



Philippines Country Programme 2017-2024

External Evaluation Report - Summary

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List of Acronyms/Glossary

ADSDPP	Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan
APECO	Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority
BDRRMP	Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Community (the same as MSK)
CBCP	Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CCA-DRR	Climate Change Adaptation-Disaster Risk Reduction
CERD	Center for Empowerment and Resource Development
CBO	Community-based organizations (also grassroots or people's organizations)
CMRSP	Coalition of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CP	Country Programme
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
EJK	Extra Judicial Killing
FA	Fastenaktion
FGD	Focus group discussion
FFSN	Filipino Farmers' Seed Network
GAD	Gender and Development
GFP	Gender Focal Person
GMAP	Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IWS	Institute for Women's Studies
IZA	FA's International Cooperation department
KII	Key informant interview
LGU	Local Government Unit
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MLGU	Municipal Local Government Unit
MSK	Munting Sambayanang Kristiyano (Basic Ecclesial Communities)
MTR	Mid-term Review
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
NTF-ELCAC	National Task Force-End Local Communist Armed Conflict
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAKISAMA	Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka
PCU	Programme Coordination Unit
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PIGLASCA	Pinag-isang Lakas na Samahan sa Casiguran (network of Casiguran associations)
POrgs	Partner Organisations (direct implementation partners)
PREAH	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SAC	Social Action Center
SEARICE	Southeast Asia Regional Initiative for Community Empowerment
SPA	Sentrong Paalaran ng mga Agta (central school of the Agtas)
Sufosec	Alliance for Sustainable Food Systems and Empowered Communities
TCD	Tribal Center for Development
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TFDP	Task Force Detainees of the Philippines
TOR	Terms of Reference
UPA	Urban Poor Alliance
UN	United Nations
VAWC	Violence against women and children

Executive Summary

Purpose and process of the evaluation

The evaluation of Fastenaktion's Country Program is undertaken to describe the cooperation among partners' collective accountability (what have we achieved?) and the areas for learning and improving (how can we do better). The evaluation result is also expected to inform the formulation of the new Country Programme, International Programme, and FA's new strategy beyond 2024. Where possible, it is also intended to complement and contribute to the mid-term-review of the Sufosec Alliance (to be completed by May 2023) of which FA is a part. The evaluation will look at standard dimensions of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability along with the programme management.

The evaluation methodology included an extensive document review of project proposals and reports of partners; reports of the project management unit; studies and assessments done for programme support. Focused group discussions were conducted online with all the partner organizations. A more extensive partner interview and field visit were conducted with 3 partner organizations which were jointly selected by FA and the evaluators based on an agreed set of criteria. It was also an opportunity to meet directly with the community organizations they work with. FGD with the PCU was done and Key informant interviews with FA staff and key project partners including those at the international levels. A survey was done with TFD partners to cover local partners.

Findings and Conclusions

The evaluation used the OECD Evaluation criteria consisting of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Selected of Programme Management was also assessed.

The Country Program is **highly relevant** during the most extreme period for human rights since the first Marcos regime. Its geographic focus is significantly located in areas where there is high poverty and that are also at high-risk to multiple hazards such as flooding, landslide, typhoons and droughts. The combination of high poverty and climate change impact intensified the effect among the target groups composed of small farmers, municipal fishers, indigenous peoples, rural women and human rights victims. The long-period of the COVID-19 pandemic caused long periods of isolation and lock-downs, limiting mobility, whilst state-sanctioned violence became even more widespread. Development aggression for rapid infrastructure and tourism development aided by national policies and priorities continue to threaten natural resources and community empowerment.

Through a total 14 partners in the Philippines, the CP's theory of change envisioned food and livelihood security among the poorest and most marginalised communities, supported by local and national advocacy to advance the right to food. The interventions carried out were **coherent** with these aspirations.

Efforts were made to raise gender awareness among partners and in the community, particularly on issues related to gender-based violence, and to account for the direct benefits of the CP interventions to women. There is now a stronger voice for women from communities and among the staff. Whilst addressing gender-based violence is at its core a human rights issue, the links

between gender inequality with food and livelihood security can still be strengthened by doing more analysis of the differential impacts of food and livelihood insecurity to men and women, that can then be the basis for gender and the right-to-food interventions.

Another point of intersection for partners is the centrality of ancestral domain in achieving the right to food. Three issues of national significance were pursued by partners: the anti-APECO campaign that was won to relieve the government of its responsibility to fund a private enterprise; the recently successful anti-Kaliwa Dam protest against the development as source of water for Metro Manila within the Agta ancestral domains; and the sustained anti-mining campaign in Mindanao to harvest gold and mineral resources that do not benefit the impacted communities.

