



FAO Philippines Newsletter

2018 - Issue #1

Featured Stories

FAO, legislators launch pilot parliamentary alliance for food security and nutrition in the Philippines

Launch of Philippine Valuation Standards 2017 edition

Strengthening risk-based food import control

FAO, Belgium help restore food security and agricultural livelihoods in conflict-affected communities in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

FAO's Early Warning, Early Action Initiative

Integrated Food Production Project helps communities with high incidence of malnutrition

Working with traditional agro-ecosystems communities in the Philippines

Building coalition with youth in sustainable development through agriculture, forestry and fishery

WELCOME

Contents

- 3 FAO, legislators launch pilot parliamentary alliance for food security and nutrition in the Philippines
- 4 Launch of Philippine Valuation Standards 2017 edition
- 5 Strengthening risk-based food import control
- 6 FAO, Belgium help restore food security and agricultural livelihoods in conflict-affected communities in ARMM
- 8 FAO's Early Warning, Early Action Initiative
- 9 Integrated Food Production Project helps communities with high incidence of malnutrition
- 10 Working with traditional agro-ecosystems communities in the Philippines
- 11 Building coalition with youth in sustainable development through agriculture, forestry and fisheries
- 12 Events

OUR PRIORITIES

The FAO Strategic Objectives



Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition



Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable



Reduce rural poverty



Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems



Increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters

Greetings from the FAO Representation in the Philippines! I am pleased to welcome you once again to a new issue of our country newsletter.

We started off 2018 with the launch of the FAO Legislative Advisory Group-Philippines (FLAG-PH). The parliamentary alliance, initially composed of 10 legislators from both houses of Congress, is envisaged to tackle national food security and nutrition issues by taking the necessary legislative actions that would impact on the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and environment and natural resources sectors.

This issue features the visit of His Excellency Michel Goffin, Ambassador of the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium to the Philippines, to communities in Marawi City who were affected by the Marawi siege in 2017 and who are now on the road to recovery. While humanitarian relief continues, FAO, with support from the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium, has been delivering assistance to help returning and displaced farmers to re-establish their livelihoods and food security.

We also highlight our partnership with the Department of Finance - Bureau of Local Government Finance in updating the Philippine Valuation Standards (PVS). The development of the PVS is part of a broader program of the national government to introduce reforms in land administration, which consists of property valuation and taxation. FAO's support to this initiative is anchored on promoting transparent and participatory decision-making, in protecting people from arbitrary loss of tenure rights, and in ensuring that no one is subject to discrimination and that issues are resolved before they degenerate into conflict.

Likewise featured in this publication are our most recent activities on helping to strengthen national capacity for risk-based food import control within a One Health framework. FAO worked closely with the Department of Agriculture in conducting consultation meetings and field visits in major ports of entry for the drafting of the "National Situation Report: Imported Food Control in the Philippines". The report, which will soon be finalized, is an initial step to enable the Philippines to enhance and strengthen its national imported food control system.

In the Municipality of Canaman in Camarines Sur, the Integrated Food Production Project funded under the Telefood Programme has helped enhance the capacities of communities with high incidences of malnutrition to be more food-sufficient. The

project distributed agricultural inputs to increase the production of vegetables, poultry meat and eggs to provide additional income and supply of nutritious food to poor families.

FAO partnered with a local NGO Yakap Kalikasan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Pilipinas, Inc. (or Yakap Kalikasan) for the project, "Building Coalition with Youth in Sustainable Development through Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery" projects to encourage and engage young people to be the next generation of farmers, food entrepreneurs, scientists, agronomists, extension workers and government leaders, among others.

FAO also held a training on "Resiliency Assessment for Climate Smart Agroecosystems' Communities and the International Treaty" in Banaue, Ifugao in March with an overarching goal of mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the Philippines and to foster a greater understanding of the importance of traditional agro-ecosystems in achieving sustainable agriculture while coping with climate change.

While our efforts in the country continue, sadly we lost one of the most committed advocates of FAO's work in the first quarter of 2018. Mr Aristo "Aris" Portugal, who served as FAO Assistant Representative for Programme from 2009 until his retirement in 2016, unfortunately passed away in February. Aris contributed greatly to the work of FAO in the Philippines and steered the country programme to new heights and direction. The FAO staff and colleagues in the development and agriculture sector will surely miss Aris' easy manner and strong leadership.

As we ushered in the new year, we believe it is imperative that we continue to evaluate the way we work to ensure that we remain responsive to the needs of our time. Any progress we hope to achieve under the Sustainable Development agenda would be impossible if we do not first resolve core development issues. We cannot achieve the global goals on poverty, hunger, lack of education, ensure good health for all, foster lasting peace and build sustainable cities when people's access to food and livelihoods especially in rural areas are not fully addressed.

