

Agro-ecological approach for sustainable rice farming

PHILIPPINES



© Patanom/Pakisama



Philippines

GDP per capita (current USD): 3,485.1 / Population: 108,116,615 inhabitants

1 national confederation of rural organizations supported: PAKISAMA

21 provincial cooperatives supported

15 provinces of the Philippines (Cagayan Valley, Aurora, Oriental Mindoro, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Leyte, Eastern Samar, Iloilo, Bohol, Capiz, Maguindanao, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Bukidnon)

Rice, sugarcane, corn

Direct beneficiaries: 10,406 among which 5,218 women, 5,118 men and 1,430 youth

Agri-Agency: CSA — Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires

Farmers' organisations support rice farmers' transition towards sustainable and resilient practices.

In 2019, rice farmers faced the implementation of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) which instead of alleviating the economic plight of Filipino farmers, worsened their situation by flooding the market with cheap imported rice. This led to the decline of the local palay's price. To tackle this challenge, PAKISAMA, a 28-year old national confederation of rural organizations dedicated to the empowerment of smallholder farmers, fisher folks, rural women, youth, and indigenous peoples in the Philippines, has taken the initiative to identify solutions to support the local farmers.

With the support of FFP ASEAN, PAKISAMA encourages farmers to diversify their activity into organic rice farming, to exhaust different marketing options available and wane their dependency on middlemen and local traders, and to access resources through public programs that help alleviate the plight of family farmers (e.g. National Organic Agriculture Program (NOAP), Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF), and SAGIP-SAKA).

PAKISAMA has also developed Integrated Diversified Organic Farming Systems (IDOFs) which is an effective response to the negative effects of RTL through ultra-low-cost farming systems, integration of various components (e.g. pest management, crops diversification) for added income.

PAKISAMA's action enabled the strengthening of the cooperatives' governance, the quality and quantity improvement of production and processing activities. It also contributed to the establishment of synergies between agri-cooperatives and with general cooperatives and facilitated the recognition of their voice in the decision-making processes of government mandated to serve rice farmers.



© Patanom/Pakisama



Ma Allinah Delmo, 56: a healthy family lifestyle through organic farming

Ma. Allinah Delmo has been a farmer for more than 20 years. Since 2015, through her membership in PATANOM, a local cooperative benefiting from PAKISAMA support, Allinah participated in IDOFS and capacity building trainings. She has also accessed farm machinery and a P60,000 loan (equivalent to 1,071 Euro) from the co-op.

Following her IDOFS training, Allinah adopted IDOFS farming technology. She produces her own organic fertilizer using waste from livestock growing. In 2019, she also bought 30 bags of organic fertilizer from PATANOM for rice production.

Allinah has increased her yield: in 2013 the average annual yield was 70 sacks of rice per hectare, and in 2019, this increased to 120 sacks (1 sack = 50-60kg). Her overall income also increased since she started livestock growing and the P60,000 loan from PATANOM generated P100,000 (equivalent to 1,785 Euro today) net income thanks to the production of sugarcane.

Her dream is to ensure a healthy lifestyle to her family through organic farming practices. Now, Allinah introduces organic practices in her community and talks about its health benefits compared to conventional farming.

Achievements

- › Development of Integrated Diversified Organic Farming Systems (IDOFS), a specific sustainable agro-ecological production approach.
- › Better inclusion of women: 48% of cooperatives members are women
- › Enhancement of women's and youth economic opportunities by trainings adapted to their needs and priorities.
- › All the supported cooperatives are now able to access agricultural inputs and other support services including grant or loan financing from government agencies.



