

FARMERS-supported initiatives to bolster the local extension system in the Philippines



Over the course of the BRIA implementation in the Philippines through FARMERS (Fostering agriculture and rice marketing by improved education and rural advisory services) from inception to date, several collaborative efforts of public and private sectors have jointly been developed and carried out to:

- support the project in fulfilling its targets;
- mainstream climate smart and yield enhancing technologies via the local extension pathway; and
- provide better understanding on the structural changes in the rice-coffee-abaca farming landscape.

These joint initiatives can support farmers towards achieving better yield and income, as well as informing researchers, academicians, development managers, and policy makers on the knowledge gaps in extension system and the pressing issues in youths and agriculture.

Production of learning videos

As complementary aid in learning, using videos to inform farmers on tested and locally adaptive technologies and farming practices has been found to be effective. Studies show that extension videos can significantly increase farmers' knowledge.

Building on the trainer's manual on better rice production and marketing, the BRIA learning videos will introduce good farming practices and improved technologies to rice farmers. Each video will highlight the benefits of the focused technology or farming practice, aiming to help farmers achieve better yield and income.

About 2 to 3 minutes short, the animated learning videos will emphasise relevant messages that offer pragmatic solutions and options towards addressing timely problems faced by the farmers. The learning videos will be designed to be attractive, simple and informative that will surely pique the interest of the rice farmers.



New Market Linkages

This is a follow-up initiative in 2016 which explores options for direct marketing channels for rice and by-products in the province of Iloilo. It facilitates formation of or targets farmer organisations or cooperatives and access to market price information for the farmers.

To be carried out by the Central Philippine University, this initiative identifies other partners in the rice value chain and seek to integrate additional activities to cover more stages of the rice value chain. In addition, the project will identify potential local rice mills and retailers and facilitate long-term arrangements between the farmer groups and the retailers.

Last year, three market linkage agreements were being implemented in Iloilo during the 2nd cropping season. Facilitated by PhilRice (Philippine Rice Research Institute), these agreements involved farmers' associations, a private trader and a government-funded rice processing complex. Consequently, the agreements were evaluated and the results, along with significant interest from local stakeholders lead now to the further expansion of the market linkage activities, including new additional market linkage models.

Structural Study

Supported by GIZ's Sector Network Rural Development (SNRD Asia), this study attempts to capture and understand the current Filipino rural transformation processes in the low-lands and up-lands and to analyse their similarities as well as their differences. The analysis shall focus especially on the farming systems and value chains of rice, coconut and coffee in selected areas in the Philippines.

The study will assess the current trends in rural transformation and their impact on the future of agriculture and rural development. It will outline possible fields for interventions, which can make the outcomes of rural structural transformation to turn into positive ones, contributing to efficient income generation in the agricultural sector and at the same time contributing to overall food security on local and national levels; in a youth and gender sensitive way.

The study seeks to answer the following key questions: What are the trends in rural transformation at the national, provincial and the farm level, with consideration for differences and similarities between upland and lowland? What farms/farming characteristics particularly attract the younger generation (m/f) and for what reasons (e.g., proximity to a city, a certain innovation, governmental support and incentive schemes, access to public goods and services, ICT and others)?



Endline Survey

This is the evaluation survey currently being conducted by the Kleffmann Group, an independent market research company, in Aurora, Iloilo and Southern Leyte. Results of the post-baseline survey will provide data comparison before and after the BRIA interventions according to the agreed indicators. Results will be available towards mid or end of September 2017.