On behalf of FAO, I would like to thank you once again, donors and development partners in the international development community and in the national agencies, for the trust, encouragement and support that you have accorded us through the years.

Mabuhay!

José Luis Fernández
FAO Representative in the Philippines

José Luis Fernández, FAO Representative in the Philippines, with the Ambassador of the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium His Excellency Michel Goffin (3rd from right), Task Force Bangon Marawi Field Office Manager and Assistant secretary Felix Castro (2nd from right), and officials from the Department of Agrarian Reform during a distribution of agricultural inputs to families affected by the Marawi conflict.





FAO, legislators launch pilot parliamentary alliance for food security and nutrition in the Philippines

FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernández and Senator Cynthia Villar mark the launch of the FAO Legislative Advisory Group-Philippines (FLAG-PH) with a symbolic exchange of tokens on 17 January 2018 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is further strengthening its partnership with the Government of the Philippines to ensure food security and nutrition in the country with the recent launch of the FAO Legislative Advisory Group-Philippines (FLAG-PH).

The parliamentary alliance, initially composed of 10 legislators from both houses of Congress, is envisaged to tackle national food security and nutrition issues by taking the necessary legislative actions that would impact on the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and environment and natural resources sectors.

The Philippines continues to face challenges in addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, with 1.3 million families or 8.3 million Filipinos unable to meet their basic food needs in 2015 according to a report by the Philippine Statistics Authority. Moreover, despite the country's economic growth in recent years, poverty incidence remains high at an estimated 21.6 percent of the population. Farmers and fisherfolk consistently rank among the poorest. Incidence of malnutrition, especially in children 0-5 years old, remains prevalent in the most impoverished regions of the country including Mindanao.

The launch of FLAG-PH is a pilot initiative by FAO in the Philippines under a larger effort to build a Parliamentary Alliance in the Asia-Pacific region.

FLAG-PH

The advisory group will initiate discussions and deliberations on proposed and pending measures on agriculture, food security and nutrition. They will have opportunities to meet with their counterparts in other Asian countries and exchange experiences

and good practices. They will also hold consultations with provincial and municipal governments, local legislative councils, farmers, fisherfolks, indigenous groups and civil society organizations.

The FLAG-PH launch was attended by Senator Cynthia Villar (Chairperson, Senate Agriculture Committee), Senator Sonny Angara (Chairperson, Senate Local Government, Ways and Means Committee), Representative Deogracias Victor Savellano (Chairperson of North Luzon Growth Quadrangle Committee, Senior Vice-Chairperson of Agrarian Reform Committee), Representative Peter Calderon (Vice-Chairperson - Global World Trade Organization Committee), Representative Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Chairperson of House of Representatives Public Information Committee, for Gender Representation), and representatives from the offices of Senator Loren Legarda (Chairperson, Senate Climate Change Committee) and Representative Ronald Cosalan (Senior Vice Chairperson of Labor, Indigenous Peoples Representation Committees).

FLAG-PH will work with other stakeholders from the government and private sectors, such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Trade and Industry, local provincial and municipal governments, Climate Change Commission, farmers, fisherfolk, food manufacturers, traders/retailers and consumer groups to come up with policies and frameworks on food security and nutrition anchored in legislation.

FAO Parliamentary Alliance

The FAO Parliamentary Alliance started in 2009, recognizing the need for reinforcing

“Legislators are crucial in creating an environment that enables the poor and marginalized to have a better chance of improving their quality of life and contributing to the country's food security and sustainable growth. But for them to enact responsive, well-informed and evidence-based laws, it is essential that they have access to timely and sound technical advice and information. FLAG-PH is intended to serve as a platform for sharing expertise, experiences, and global good practices,” said FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernández.

constitutional and legislative provisions to ensure that everyone has a right to adequate, safe, sufficient and nutritious food and to freedom from hunger. FAO has since been strengthening collaborations with Parliamentarian groups across the globe. In the Latin America and the Caribbean region, FAO has helped establish the Parliamentary Front against Hunger which has produced four framework laws and has enacted more than 20 laws relating to food and nutrition security. In Africa, the Pan African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition has been positioning the issue of food security and nutrition at the highest level of the political and legislative agendas. In Europe, the European Alliance “Fight Against Hunger” has been working to foster discussions and dialogues with other global/regional parliamentary alliances. In Asia, FAO has helped create the Japanese FAO Parliamentarian Friendship League. The establishment of FLAG-PH is the first initiative in ASEAN countries.



© Bureau of Local Government Finance

2017 edition of the Philippine Valuation Standards launched

Officials and staff of FAO, the Department of Finance (DOF), the DOF-Bureau of Local Government Finance at the launch of the 2017 edition of the Philippines Valuation Standards.