National laws that exist to promote the right to food were used as basis for the CP implementation at the local level. Partners have mobilised and tapped on the strength of their own networks from the Catholic Church, national legislators, and the civil society in support of relevant campaigns and policy advocacies. The implementation of these pro-poor policies at the local level can be further strengthened to expand the benefits of sustainable food production systems to larger numbers in the community.

Overall, tangible changes in making food healthy and accessible to vulnerable target groups were achieved. In household food security, project support for agroecology, backyard food production, and organic food production systems were **effective** in addressing the vulnerabilities of men and women especially during the pandemic years. There was an increase in hectareage of marine protected areas and engagement with local government for disaster preparedness contributed to a more stable fish harvest in communities covered by the CP. Opportunities for resilient livelihood activities, especially for women have opened up. The left-behind groups were able to hurdle the pandemic as a result of these interventions.

However, building resilience amidst climate change was not a well-articulated strategy, except in the work with the fisheries sector. While organic farming can be considered as a climate mitigation strategy, the framing of the initiative is more strongly based on sound ecological and economic (less expense/less debt) perspective rather than as a response to changing climate. Although, agroecological systems is still recognized as a necessary response to build more climate resilience. As the COVID-19 pandemic has become less of a food security threat, partners can also consider building food and livelihood security as part of the pandemic recovery measures.

Although there were gaps in fulfilment of targeted outputs, the investment through the CP is still considerably **efficient**, at PHP 19,768 per beneficiary and PHP 99,008 per household – when bearing in mind that the returns were food security during the pandemic and increased ability of women and men to claim their rights. Partners were also able to mobilise their own networks to complement their work in capacity building and advocacy.

The high level of ownership by the community (farmers, fishers, indigenous people, women, and youth) to the interventions provides a strong foundation for the **high level of sustainability** of what have been achieved. Despite the challenges in human rights abuses and a relatively constricted political space, partner organizations and the communities impacted by the CP have persisted to protect their fisheries, their land, and their seeds.

A key element in the evaluation is the programme management of the CP. Development South Consultancy provides programme cycle management support and technical services. The

programme support provided by FA through capacity building (notably in human rights, gender mainstreaming, psychosocial support) and opportunities for shared learning sessions were highly appreciated by the partners. The CP partners are also highly satisfied with the flexibility offered by FA that enabled partners to adapt to the changing conditions during the CP implementation. The number of partners are adequate in terms of building expertise and generating lessons from practice in sustainable agriculture and fisheries and in calling attention to the rights of IPs to development, including the right to food. In terms of linkages with the FA global campaigns through the International Programme, however, the country's contribution did not prosper because partners were mainly involved in local actions, there was not enough capacity to carry out campaigns at an international level.

Recommendations

- 1 Encourage documentation and shared learning among the partners** on successes and failures encountered in advancing their right to food, protecting their natural resources, preserving their indigenous and local food production systems, in transforming organizations and communities towards gender equality and women's empowerment. Partners can be supported to take on or learn together for common or intersecting advocacies or thematic approaches. FA should ensure that platforms for knowledge sharing are sustained and continue to support capacity development using diverse approaches, not just training.
- 2 Improve the outcome tracking** through the project reporting system. While it is important to measure tangible outputs, the reports should indicate whether the interventions are moving closer to achieving the outcomes and the factors that aid or hinder them, whilst maintaining a lean, simple reporting template. The PCU can help to support the partners to make adjustments based on changing contexts and to draw out the lessons on a regular basis.
- 3 Develop a local influencing strategy** to affect policies, plans and investments beneficial to the poorest and marginalized sectors and food producers. Since partners are at varying levels of engagement with the local government, they will need to be more directive and purposive in their local governance agenda based not only on an analysis of the current situation but also offering an alternative development vision where human rights is at the centre.
- 4 Strengthen the work on climate and disaster resilience** by integrating the CCA-DRR framework in the operational plans of partners. An assessment of climate hazards and risk for each partner is an integral part of this work which leads to plans on addressing resiliency and adaptation.
- 5 Systematize gender mainstreaming with a heavier emphasis on analysing the barriers** to women to equally participate and benefit from development outcomes. The gender analysis should be a reference for project plans and reports. Work on gender mainstreaming should also be distributed across different teams within each partner organizations with the heads of organizations as key drivers of the process, not just the Gender Focal Persons.