Services provided by Patanom

- › Production and marketing of organic rice
- › Lobbying and advocacy
- › Linkaging (accessing public programs) and financing through Landbank
- › Organizational development
- › Capacity Building
- › Loan window for organic farmers



Farmers taking development in their own hands

PHILIPPINES



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Philippines

GDP per capita (current USD): 3,485.1 / Population: 108,116,615 inhabitants

5 Primary Cooperatives: Abrasa Multi-Purpose Cooperative (AMPC), Fatima Multi-Purpose Cooperative (FMPC), Patanom Credit Cooperative (PCC), Labo Progressive Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LPMPC), Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC)

Federation of People's Sustainable Development Cooperative (FPSDC)

Luzon Island: Diffun, Quirino (AMPC); Labo, Camarines Norte (LPMPC); SoroSoro-Ibaba, Batangas City (SIDC) and Quezon City (FPSDC)
Visayas Island: Calubian, Leyte (FMPC); Barotac Viejo, Iloilo (PCC)

Organic rice, cassava dried chips (for feeds), pineapple (fresh fruit and juices), coconut sugar, muscovado sugar, corn, livestock and animal feeds

Direct beneficiaries: 55,571, of whom 32,740 women and 2,547 young farmers

Agri-Agency: Agriterra

Farmers Fit for Business: How six agri-cooperatives upgraded their business

In 2018, as part of the FFP-ASEAN Program, six agricultural cooperatives of the Philippines partnered with Agriterra to grow and expand their agricultural businesses in order to improve their services and incomes of their members. These six cooperatives were Abrasa Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Quirino (cassava trading), Fatima Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Leyte (cassava trading), Labo Progressive Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Camarines Norte (pineapple processing), Patanom Credit Cooperative in Iloilo (organic fertilizer production), Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative in Batangas (feed mill and livestock, consumer retail, savings and loans) and Federation of People's Sustainable Development Cooperative in Quezon City (marketing and distribution of agricultural products).

The key results achieved by the cooperatives were in the scaling up of their agribusinesses as lead firms in their respective value chains. This scaling up was driven by improved business performance, bigger production volume, more efficient mechanized and automated processes, enhanced services to members, higher revenues, lower costs, bigger markets or improved business arrangements. The impact went beyond the cooperatives to the sector where their value chains belong. The project impacted positively farmers' lives: increased their income, improved their socio-economic conditions and opened up new opportunities.

For Patanom Credit Cooperative, the impact at farmer level has been on the transformation of their members' farming practices into organic rice and vegetables production. This transformation was supported by the use of the organic fertilizer, which is now being produced by the cooperative.



© SIDC

Jordan Mendania ventured into pig farming with 5 sows

Jordan Mendania was¹ a young member of the Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC) since 2013. From a small multipurpose store earning a small income he started to venture into pig raising with 5 sows. Using the cooperative's high-quality feeds, he succeeded in expanding his production. He was offered by the cooperative to run a feeds outlet of his own to serve the growing needs of cooperative members in his community. From 500-600 bags per month, his sales reached a high of 1,000-1,500 bags per month. With the growing customer base, he was soon able to buy a truck with a low interest loan from the cooperative. He also earned a patronage refund for every transaction and his main income came from his feed outlet, pig raising and side-line trucking of feeds. Improvements in Jordan's life also impacted positively other community members' lives through the various businesses and services of the cooperative.

¹He has passed away and his wife has since taken over the business

Achievements

- › Increase in the number of local farmers that became part of a sustainable value chain
- › Installation of a computerized financial system allowing a better monitoring of business activities in 3 cooperatives
- › Enhanced capacity on feed milling (coop management, milling operations, feed formulation) and on hog technology (piglet production, slaughterhouse, manure processing) thru business advise mission
- › Double pineapple juice production volume and increase sales to 50%

Services provided by Agriterra

AGRI-BUSINESS ADVISE

- › Provision of Agripooler (expert from agri cooperatives) in the feed milling industry to improve feed formulation, feed milling management and piggery management
- › Provision of expert in the installation of accounting software to improve financial management system

- › Provision of Agripooler (expert from agri cooperatives) in the review of organizational/cooperative plan
- › Provision of experts and business advisors in the review and improvement of business plans achieve their BHAGs (big, hairy, audacious goals)
- › Provision of advise to marketing activities for pineapple business