The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) has announced plans to roll out the 2017 Edition of the Philippine Valuation Standards (PVS) within 2018, following a series of exposure workshops, wriweshop, and a pilot training.

The latest PVS was crafted with support from the FAO, under the Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) entitled Mainstreaming Voluntary Guidelines on Governance of Tenure (VGGT): Philippines.

In 2009, BLGF issued the first PVS which adopted the international valuation standards (IVS) released in 2007 to set specific standards in property appraisal practice in LGUs, and to promote the consistent use and application of internationally accepted valuation practices. Its subsequent version, PVS 2017, adopted in full the IVS 2017 and extended its reach to cover all users of valuations in the Philippines, especially the Department of Finance (DOF) attached bureaus and agencies performing or requiring valuation service.

The development of the PVS is part of a broader program of the national government to introduce reforms in land administration, which consists of property valuation and taxation.

Ultimately, greater efficiency and transparency in the property valuation and taxation sector will contribute to national development by fostering a dynamic real estate market with these characteristics: a) lands allocated to their best use, b) higher confidence in the valuation sector, c) security to property owners, and d) lower property investments risks.

The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT), a set of guidelines for the governance of tenure for land and other natural resources, was officially endorsed and adopted by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012 to support the overarching goal of poverty alleviation and achieving food security for all. Since then, implementation has been encouraged by G20, Rio+20, the United Nations General Assembly and the Francophone Assembly of Parliamentarians.

BLGF OIC Executive Director Niño Raymond B. Alvina said that it is necessary to bring the PVS at par with latest global standards and best practices. He explained that doing so will bring greater efficiency to the valuations of property for all purposes including capital transactions, portfolio valuation, property taxation, just compensation and financial securities.

BLGF presented the updated PVS to around 200 stakeholders including representatives from the private sector, non-government organizations, the national government, local government units (LGUs) on 19 December 2017 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City.

According to DOF Undersecretary Antonette C. Tionko, the BLGF's initiative sets the stage for greater consistency,

transparency and confidence of financial institutions, lenders, investors and the general public on the Philippines' valuation reports. She added that this development supports the government's efforts to raise more revenues, maintain sound fiscal management, and foster a conducive environment for investments and businesses.

In March 2018, the BLGF became the latest institutional member of the International Valuation Standards Council (IVSC), an independent, not-for-profit organization that acts as the global standard setter for the conduct and competency of professional valuers.

The BLGF is set to cooperate and collaborate with IVSC and its other members to establish a consistent and transparent framework for valuation practice worldwide; bridge the gap between local and international valuation standards; and provide locally relevant guidance, education, qualifications and quality control to assist properly trained appraisal and assessment professionals in identifying best practices.

FAO has been at the forefront of promoting these Guidelines and in assisting member nations in achieving transparent and participatory decision-making, in protecting people from arbitrary loss of tenure rights, and in ensuring that no one is subject to discrimination and that issues are resolved before they degenerate into conflict.



Strengthening national capacity for risk-based food import control within a One Health framework

Food products have been the third most valuable commodity group traded internationally, according to the report of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) International Trade Statistics 2014. Many countries, including the Philippines, import a significant proportion of their food supplies.

However, rapid urbanization, new processing and handling technologies, and emerging pathogens, among others, are driving the need for more effective food import controls. All food, including agricultural products that enter the countries are required to comply with protocols to ensure that they are fit for their intended use/consumption and contamination are mitigated or totally avoided.

Over the last decades, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has set two international agreements namely Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) that defined a framework for control measures to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in food trade. For the countries that are Members to WTO, including the Philippines, the international food standards developed by the Codex Alimentarius (Codex) have become significant food safety reference documents to follow the agreements.

Relatedly, according to the Food Outlook published in November 2017, the cost of importing food is set to rise in 2017 to USD 1.413 trillion, a six percent increase from the previous year, amidst the strong global food production trends. The higher import bill is being driven by the increasing demand for food and increasing freight cost rates. Countries including in Asia-Pacific are dealing with social and economic implications brought by rising import demands and, consequently, food prices.

FAO initiated a project to strengthen national capacity for risk-based food import control within a One Health framework in four

countries namely the Philippines, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri-Lanka, to provide guidance and introduce risk-based food import control systems with reference to Codex. Codex is a compilation of international standards, guidelines and codes of practice for food safety and trade.

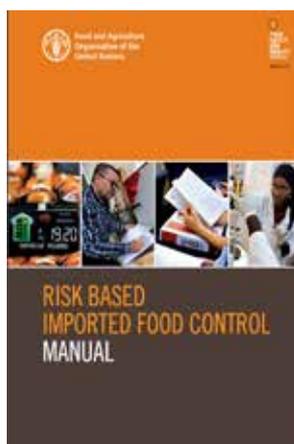
The Philippines' imported food control system has been governed by the Republic Act No. 10611, otherwise known as the Food Safety Act of 2013, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations as embodied in Joint Department of Health (DOH)-Department of Agriculture (DA) Administrative Order No. 1, s. 2015. Operating under the principle of consumer health protection and market access regulation, key government agencies such as the DA and the DOH lead the implementation of pertinent legislation, rules, and regulation on the Philippines' imported food control system.

