

Working Paper No. 2018-07

**MAINSTREAMING “PALAYAMANAN” IN MUNICIPAL
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES**

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ABSTRACT

An avenue to mainstream agricultural projects, such as technology development, is its inclusion in the development plan of the municipality with fund allocation and approval by the local legislative body. Therefore, the last two activities of the project were on building the capacity of municipal-level staff to integrate Palayamanan into their agricultural development plans and in crafting local ordinances. This paper details this capacity building process with the main objective of mainstreaming technology into the policy and plans of the municipality.

Keywords: agricultural extension, policy, agricultural development plan, Palayamanan, CPAR, ordinance

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I. Introduction

Over the past years, various efforts have been accorded toward improving the agricultural sector in the country. Considerable work has been made throughout the field of research and development. The agricultural statistics reflect the positive impact of such ventures, but it still falls short of what the country needs to fully improve the economic status of Filipino farmers.¹

Among the different crops planted in the country, rice is considered to have the most organized R&D activities. Rice is the staple food of Filipinos and farmers in the country plant rice to meet their daily dietary and financial needs. The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) both play a crucial role in the development of R&D in rice. IRRI, which was established in 1960, aims to reduce poverty through rice research.² It also partakes in the improvement of human capital (local R&D workers) through the conduct of technical training and giving access to its facilities such as laboratories, libraries, and the International Rice Genebank, among others.

While there is an organized R&D in the country, the agricultural extension system in the Philippines is highly fragmented (Gapasin, 2013). When the Local Government Code was enacted in 1991, the manpower of the then Bureau of Agricultural Extension of the Department of Agriculture was devolved and dispersed among the provincial and municipal local government units (LGUs). After the devolution, the LGUs in the Philippines became the central institution tasked to formulate and implement policies and programs related to various aspects such as agriculture, the environment, social welfare, and health. While devolution ideally means easier management of programs toward achieving the development goals of communities, the effectiveness of such activities is highly influenced by the level of integration of the resolutions and policies guiding these activities.

Previous studies reveal a disconnect between existing policies in the agriculture sector and the problems they are trying to address. Current development policies and approaches still do not adequately reflect the interconnectedness of food security challenges (Greenberg and Lee, 2013). Limited resources and ineffective management of such further aggravate the lack of programs that can fully address developmental problems. A coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive focus on agriculture is essential to achieve improvement of the sector. Focused assistance of various sorts, including safety nets and interventions to improve adaptive capacities of farmers, must complement ways to face the long-term challenges of food insecurity and poverty (Greenberg and Lee, 2013).

¹ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/W5830E/w5830e0b.htm>

² <http://irri.org/about-us/our-history>

1.1 Use of strategic planning in attaining agriculture sector development

Strategic planning is needed to achieve agricultural development. While many organizations aim to help improve the agriculture sector, they can only do so much. Organizations have limits to their capacities and capabilities. There is thus a need for collaborative effort between agencies with similar goals.

In essence, strategic planning is where all stakeholders participate in the decision making and implementation process to further enhance the fit between the problems to be addressed and the project to be introduced. Planning is not solely outside in but also inside out. All resources of the communities are evaluated and characteristics of each community are examined and evaluated. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the target areas are all identified and taken into account for project development. Plans are reconciled with the needs of the target areas. With the needs and goals of the community in mind, a project is conceptualized and all stakeholders are involved in all the processes and tasks.

Over the decades, a number of management tools aiming to facilitate stakeholder involvement have been developed. Among such is the community participatory action research (CPAR) approach.³ This approach can be used for both research and extension.

With the growing differences between regions and municipalities, the need to formulate site-specific technologies becomes more intense. The provision of location-specific technologies is the need of the hour to address specific problems encountered by farming communities in the country. Identifying research and extension gaps is one important component. To develop site-specific technologies, it is crucial that gaps and problems are known. In summary, strategic planning entails knowing what is intended to be achieved and crafting of plans on how to get there. It involves making fundamental choices on

- What goal to pursue
- Who to involve/which stakeholders are to be contacted to be part of the project
- What program and services to offer
- How to mobilize and utilize needed resources, people, money, expertise, and facilities

II. A Framework for Mainstreaming Technology in Local Legislation

Mainstreaming Palayamanan involves the process of integrating the Palayamanan system of diversified farming into the agricultural development plan of municipalities. It entails planning and monitoring for possible effects on the sector.

