

A Case on Keeping Faith on Flood Areas as Food Areas

around Php40,000 a week,” she says. The harvest for Al-ag’s crops could run up to three months.

The foregoing shows how the interaction and connection established between the farmer-borrowers and the service provider – in this case through BCBMPC’s account officers helped ensure the responsiveness on the part of the provider.

WHAT TUMANDA wants to see being improved in the package is the increase of the loan ceiling to more than Php15,000 per hectare. She reasons out that the cost of production has been increasing and the current ceiling means that the farmer has to secure the lacking amount from other sources with much higher cost of money and stiffer terms.

Al-ag, whose two kids, ages 8 and 9, have been trained to the ways of living in a vegetable farm, wants to see the immediate replication of the scheme in more areas in the municipality. “So that more can benefit from it and secure a better future for their family,” she says.

What Tumanda and Al-ag both wish is for an ordinance to be passed regulating the use of the road from a quarry at the bank of the river to the provincial road that cuts through their farms. This is also the same condition of road in other farming barangays that they want the local government unit to look into.

Otherwise, Tumanda is picture of a person so content just surveying her fruit-bearing corn farms, assured that the fund she poured into it this time is insured. Al-ag, on her part, is also content serving as co-maker to as many borrowers who come her way. “So that many more can already benefit from the scheme”, she explains, adding that her only request from the people with whom she has stood as co-maker is for them to live true to the terms of the loan agreement.



This caselette is prepared by the KM & Process Documentation Support Group - Caraga Learning Service Providers Network (LSPN) for the ILO-DOLE-DTI Climate Change Adaptation Project (CCAP).

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(November 2011)

The CCAP in Agusan del Norte – “Climate Resilient Farming Communities Through Risk Transfer Mechanisms” -is a demonstration project under Outcome 3 of the Spanish government-funded Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDG-F 1656) Joint Programme: “Strengthening the Philippines’ Institutional Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change.”

The International Labour Organization (ILO), a specialized agency of the United Nations is implementing this demo project in partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in collaboration with the provincial government of Agusan del Norte and the municipal governments of Las Nieves, R.T. Romualdez, Jabonga and Buenavista.

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Outcome 3.4 – Climate Resilient Farming Communities in Agusan del Norte Through Risk Transfer Mechanisms
Implemented by the International Labour Organization • Department of Labor & Employment • Department of Trade and Industry • Province of Agusan del Norte



*Climate Change Adaptation Project
Caselette # 4*

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Las Nieves Women Farmers’ Story of Bouncing Back and Getting Buoyed by a Climate Change Risk-Responsive Financing Partner
Easy Access to Credit and Protection from Insurance Crop and Farm Diversification



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FOR FARMERS in climate risk vulnerable areas, literally: “to brave the storm”, is to become more productive.

This says Pedrita Tumanda, a corn farmer in Lingayao, Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte, is what the climate change adaptation financial package she availed from Baug CARP Beneficiaries Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BCBMPC) has done to her and several others in their municipality.

“It is the fact that our crops are insured and that there is a facility we can turn to when calamity hits us, that is giving us good sleep this time,” explains Tumanda.

“The facility makes the farmers even better borrowers,” adds Evarista Al-ag, a vegetable farmer, also of the Municipality of Las Nieves. Both women farmers refer to the integrated financial package they got from the BCMPC Branch in Las Nieves. BCMPC is a partner financial service provider of the Climate Change Adaptation Demonstration Project (CCAP) in Agusan del Norte. BCMPC administers the test run of the Coop Model of the package.

The demo project, “Climate Resilient Farming Communities in Agusan del Norte Through Risk Transfer Mechanisms” is one of five climate change adaptation projects in the country and the only one in Mindanao. This is under Outcome 3 of the Spanish government-funded Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDG-F 1656) UN-GOP Joint Programme on “Strengthening the Philippines’ Institutional Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change.”

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TUMANDA MAINTAINS a 10-hectare corn farm right in an area that is said to be the center of flooding in their place – along the bank of the giant Agusan River, the most recent flooding being in 2009. It wiped out Pedrita’s corn farm and left her with debts amounting to Php100,000.