Following the project's inception in the Philippines in 2017, FAO worked closely with the DA in conducting consultation meetings and field visits in major ports of entry for the drafting of the "National Situation Report: Imported Food Control in the Philippines". The report, which will soon be finalized, is an initial step to enable the Philippines to enhance and strengthen

its national imported food control system.

The report presents the current status for agriculture produce including livestock products (including relevant laws, regulations, relevant international/regional agreements, needs and gaps, among others). The information in the report is important to help relevant stakeholders to work more collaboratively and understand clearly the Philippines' progress on capacity development for imported food control.

FAO's support to this initiative is aligned with its thrust of assisting the Philippines in improving the policy/institutional environment for food and nutritional security through enforcement of rational food policies, including for food safety and early detection of threats to food/agriculture.



The approach for food controls in general has now shifted from being mostly reactive, based on end product inspection, to being preventative and risk based, taking into account the entire food chain. FAO has developed a global guidance for risk based imported food controls. The necessity of this guidance is based on the recognition that there is no "one size fits all" solution and that each country presents a particular set of challenges and opportunities. This FAO manual aims to support competent authorities in shaping a customized plan of action, based on an analysis of their specific country situation. Based on Codex texts, this guidance focuses on import control over food products. FAO recognizes that the impact of feed safety on food safety is essential. It should be noted that the majority of approaches developed in this manual for imported food control could also apply to feed.

Download a copy: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381e.pdf>



Belgian Ambassador to the Philippines Michel Goffin (right) and FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernandez (4th from right) visit a vegetable seedling nursery in Barangay Guimba in Marawi City.

©FAO/Noel Celis

FAO, Belgium help restore food security and agricultural livelihoods in conflict-affected communities in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

Communities in Marawi City and outlying municipalities in the Provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao have started on the road to recovery following the destruction left by the Marawi crisis that lasted from May to October 2017.

The conflict has taken a heavy toll on rural livelihoods and industries, as well as the food supply and agribusiness value chain on which smallholders depend for their daily subsistence.

While humanitarian relief continues, FAO, with support from the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium, has been delivering assistance to help returning and displaced farmers to re-establish their livelihoods and food security.

With a USD500 000 (Php25 million) contribution from the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium through the FAO-SFERA (Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities), FAO is distributing rice, corn and vegetable seeds, fertilizer, farming tools and broiler chicken production packages to 4 949 farming families in Marawi, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao.

Families in evacuation centers and those staying with their relatives and host communities, including agrarian reform beneficiaries, are among those who received essential agricultural inputs to

help augment their short-term food and income requirements.

Belgian Ambassador to the Philippines, Michel Goffin, together with FAO Representative in the Philippines, José Luis Fernandez, met with government, non-government organizations and communities in Marawi and Iligan cities during a visit on 19-20 March 2018.

“The Government of Belgium and its people hope that our contribution will help ensure that those affected by the Marawi crisis are able to recover as quickly as possible,” Ambassador Goffin said.

FAO has been working closely with the Task Force Bangon Marawi as a member of the sub-committee on business and livelihood and has conducted consultations with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries–Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DAF-ARMM), Department of Agriculture (DA), Mindanao Development Authority (Minda), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Provincial Government of Lanao del Sur, City Government of Marawi, IDP representatives (agrarian reform beneficiaries and non-agrarian reform beneficiaries), other sub-committee members, relevant partners and stakeholders.

Under a convergence initiative, FAO is also working with the World Food Programme (WFP), DAR, DAF-ARMM, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and other partners in the restoration and rehabilitation of the agriculture and agri-based livelihoods of agrarian reform beneficiaries in Marawi and surrounding areas.

Balo Mariga, a 66-year old farmer from Barangay Dulay West, Marawi City said: “We left everything (farm and farm assets) due to the Marawi siege and evacuated to Balo in Lanao del Norte. We returned only last December 2018 with no farm inputs to restart our livelihoods. Luckily, we received corn and vegetables seeds, and Urea fertilizer from FAO through our barangay captain. With the inputs, we were able to grow crops. I started harvesting eggplants and tomatoes. I am also expecting a good corn harvest by end of Ramadan.”

FAO’s emergency and recovery response to the Marawi crisis focuses on rehabilitating the agriculture and fisheries sector, restoring the food supply chain in affected communities, and helping farmers reclaim their lost livelihoods so that they can begin rebuilding their lives.