TRAINING

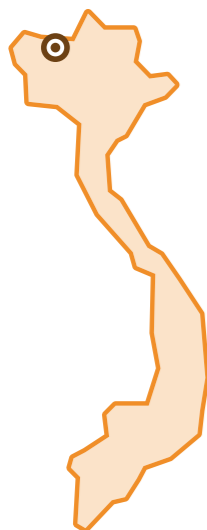
- › Agricooperative Governance Training
- › Marketing Training
- › Financial Management Training
- › Farmers Advocacy Tool

EXCHANGE

- › Luzon – Mindanao exchange for cassava cooperatives

Good livestock farming practices and climate change

VIETNAM



Vietnam

GDP per capita (USD): 2,715.3 / Population: 96,462,106 inhabitants

FO supported: Lao Cai Farmers Union (LCFU)

Implemented in 3 different districts: Bac Ha, Sa Pa, and Bat Xat hardest hit by extreme cold winter

Cattle/buffaloes

Direct beneficiaries: 540 households or 2,700 individuals

Agri-Agency: AsiaDHRRRA

Extreme weather, increased temperatures and shifts in rainfall distribution poses serious threats to livestock production and productivity around the world.

Lao Cai Province is among the poorest, mountainous and highland province of Vietnam with over 20 Indigenous ethnic groups that represent about 70% of its population. According to UNICEF and the Lao Cai Peoples' Committee, poverty rate in 2014 was 25.3%, being ranked 6th among the poorest provinces of the Northern mountainous region.

Raising cattle, buffaloes and other small animals are the main sources of cash incomes of farmers. In the most recent years, starting 2008 extreme cold winters have caused the death of thousands of animals, which has caused serious losses for the farmers. In 2008, more than 18,000 animals were reported dead in the province due to extreme cold winter. This was followed in 2011 and 2014.

Supported by AsiaDHRRRA, LCFU enabled farmers and farmers unions' staffs to improve their capacity to prevent and minimize negative effects of cold weather and diseases on animals. Farmers were trained in forage production, silaging feeds for winter, improvements of feeding and animal nutrition, construction of appropriate animal shelters. Farmers also received training on animal health care and herd management.

The efforts have rewarded with positive results. In the past three years and despite extreme cold winters, no deaths has been recorded in the province. This has contributed directly to the improvement of farmers' incomes and sustainability of their livelihoods.

LCFU is now replicating the process in other high elevation districts and among ethnic groups in the province.



Vang Thi Uong, 58, woman farmer leader

Through the support of ASIADHRRRA, and thanks to her new knowledge, Vang Thi Uong has been able to expand her family's cattle/buffalo forage field (from 300 sqm to 1000sqm) and to renovate her animal shelter to accommodate more animals and constructed a simple breeding facility. She is now involved in the business of buying, fattening and selling live buffaloes. She sells an average of 6-8 buffaloes per year, which brings her and her family an additional income up to 5.500 Euros per year.

"Before, we only focused on raising cattle/buffaloes traditionally... we did not know about markets and price issues. Thanks to the training I have followed, I can now help also other farmers on accessing market and selling their cattle/buffaloes with better price."

During their regular meetings of CIGs, she provides members with information on prevailing market prices, as well as other market information. She is now a facilitator of 2 CIGs.

Achievements

- > 32 animal health care staffs trained in delivering animal husbandry training and extension services in 3 districts and are now providing education, advisory, and training to farmers
- > No cold winter related deaths of animals in the last 3 years despite extremely cold winters.
- > Reduced traditional grazing of animals in distant pasture fields allowing more time for members of the family at home
- > 540 farmers organized into 18 common interest groups (CIGs), CIGs are learning and self-help groups

Services provided by AsiaDHRRRA

- > Animal husbandry extension and training services
- > Capacity-building on forage farming, silage feed production, animal health and herd management
- > Organizing common interest groups (CIGs)
- > Construction of model animal shelters
- > Provision of pilot animal health kits
- > Cross community farmer to farmer learning exchange

From farm rehabilitation to cooperative building

PHILIPPINES



Philippines

GDP per capita (current USD): 3,485.1 / Population: 108,116,615 inhabitants

1 provincial cooperative supported: Island of Samar and Leyte Agricultural Cooperative (ISLACO)

Eastern Visayas (Region VIII), Philippines

Main Commodities: Organic rice, vegetables, poultry and swine

Number of direct beneficiaries: 3,600 families

Agri-Agency: AsiaDHRRA

Capacity-building for sustainable agriculture and rural development in a post disaster context.

