

EXIT REPORT

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TA for Agricultural Extension and Mainstreaming UDP Schemes

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Rationale

The municipal extension network which consists of the Municipal Agriculturist, Agricultural Technologist, Barangay Extension Worker and the Sitio Extension Workers (also called farmers training group), has been recognized as the network that could efficiently* carry development messages and render extension services to remote places in the uplands. Although the network members were recipients of trainings on crop-livestock production and soil conservation they were not well oriented to do collective extension work.

This TA engagement was designed to build the mechanism that would make the municipal extension network function and self-regulate in the post UDP. It involved the municipal and provincial extension network members who defined their roles and planned for collective extension services.

This report presents the inputs of this TA pursuant to the terms of reference, particularly the formulation of the mechanism for the municipal extension network, as follows:

1. Review of the national and UDP extension models
2. Designing the methodology to build the mechanism
3. Review the progress of the MEP
4. Conduct of the workshop with network members
5. Analysis on the critical factor for the sustainability of the network

* Refers to the low cost and high output ratio from the municipal extension network

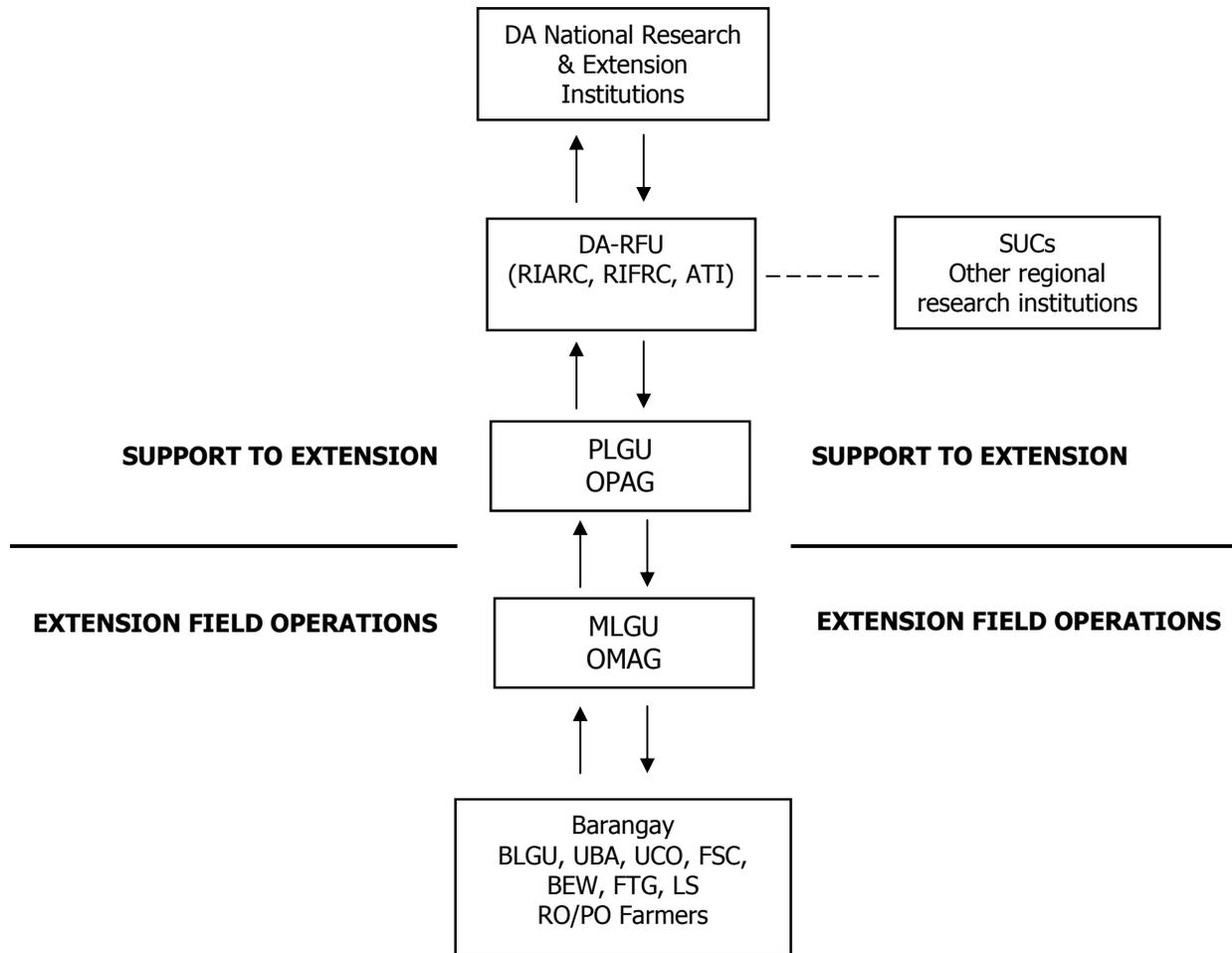
Accomplishments

The major achievement of this engagement is the expressed concern and commitment of the members to pursue collective extension services. This was brought about from the workshop wherein the network members defined and prescribed their roles and responsibilities, which they took as their commitment. This achievement is also projected to sustain due to the self-rewarding efforts of the members like the putting up of DFS farms for family security and as learning sites.