“We acknowledge that recovery and rehabilitation take some time, but the concerted efforts of government, non-government organizations, and

communities are already making positive impacts to the people affected by the crisis. We must continue working together to sustain the gains we have achieved so far," Mr. Fernandez said.

Working closely with various partners and stakeholders, FAO has also mapped out a short- to medium-term strategic response plan to restore the food supply and agribusiness value chain in Marawi and other affected municipalities and enable them to be better linked to regional markets.

Belgian Ambassador to the Philippines Michel Goffin (2nd from left) and FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernandez (left) distribute agricultural inputs to communities in Marawi City.



© FAO/Noel Celis

Portraits of Resilience

Beneficiaries of the livelihood assistance project supported by FAO and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium



©FAO/Mario Corado

Balo Mariga, a 66-year old farmer from Barangay Dulay West, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, is looking forward to more harvests from his vegetable garden.



©FAO/Noel Celis

Maira Palindok, a beneficiary of seedlings from FAO-Belgium Marawi Response Project, at a Food Security Convergence Nursery at Barangay Guimba, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.



©FAO/Noel Celis

Norhaya Angod, a beneficiary of seedlings from the FAO Marawi Response Project, harvesting chinese cabbages from her backyard vegetable garden at Barangay Dulay Proper, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.



©FAO/Noel Celis

Sobaira Yunos, a beneficiary of seedlings from FAO harvests radish from her backyard vegetable garden at Barangay Guimba, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.

FAO's Early Warning, Early Action Initiative: A new focus on responding to early warnings

Evidence shows that the frequency and intensity of climate-driven natural disasters and conflicts is increasing. Natural disasters are occurring nearly five times as often compared to 40 years ago, with increasing cost to local economies, livelihoods and lives. Due to changing dynamics of disaster management, governments, humanitarian actors and donors are facing new challenges to respond in a timely and effective way.

The challenge of triggering early actions in response to early warnings has received renewed focus in the past few years. Governments, both at the national and local levels, humanitarian and development partners have better understood the need – and the way – to take action before an emergency has escalated into a crisis. And it's indeed a wise investment: stepping in early to take action reduces both disaster losses and the costs of emergency response.

FAO is developing an Early Warning – Early Action (EWEA) System to translate warnings into anticipatory actions to reduce disaster impacts. It focuses on consolidating available forecasting information and putting plans and funding in place to enable quick actions when a warning is at hand.

EWEA enables FAO, together with government and humanitarian and development stakeholders, to act early before disasters happen and to mitigate or even prevent their impact. By lessening damages to livelihoods and protecting assets and investments, FAO can help local livelihoods become more resilient to threats and crises.

Expanding needs, competing priorities and scarce resources globally mean that

new tools are needed to enable smart, effective investments to lessen the impact of disasters before they occur. Being able to forecast and mitigate the impact of disasters is critical – not only to save lives and livelihoods but also to protect development gains.

Forecast-Based Financing initiatives such as FAO's EWEA are gaining increasing attention as the international community recognizes the importance of exploring new and more cost-efficient ways of disaster management.

How the system works

The Early Warning – Early Action System works at two levels, global and national.

Global – FAO develops a quarterly Early Warning – Early Action report with a list of countries at high-risk of food insecurity. Besides giving warnings, the report includes recommended early actions to take. If threats are imminent, special alerts are published.

National – FAO is working closely with national authorities to establish early warning systems and to develop indicators and evidence-based triggers for prompt action. Early action plans are also being drafted so they can swiftly be put in place as soon as a trigger is reached.

An Early Warning – Early Action Plan for the Philippines

The FAO Philippines Representation Office hosted a mission by FAO's technical experts in February 2018 to develop an EWEA Plan focused on agriculture for the Philippines.

The Philippines is one of the most disaster prone countries in the world. Between 1995 and 2015 alone, 274 disasters

were officially recorded. Weather and climate are major drivers of disaster risk in the Philippines, where a range of hazards impact the social, economic and environmental dynamics of the country. Common natural hazards include typhoons, drought, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and flooding.

The EWEA Plan aims to target and protect livelihoods across a range of agriculture activities which include: agriculture, livestock and fishers. FAO Philippines has over the past years worked closely with the Department of Agriculture in building DRR/ climate change adaptation capacities, both at national and regional/province levels, which included DRR plans and investments in Mindanao.

The EWEA plan focuses on Mindanao and more specifically the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and North Cotabato which are among the poorest and most vulnerable areas in the country, relying heavily on subsistence agriculture.

Drawing on the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management plan, as well as advice and information provided by Department of Agriculture – Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Operations Center, the first phase of the EWEA Plan addresses two natural hazards: drought and typhoons. The second phase is being planned to incorporate flooding and volcanic eruptions.