The Post Haiyan Rehabilitation project was implemented by AsiaDHRRA together with PAKISAMA after the Super Typhoon Haiyan struck the central region of the Philippines in 2013.

The project provided capacity building both for organizational and livelihood development. Through the Integrated Diversified Organic Farming System (IDOFs) technology, many participating families learned to diversify their farms, and started to produce organic rice, vegetable, swine and poultry. Before the disaster, these families were heavily dependent on coconut (copra).

In 2017, the FOs formed the Region 8 Alliance, a platform they used to engage local and national government agencies to access public programs and services. The platform garnered about \$218,759 consisting of farm machineries, seedling and other planting materials, fishing gears, and cash for seed capital particularly in procurement of piglets and feeds.

In the same year, as the Post Haiyan Rehab project was about to end, realizing that a number of challenges they encountered could not be addressed individually but through collective effort, the FOs decided to establish the "Island of Samar and Leyte Agriculture Cooperative (ISLACO)". This phase was supported by FFP ASEAN. It covered 8 FOs in 8 municipalities in 3 provinces of Leyte, the Western and Eastern Samar reaching out to 3,600 families.

To date, ISLACO is fully operational. It provides credit services to its members. It markets organic rice and dried fish from its members, although in still limited volume. It also started to process its cacao into "tablea" cake - used to make hot cocoa drink. Some women started to establish their own business enterprises.

Achievements

- > Out of the 3,600 FOs members, 69% are women
- > From zero, the total assets reached \$74,000; Share Capital \$12,538; Saving Deposits \$6,827
- > Since December 2018, the total credit released to members reached \$149,080 (Ph7.45M) to 430 members
- > It employs 6 staff
- > ISLACO was able to maintain a "portfolio at risk (PAR) of less than 8% at any time period, except during the Covid19 pandemic when its PAR went as high as 51%

Services provided by AsiaDHRRA

- > Capacity-building
- > Marketing services
- > Savings and credit
- > Agricultural extension services
- > Capacity-building
- > Improve producers' well-being



Elmer Bulcase, 32

is one among the typical LGBT members in their community. Her main concern then joining his friends and attending to his beauty regimen. Typhoon Haiyan destroyed his family's house, coconut farm, fishing gears and other sources of income. He felt bad and scared his family would go hungry. He had no choice but to join the passion of her mother in farming who at that time was already participant to the Post Haiyan Rehabilitation project.

Elmer joined ISLACO and was able to borrow a total of \$600 as capital for vegetable production and hog raising. He was able to augment his earning; invested part of his earnings in food business like fish ball and other foods. He is a good paying member. Eventually, his credit reached \$1,000 which he used expand his hog raising and farm production. To date, the family's earning increased \$140 to \$400 per month from their farming activities.

He volunteered to lead the young farmers in his village. He shared his knowledge in organic farming and encourage them to become financially independent.

"During those hard times I saw the value of farming, and the importance of cooperation and mutual aid," said Elmer Bulcase. He did not like to reminisce the tragic experience of the super typhoon Haiyan although as a young farmer he had learned to draw strength from that experience.



Diversifying agriculture livelihood options

CAMBODIA



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Cambodia



GDP per capita (current USD): 1,643.1 / Population: 16,486,5421 inhabitants

1 FO supported: Farmer and Nature Net (FNN)

25 villages from 9 communes in 4 districts supported

Kampong Cham Province, Cambodia

Rice, vegetables, poultry, livestock (non ruminants)

Direct beneficiaries: 1870 individuals of which 40% are women

Agri-Agency: AsiaDHRRRA

Diversifying rice-based farming systems by vegetable farming and livestock and poultry raising.