“I was helpless then,” says Tumanda, adding that it was good that her family has other economic activities – livestock raising, rice farming, rice trading and a mini rice mill – with income that cushions the impact and allows her to pay her losses in corn farming.

She was supposed to part with corn farming in the 10-hectare area which she is actually just tilling (the adjacent lots are owned by four different owners) this season. But she felt she would be missing the natural richness that the land gets every after flooding. The ILO-DOLE-DTI CCAP facility also came and the decision to farm the place in another “gamble” was once again reached.

“Pero kampante na ko karon (but I am more at ease this time),” Tumanda says. “Insured na man gud (since my crops are already insured),” she adds, referring to the insurance scheme that the facility offers as part of the package. The initial orientation and other pre-release seminars have also reportedly helped her decide the right time to plant her corn. “Imbes kay Marso ko magtanum human gyud sa ting-ulan, sa Mayo na kay para maandam na gyud ang yuta. (instead of planting in March or right after the rains, I chose to plant in May for the land to be ready),” she shares.



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“I can also choose where to market my corn now.” Tumanda further says, comparing her situation in the past where she has to bow to the dictates of the inputs providers and traders who provided the fund for her production. Although, the unmaintained farm roads leading to her farm still pose a big hassle for her and the other farmers.

AL-AG, WHOSE TWO-HECTARE rice farm lay adjacent to Tumanda’s corn farm, was also hit by the flood in 2009.

“I was left with a Php30,000 debt and I was helpless,” Al-ag says, adding that this has been the case every time a calamity hits in the several years that her family is tilling the rice land of her brother.

“It’s good that aside from rice farming I have also been engaged in vegetable farming,” Al-ag relates on where she gets the money to pay her debts in rice farming.

Unlike Tumanda who choose to continue corn farming, Al-ag has for the moment given up rice farming. It’s a matter of economics. “It is in vegetable farming that I earn better,” Al-ag reasons out.

Like Tumanda however, Al-ag also reached her decision to focus on vegetable farming in the coming in of the ILO-DOLE-DTI CCAP integrated financial package.

“My loan from the coop facility this season has brought for me a good harvest and it has allowed me to buy a lot of my own - a little more than a hectare “in the higher ground,” Al-ag shares on the transformations that the facility has ushered in for her. “My family will expand our vegetable farm,” she says. “This time in an area that is not prone to flood.”



AL-AG, AS SHE herself reveals used to shy away from loans. She hates the high interest rates and she is uncomfortable having to source out fund for an unsure venture that is farming, especially in her flood-prone farms. But when she heard of the CCAP coop facility from the account officers of the Baug CARP Beneficiaries Multi-Purpose Cooperative or BCMPC as she joined in one of the briefings, she found it “Ok ra” (it’s okay).

“The interest rate is low, and the other terms, especially the seminars (in social preparations) are useful,” Al-ag, like Tumanda, says.

More than that, their respective farming ventures are also insured as part of the package, Tumanda and Al-ag point out.

THE OTHER THING that makes the facility good, especially in the case of Al-ag, is that it serves as her entry into BCMPC’s regular lending program. Because of her good credit record and the prospect that her vegetable farming has shown, the cooperative offered Al-ag a loan for the purchase of a multi-cab, something that is a critical requirement as her farming venture grows and expands.

Al-ag delivers vegetables – eggplant, bittergourd (ampalaya) and bell pepper – harvested from her farm at the market centers in the 20-km far city of Butuan twice a week. She hires a multi-cab at Php1,500 per delivery or a total of Php12,000 a month, an amount that can very well cover for the monthly amortization. This has made her decide to avail of one.

“It’s only in Al-ag’s venture that we realize the extent of the money making potential of vegetable farming” BCMPC’s General Manager Luxmi Auxillo notes on why the decision to grant Al-ag a loan for the purchase of a multi-cab came easy. “For less than a hectare a farmer earns