FAO also held a National EWEA Workshop with key government staff to outline the rationale and main technical components of the proposed EWEA Plan, as well as to present the draft plans for Mindanao and outline FAO's potential role in assisting with EWEA capacity building in the Philippines.



© LGU Canaman

Integrated Food Production Project helps Camarines Sur communities with high incidence of malnutrition

A resident of the Municipality of Canaman tends to her home garden established with the assistance of FAO Telefood Programme.

Canaman is a fourth class municipality located in the 3rd Congressional District of the province of Camarines Sur. It is a largely farming municipality. However, more than 2,300 hectares of the rice areas are affected by unfavorable conditions for production: 65% is drought prone, 32% is prone to saline intrusion and the 3% is submergence or flash flood prone. The area is also frequented by typhoons, which greatly affect farm production and consequently, further diminish the already meager household income of subsistence farmers and farm-workers.

Moreover, the 2013-2016 Early Warning System on Food and Nutrition Security (EWS-FNS) Survey results and analysis showed that more than 40% of the households are food insecure and more than 80% of the households do not have diverse diet. The survey results also showed that there are nutritious food items that scored low in consumption but can be readily produced by the households. These include roots and tubers, nuts and legumes, fruits and even eggs.

Although malnutrition incidence of the municipality in the past three years showed significant decrease, the figure is still significant at more than 15% of its population of 34 000. National and local government agencies have been implementing various programs and projects to address malnutrition and food insecurity in the municipality.

FAO provided assistance to the local government of Canaman through the Integrated Food Production Project funded under the FAO Telefood Programme to help enhance the

Residents of Canaman Municipality receive farm tools for their gardens established through the Telefood project.

capacities of communities to be food-sufficient. The project distributed agricultural inputs to increase the production of vegetables, poultry meat and eggs to provide additional income and supply of nutritious food to poor families.

The project benefited 45 households in 9 barangays (San Juan, Palo, Mangayawan, San Agustin, Haring, Dinaga, Baras, Tibgao and Pangpang) in Canaman which were identified to have high incidence of malnutrition but were not covered by the Bottom-up Budgeting-funded integrated community food production project.

The Integrated Food Production project was divided into three (3) components: vegetable production, fruit production and poultry (duck and chicken) production. Vermiculture production is also included to provide fertilizer and help in managing biodegradable wastes. The beneficiaries received farming tools, vegetable seeds, fruit seedlings as well as ducks and chickens.

This project also benefitted more than 200

members of the household-beneficiaries. The communities also have increased access to nutritious foods for sale produced by the beneficiaries.

Each beneficiary household was provided with inputs for vegetable and poultry production. For vegetable production, each beneficiary received 10 kinds of open-pollinated variety of vegetable seeds; roots and tuber planting stock; 1 piece each of sprinkler, bolo, transplanting trowel; organic and inorganic fertilizer. For poultry production, each beneficiary was provided with 10 pieces heads of ready-to-lay native chicken stocks, net for enclosure, layer mash, biologics, waterer and feeding trough.

The local government, through the Municipal Agriculture Office, provided technical trainings, supervision and other technical assistance to the household beneficiaries. The labor component for the construction of simple housing, chicken enclosure and other labor-related activities were contributed by the beneficiaries.



© LGU Canaman



© Yakap Kalikasan

Students planting vegetable seedlings in a school garden.

Building coalition with youth in sustainable development through agriculture, forestry and fishery

Young people ages 15-30 comprise almost 30%, or 29 million, of the Philippines population as of 2015. Those living in rural areas are often marginalized as a result of problems such as poverty, food insecurity, discrimination, displacement, and lack of education and opportunities.

Agriculture offers many livelihood opportunities. Yet, young people are discouraged due to various challenges associated with farming. FAO recognizes that there is a need to revive the youth's interest to pursue farming as a profession, for it is vital to future food security and agricultural development.

By their numbers alone, there is tremendous potential for youth to be involved in ensuring a sustainable future for the country. As such, FAO is working closely with the key government partners, CSOs, and other relevant stakeholders in implementing programmes and projects to encourage and engage young people to be the next generation of farmers, food entrepreneurs, scientists, agronomists, extension workers and government leaders, among others.

In the Philippines, FAO partnered with a local NGO Yakap Kalikasan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Pilipinas, Inc. (or Yakap Kalikasan) for the project, "Building Coalition with Youth in Sustainable Development through Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery". The project was implemented in the Philippines from October 2017 to February 2018, involving three youth groups in Laguna province namely Youth in Environment School Organization (YESO) of Kapayapaan Integrated School (KIS), YESO of Paciano Rizal Elementary School (PRES) and one informal youth group in a village in Bgy. Putho-Tuntungin, Los Baños.