The Aphivatt Srok Yeurng Agriculture Cooperative (A.C.) is located in Prey Chheur District, Kampong Cham Province. The cooperative was organized in 2015 by the members of the savings groups within the district, majority of whom were rice farmers. To respond to the rice farming needs, the cooperative focused on three types of services; namely, 1) Rice Milling, 2) Savings and Credit, and 3) Farm Inputs Supply. The cooperative is recipient of a loan package from a Japanese microfinance company; and was able to forge marketing contract with a private rice company named AMRO Rice Company. It also sells packed rice with their logo to wholesale and retail outlets locally.

FNN project aimed to diversify the livelihood options of the rice farmers. The project aimed to diversity the livelihood options of the farmers aside from rice production. Trainings were conducted in vegetable production, livestock and poultry raising. There was a total of 612 farmers who became involved in either types of agricultural production. Project records indicate that each participating family, on the average, earned an averaged additional income of around \$ 1,652 annually. Livestock was the most profitable, but most farmers eventually stopped raising livestock due to the African Swine Fever (ASF) disease.

The cooperative envisions to implement projects to address two important challenges of the members; 1) Mechanical Dryer for rice due to the difficulties to dry rice paddies during rainy season, and 2) Irrigation because of inadequate water for vegetable production during summer season.

One weakness observed is that women are not sufficiently involved in the governance structure of the cooperative. The cooperative is actively seeking to address this.



Nhean Channy, 32, mother of two, is a member of A.C. since 2015

In 2016, Channy had the opportunity to attend sustainable farm production trainings conducted under the FFP-AFOSP which was implemented by Farmer and Nature Net (FNN) with assistance from AgriCord through AsiaDHRRRA.

Her farming improved due to the acquired new knowledge and techniques, coupled with her access to credit from her savings group. Her rice production increased to 3.5 tons per hectare; before her rice is only for household consumption. Chicken outputs increased from 96 kilos in 2015 to 195 kilos in 2019; vegetables production tripled; and farm income increased from \$925 in 2015 to \$2,400 in 2019. Through the saving group, she was able to save a total of \$500 and was able to access loan. She also gained from discounts on the farm inputs purchased from the cooperative. She said that the contract farming that her cooperative was able to negotiate with Amru-Rice (a private enterprise engaged in rice trading) helped her a lot due to better price arrangement.

Channy recognized that learning to speak out her thoughts to bigger groups were the biggest impacts that she got from the trainings she had attended. This also led to better relationship with her husband. She says that her husband now respects her more on her ideas not only in farming but also in family and relational matters. She intends to ask her husband to help her manage their farm full-time. Her husband is currently a construction worker in the city.

Achievements



- > The rice milling business reached an out put of 480 tons of milled rice sold to 20 shops and 300 families (direct sale)
- > Savings deposits of members reached \$275,000 from 222 members
- > Improved Agri-input supply business. In 2019, the cooperative sold 30 tons of fertilizer, 25 tons of rice seed to 243 members.

Services provided by AsiaDHRRRA



- > Capacity Building -Self and Organizational
- > Support for Enterprise Development
- > Adoption/Innovation of Agricultural Technology
- > Partnership Building