Review of the National and UDP Extension Models

The review was made to draw the basis in building the mechanism for the sustained efficiency of the municipal extension network. It looked into the national extension system (Figure 1) and municipal extension network (Figure 2), which were reported in previous engagement of this TA. The review on the national extension system focused on how to put into the mechanism, the strong linkages and support towards the municipal extension network while the review on the municipal extension network looked on the roles and relationship of members that could be improved for efficiency and sustainability of the network. The review of the municipal extension network, sorted out the key points to build the mechanism, such as: complementary roles among the MA, AT, BEW and FTG; operational structure of the network; frequency of meeting among members for feedback and improvement; reward system; operation of learning sites; support from the PLGU as the nearest institution in the national extension system. The key points were used as guide for the members to define and prescribe roles and responsibilities.

Figure 1. The National Extension System



Legend:

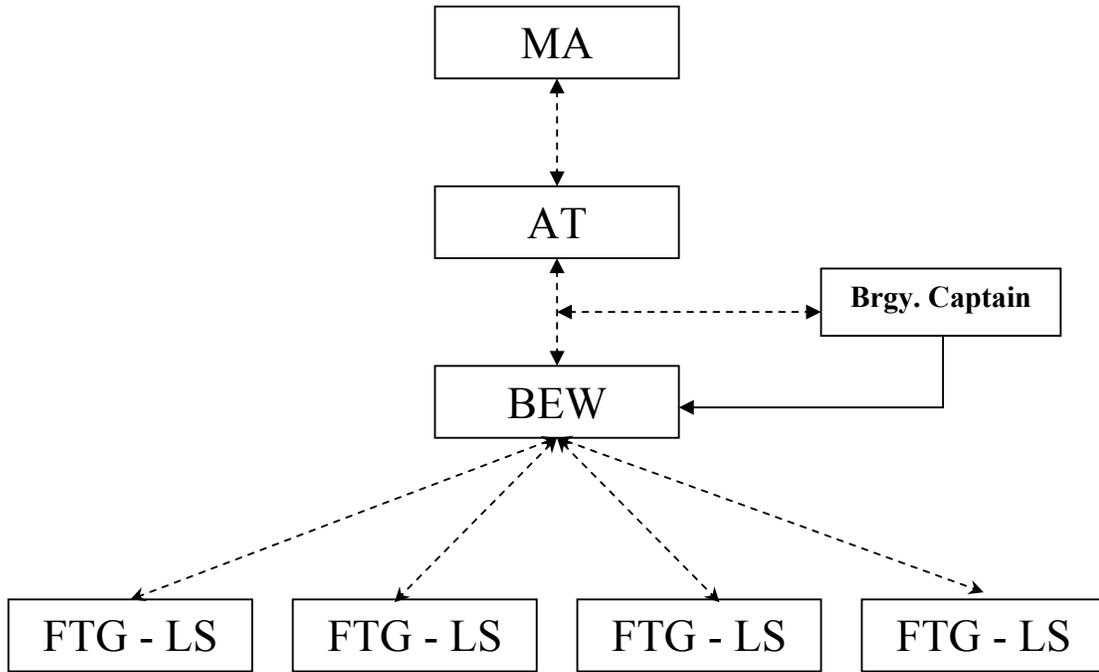


Downloading technology to users;



Uploading technological problems for research

Figure 2. The municipal extension network, operational structure



Designing the methodology to build the mechanism for the sustainable efficiency of the municipal extension network

The reviewed extension networks provided some insights as to content and processes to build the mechanism. They illustrated the need for common understanding of the task of the municipal extension network and role commitment of members, which could be achieved through workshops with each MLGU extension network.