Through series of orientations, workshops, field exposures, demonstrations, and close supervision from the agriculturists of Yakap Kalikasan, the youth groups designed and established organic gardens of vegetables and herbs from either idle or wastelands in certain project areas provided by the local government and schools.

Among the outcomes, the PRES youth garden were able to produce assorted vegetables which are being used for the nutrition program of the school. On the other hand, the KIS youth group converted the school garbage dump site into a productive and attractive garden. Lastly, the Putho-Tuntungin village youth carried out vertical and backyard gardening to maximize small extra spaces in housing project villages for backyard farming and aesthetic purposes. This has already been practiced by a number of youth members and has already been adapted by families in that area.

The youth takes pride in their use of inexpensive, ecological and aesthetically-sound agricultural techniques such recycling materials, utilization of kitchen and food wastes as natural soil enhancers, and application of improvised vegetable insecticides. The experiences of the youth groups – both successful and challenging – were considered lessons and inspiration as they shared during cross-structured garden visits, assessment workshops, forum and in a weekly livestream broadcast through Facebook, among others.

The project produced a video which highlights the activities that aimed to promote youth's contribution in sustainable development through ecological and innovative agriculture.

The youth groups also participated in a community immersion activity in a FAO emergency response project site in Baler, Aurora province for the project "Emergency Assistance to Restore Agricultural Production in Typhoon-affected Communities in Region III". Stories about this community exposure were written by selected young journalists and were featured in LB Times and The Philippine Star.

The last phase of the project was highlighted by the harvesting some vegetables like cucumber, lettuce, stringbeans, sweet potato, water-based spinach/kangkong, and sponge gourd or luffa/patola, Chinese cabbage/pechay.

The FAO assistance increased the level of awareness, appreciation and skills of the youth on agriculture in relation to long term goals, such as among others sustainable environment, food security, nutrition healthy life, equal opportunity to education, and responsible citizens and leaders.

According to Yakap Kalikasan, "It is time to recognize the capacity of the youth to responsibly take a role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and community development. It is time to trust their capacity to create positive change. This project may be small in scale but it made the adults (such as but not limited to parents, teachers, school heads and partner agencies) realize that the youth can do something essential for their families, school and the community, at large. More programs of this type must be collaboratively promoted and implemented by the key government agencies through the Philippines National Youth Commission Department of Education and Department of Agriculture."



©FAO/John Paul Dimacali

Field visit in Ifugao Banaue Rice Terraces.

Working with traditional agroecosystems communities in the Philippines

Increasing and evolving patterns of human food consumption, together with rapid urbanization, unregulated development expansion, unsustainable management of natural resources, replacement of locally adapted varieties by higher-yielding and more uniform varieties, shift from traditional to intensified production systems, environmental and climate change are all threats to the world's rich and highly adapted crop genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Traditional agroecosystems communities are increasingly facing unpredictable and recurrent climate adversaries. On agrobiodiversity, several of the indigenous crops are being lost at an alarming rate due to displacement by improved cultivars, conversion of agricultural lands into infrastructure and housing, deforestation, and adverse environmental conditions due to climate change such as strong typhoons, flooding, and prolonged droughts, among others.

Agrobiodiversity conservation project

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), are working together to implement a four-year project entitled "Dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in traditional agro-ecosystems of the Philippines." Recognizing the crucial importance of agrobiodiversity to food security and nutrition, the significance of traditional agriculture, the project aims to enhance, expand and sustain the dynamic conservation practices that sustain globally significant agricultural biodiversity in traditional agroecosystems of the country.

"FAO is supporting the government in enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in the Philippines. We see this effort as a way to ensure that the country's crop genetic

diversity are conserved and sustained, and it can continue to support quality food crop production for the population. The Agrobiodiversity project also aims to address the capacity building needs of the farming communities and to provide technical solutions to the many complex development issues" said FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernández.

The project supports dynamic conservation management of traditional agro-ecosystems while enhancing knowledge and understanding of the socio-cultural, ecological and economic importance of crop genetic diversity. The project envisions to help improve economic opportunities for local communities, safeguard food security and nutrition, increases the awareness of policy-makers, practitioners and consumers about the fundamental socio-economic and cultural heritage values of agrobiodiversity.

Currently, the pilot activities are being implemented in 17 communities located in Ifugao and South Cotabato provinces. The activities include training farmers on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, establishing and managing community seedbanks, enterprise development, and working with local and national policy-makers to mainstream the agrobiodiversity conservation.

Climate-smart agroecosystems

With an overarching goal of mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the Philippines and to foster a greater understanding of the importance of traditional agro-ecosystems in achieving sustainable agriculture while coping with climate change, a training on "Resiliency Assessment for Climate Smart Agroecosystems' Communities and the International Treaty" was held in Banaue, Ifugao on 13-15 March 2018.