The project targeted mainstreaming in building ownership and participation through a legal framework. World Bank (2000), as cited by Estrella (2017), defined

³ <http://www.manage.gov.in/studymaterial/SREP-P1.pdf>

mainstreaming as “a process of introducing, adopting, integrating new/good practices, approaches or technology into current conventional practice or existing institutional systems to enhance productivity.”

Four key elements are identified to achieve mainstreaming through local legislation: program or technology, policy, structure, and community of stakeholders (Fig. 10.1). This will build ownership and partnership between the LGUs and the community (Source (Estrella, 2017).

1) Program or technology: A program or technology refers to the set of projects to be implemented in a certain area in order to achieve a result or outcome. It could be a modified and advanced practice from existing activities in the area that were developed through time. It could be implemented to raise awareness or to deliver services to the community.

2) Policy: The creation of public policy is one of the activities of the project in order to establish collaboration with the LGUs of the municipalities. As Boer (2004) stated, local governments will concentrate in the formulation of policy, local ordinances, and regulations to support farmers’ activities. It is considered a plan or course of action intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters adopted by an individual or a group. As an output itself, it is what government delivers through its goods and services (Sanchawa, 2015).

Other forms of policy could be categorized into laws, statutes, ordinances, and resolutions which were created by legislative bodies. A policy could also be an executive or administrative order as crafted by executive agencies and court orders. Others refer to it as a written contract.

3) Structure: The third element represents the key actors who are responsible for implementing the program at the local level. The LGU, composed of the Mayor, the Municipal Agriculture Office, and the Sangguniang Bayan, has the role of endorsing a program to the community to promote development. The Sangguniang Bayan members are the legislators who propose the regulations and have the power to appropriate funds. They generate revenues, regulate, legislate, and also do oversight functions. These three key actors have the role of delivering basic services and facilities and promoting general welfare.