Round of applause

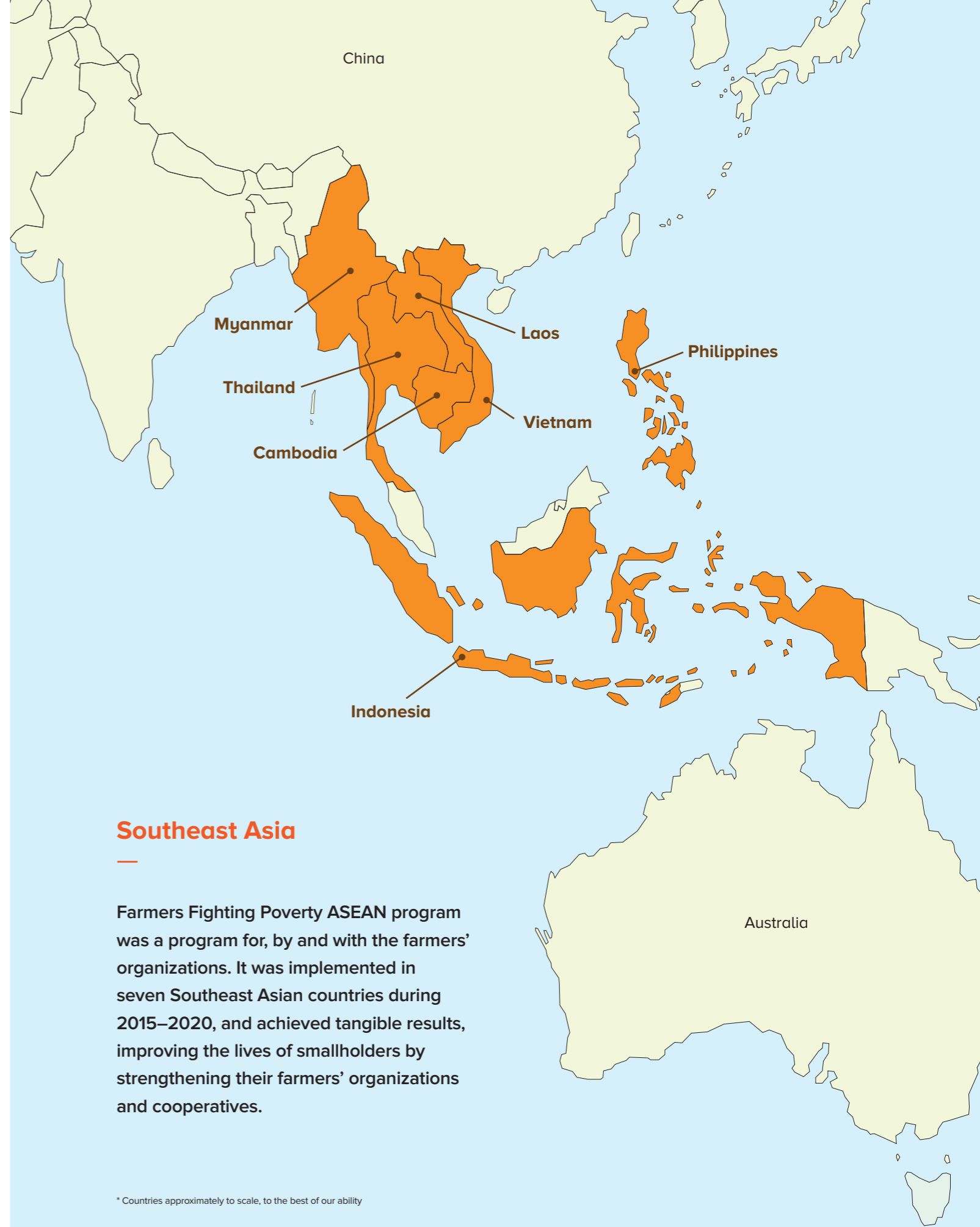


Miller Bicaldo (black shirt) and his daughter Jennifer (red shirt) manage Pecuaría Cooperative, an pigmented rice farmer organization in Bula, the Philippines. In this warehouse rice is weighed, milled, colour sorted and dried. After quality control, rice is repacked and distributed to organizations like GlowCorp and FPSDC.

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Let's give them a round of applause for the hard work they deliver!

In 2019, Annie won the regional organic achievers award. She was also in the top ten of the Green Award. She started her banana plantation in 2004. Before that, she grew corn, abaca and rice. FARMCOOP introduced to her the idea of growing organic banana as well, as it is more sustainable. To combat the struggles of climate change, she also grows chili peppers, cacao, coconut and mahogany trees.

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That's what we call being resilient!



Southeast Asia

Farmers Fighting Poverty ASEAN program was a program for, by and with the farmers' organizations. It was implemented in seven Southeast Asian countries during 2015–2020, and achieved tangible results, improving the lives of smallholders by strengthening their farmers' organizations and cooperatives.

* Countries approximately to scale, to the best of our ability

FARMERS FIGHTING POVERTY

Farmers and their organizations produce, innovate and steer thriving businesses. They are the central actors in the food system transformation needed at the global scale and should be invested in as such.