The three-day training-workshop brought together 100 policy-makers, representatives

from government agencies, farmer leaders, indigenous peoples, representatives from academes and civil society organizations, and FAO Philippines. The training-workshop was organized to enhance the capacities; exchange of knowledge, views and experiences between and among the various stakeholders in managing traditional agriculture/ancient farming systems through Climate-Smart Agricultural practices; and how to assess and sustain resiliency of agroecosystems. Participants had the opportunities to understand and know-how the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and its main provisions, particularly related to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, and Farmers' Rights, as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty.

Former FAO Land and Water Division Director and World Agricultural Heritage Foundation President Dr Parviz Koohafkan and FAO-ITPGRFA Technical Officer Dr Mary Jane dela Cruz Ramos jointly facilitated the training discussions.

Dr Koohafkan discussed the concept of traditional agroecosystems which are foundations for biodiverse, resilient and productive agricultural systems.

"The assessment of resilience and ecosystem services in traditional agroecosystem has the potential for improved decision-making and reducing the risk of undesirable consequences of climate change and could improve the long-term environmental health, stability and sustainability" Dr Koohafkan said.

Traditional agroecosystem based on family farming, indigenous knowledge systems and agroecological principles can contribute to food and nutrition security and the conservation of agro-biodiversity and environmental resilience, as well as sustaining the local cultures, economies and societies.

Regional Technical Seminar on "Joining forces in the fisheries sector: promoting safety, decent work and the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing"



©FAO/Jaclyn Grey

FAO, together with the Apostleship of the Sea and with participation of the International Labour Organization, organized a regional technical seminar attended by at least 10 countries in South-East Asia from 21-23 March 2018 at the Heritage Hotel in Manila, Philippines. The event aimed to increase collaboration at national level between different authorities to ensure coherence and effective implementation of international instruments to promote responsible use and management of fisheries, resources along with fair treatment and decent work of fish workers across all fish value chains. FAO emphasizes that fisheries management is directly linked to the livelihoods and working conditions of fish workers in the sector.

The healthy status of world fisheries and aquatic resources and the well-being of fishing communities and fisher workers is central to FAO's policy work, its Blue Growth Initiative and FAO's Strategic Programme to Reduce Rural Poverty. The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted by the FAO Conference in 1995, included recommendations on how to promote health and safety at sea, insurance coverage, training and fish workers' participation.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing continues to be a major threat to many fisheries and productive ecosystems as well as to the wellbeing and resilience of many of the world's fisheries communities whose livelihoods and food security depend on this vital sector.

Presentation of Country Gender Assessment of the Agriculture and Rural Sector of the Philippines



©FAO

Gender equality is central to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO's) mandate to achieve food security for all by raising levels of nutrition, improving agricultural productivity and natural resource management, and improving resilience to natural and human-induced disasters.

In the Philippines, one of the specific initiatives of FAO to close the gender gap in agriculture and support rural women's empowerment is the conduct of the Country Gender Assessment (CGA) of the Agriculture and Rural Sector of the Philippines. The CGA aims to provide an analysis of gender dimensions in agriculture and rural sectors through exploring existing gender roles, relations and inequalities in agriculture, their causes and impacts on the socio-economic development of rural areas. The initial results of the CGA were presented to key government partners, non-government, and civil society stakeholders for further refinements on 21 January 2018 at the Linden Suites in Ortigas, Pasig City. The CGA is being finalized with technical support from FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

International Day of Forests 2018



©FAO/Edwin Loyola

Edwin Loyola of the Philippines is the 2018 winner of the International Day of Forests photo contest organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The winner will receive an award at the biennial session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) in Rome, Italy in July 2018.

FAO launched the photo contest ahead of this year's International Day of Forests (IDF), which had as its theme "Forests and sustainable cities". Competition entrants were asked to take a photo of forests and trees in towns and cities and the people who benefit from them.

A jury of 15 people judged more than 300 entries from 60 countries. Photos were judged according to their relevance to the IDF theme as well as for aesthetic and technical excellence. The best six photos were then posted on FAO's Facebook page for the public to vote for the winner in time for IDF. Read more here: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/news/94281/en/>.

FAO also joined the Philippines in celebrating the International Day of Forest (IDF) on 21 March 2018 at the Crown Plaza Galleria Manila, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, led by Secretary Roy Cimatu, through the Forest Management Bureau spearheaded a Symposium on Building Forests under the global IDF theme "Forests and Sustainable Cities". The event provided a platform to raise awareness on the importance of all types of woodlands and trees and celebrate the ways in which they sustain and protect life on earth.



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

FAO Representation in the Philippines

Email: FAO-PH@fao.org

Website: www.fao.org/philippines

Twitter: [@FAOPhilippines](https://twitter.com/FAOPhilippines)