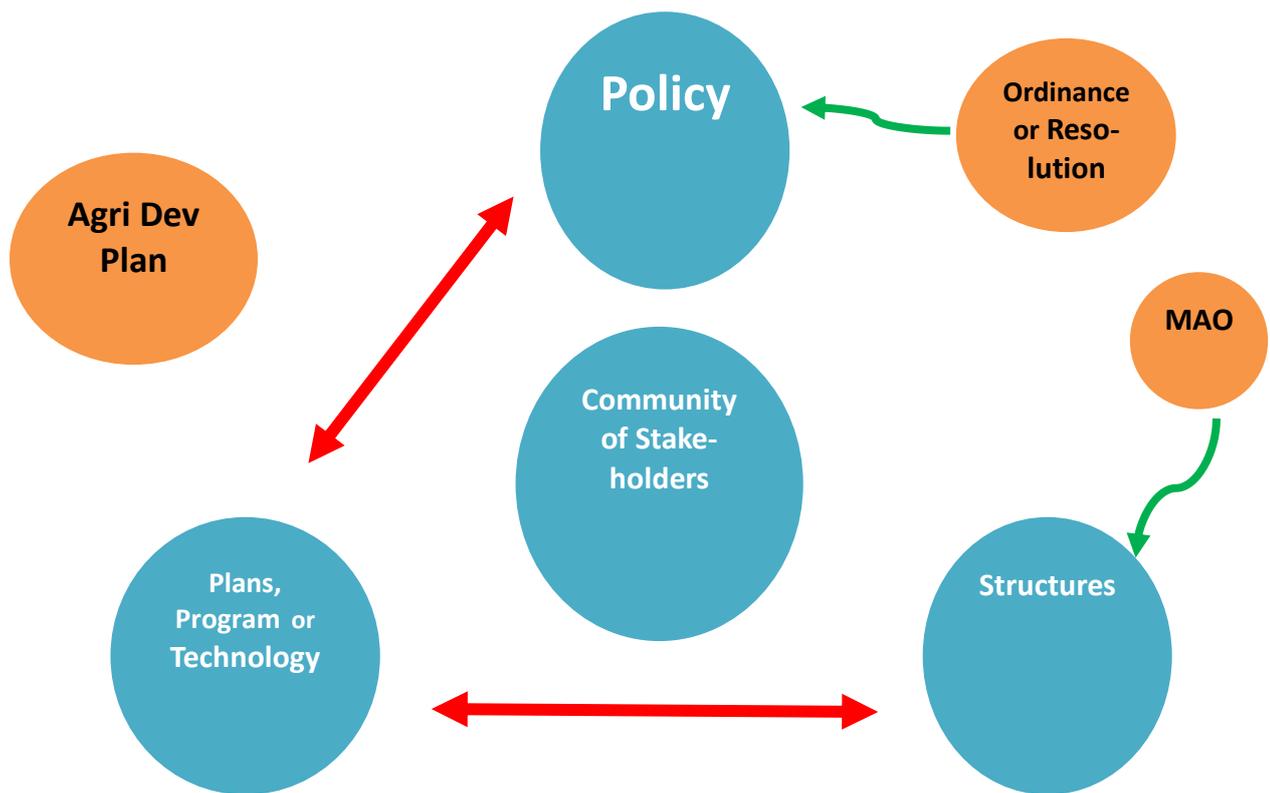


Fig. 10.1 Key elements in mainstreaming activities
Source: Estrella (2017)

The Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act 7160) states that the local government is given more power, authority, responsibility, and resources to implement development plans to promote the general welfare of the municipalities and its inhabitants. Implementation of development plans was carried out through different governance actors. These actors work with each other and collaborate in performing their duties and tasks. The Sangguniang Bayan, with the development council, is responsible for policymaking and local legislation, formulating ordinances based on a comprehensive multisectoral development plan. The municipal mayor, who acts as the chief executive of the municipal government, has the authority to supervise and exercise control over development projects, programs, and services.

Local ordinance formulation should be based on a comprehensive multisectoral development plan to be initiated by the development council and approved by its Sangguniang Bayan. This plan consists of long-term, medium-term, and annual socioeconomic development plans and policies, programs, and projects.

4) Community of stakeholders: One important element that binds the three elements together is participation of the community and the stakeholders. The strong participation of the stakeholders ensures the success of implementation. The stakeholders are the farmers in the area who are interested in joining the program for the communities.

III. The experience of mainstreaming Palayamanan in Bicol

An output of the project is the mainstreaming of Palayamanan in the agricultural development plan at the local level. To realize this objective, a 2-day training was held separately for Camarines Sur and Masbate. The municipal agriculture officers, Sangguniang Bayan chairmen for agriculture, and agriculture extension technologists from different municipalities were the participants.

The training was mainly divided into three parts. The first part was a discussion of the Palayamanan concept and CPAR approaches. Part two tackled development planning, where the discussion centered on the difference between an ordinance and a resolution and on how to craft such legal instruments. In Part 3, participants were tasked to review and draft an agricultural development plan (ADP) into which Palayamanan through CPAR was integrated. Detailed inputs, processes, and budget under Palayamanan should be integrated in the ADP before the municipal government can formally adopt it.

The package of technology is a combination of growing rice and vegetables and raising goats and native chickens. Together with all the other proposed interventions are the inputs to diversify the sources of income of farmers.

The institutionalization of the package of technology of Palayamanan using CPAR approach can be done in two ways. One is through an ordinance, which has the strength of a law and enacted by the municipal legislative council. The other is through a resolution, which is an expression of opinion of the municipal legislative council concerning a certain subject. The participants from the municipalities of Pamplona, Camarines Sur and Milagros, Masbate drafted resolutions for their LGUs to institutionalize Palayamanan in their communities.

The resolution drafted by the participants from Pamplona highlighted the contribution of Palayamanan in improving the capacity of farmers to engage in climate-resilient technology and in multi-commodity and multi-animal farming. The resolution also emphasized the increased productivity and income of farmers who adopted Palayamanan. A similar resolution was crafted by the participants from Milagros, Masbate.

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

Sound policies and resolutions are needed to address food security challenges and as per the 1991 LGC, the task of formulating and implementing such legal instruments becomes the responsibility of the LGUs). Ordinances and resolutions can be passed by the local legislative councils to institutionalize programs and projects, including Palayamanan.

The CRDES 2 project conducted a training course in Camarines Sur and Masbate to build the capacity of stakeholders in making agricultural development plans. The aim is to have this plan institutionalized through the passage of an ordinance or a resolution for adoption at the municipal level. The training enhanced the capacity of

extension officers, the municipal agriculture officers, and the Sanggunian Bayan chairs for agriculture. The first output of the training was the integration of the Palayamanan concept using the CPAR approach in the municipal agricultural development plan. A draft resolution adopting Palayamanan was the second output. The project staff hope that a member of the Sangguniang Bayan will sponsor a draft resolution adopting Palayamanan using the CPAR approach to ensure food security and encourage community participation.

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