The workshop design included the following:

- ◆ Listing the key points to build into the mechanism (e.g. roles, linkages, etc.)
- ◆ Defining roles in relation with members
- ◆ Frequency of meeting among the municipal extension network
- ◆ Frequency of meeting among the barangay extension network
- ◆ Frequency of AT's visit to the barangay
- ◆ Frequency of MA's visit to the barangays
- ◆ Group clarification of individual roles
- ◆ Providing motivation to voluntary work by the members
- ◆ Reward system thru honorarium and assistance to the putting up of DFS learning sites
- ◆ Downloading technology and assistance; uploading problems

The workshop design also included the review of the SUD model, the prevailing extension practices, the ideal task of the municipal extension network and the members, the Municipal Extension Plan (MEP), technical and financial support from the PLGUs. They were included as inputs in building the mechanism.

Review of MEP

The MEP for 2007 was presented by the MA of each MLGU. It showed the indicative action plans with budget to implement the extension scheme using the municipal extension network. Some MEPs were presented in specific terms while others were in general format, a sample MEP shown in Appendix B.

Majority of the MEPs were not yet implemented as of the time of presentation. As most MLGUs are IRA-dependent, MEP 2007 shall be implemented upon the release of the IRA and during the rainy season.

Conduct of the workshop with network members

Each workshop session was conducted after provision of the following inputs: (1) review the SUD model, (2) review of the prevailing extension practices, (3) the MEP, (4) the ideal network tasks and members' roles, (5) DFS as the current message in extension, (6) economic benefits from knowledge and skills as volunteers in the network. Each session served as good venue for group action in defining roles, and planning and commitment for collective extension work.

The workshop session proceeded as follows:

1. Broad input statements from facilitator on the ideal roles of each network member
2. Grouping the participants (MA, AT, BEW, FTGs) into cluster of barangays who collectively defined and prescribed responsibilities for the members on the key points
3. Each group reported workshop outputs thru their group reporter
4. The MA, AT, BEW and FTGs were made to comment the roles and responsibilities prescribed by the participants.
5. Commitment statements by groupings of MA, AT, BEW, FTGs after clarification of roles and responsibilities.

Workshop Outputs

The workshop outputs from the different networks were identical with some copies provided in Appendix C. They are summarized as follows:

Roles of the MA:

- ◆ Oversee the activities of the network
- ◆ Monthly visit to the barangays
- ◆ Hold semi annual conference with municipal extension network
- ◆ Weekly meetings with the ATs
- ◆ Coordinate municipal planning and budgeting for agriculture
- ◆ Access funds for BEW honorarium
- ◆ Fund sourcing for special projects on agriculture
- ◆ Establish technology and market linkage
- ◆ Maintain good relations with municipal officials
- ◆ Maintain good relations with OPAG/PAGRO and RRDEN
- ◆ Download technologies from RRDEN
- ◆ Download technical problems to RRDEN

Roles of the ATs:

- ◆ Oversee the activities of the BEW and FTGs
- ◆ Conduct trainings as needed
- ◆ Demonstrate farming skills individually and in groups
- ◆ Conduct monthly meetings with the BEWs and FTGs
- ◆ Demonstrate downloaded technology and submit
- ◆ Submit technical problems to MA
- ◆ Maintain good relations with barangay officials and farmers

Roles of BEWs:

- ◆ Establish and maintain good DFS farm for agri-business and learning site
- ◆ Assist ATs in extension activities
- ◆ Assist the FTGs in trainings, field demonstration
- ◆ Regularly attend sessions with Barangay Council
- ◆ Attend meetings with the barangay extension network
- ◆ Attend meetings with the municipal extension network

Roles of FTGs:

- ◆ Establish and maintain good DFS farm for agri-business and as learning site
- ◆ Assist ATs in monitoring projects
- ◆ Advise and assist fellow farmers in the layout of DFS
- ◆ Attend to meetings with the barangay extension network
- ◆ Attend meetings with the municipal extension network

Frequency of meeting with the municipal extension network

Twice a year

Frequency of meeting with the barangay extension network

Monthly

Statement of support from the PLGU

After each workshop session, the PLGU thru the OPAG or PAGRO assured the municipal extension network of their technical and financial assistance with advice to submit written requests ahead of time.

Turn-over of some useful materials to the network

Each workshop was culminated by the turning over of manuals, training materials, list of leaning sites and names of DFS cooperators to the MA with the network members. The turning over ceremony was of high significance to strengthen their commitment to pursue their tasks without the UDP. The turning over was usually done by the Co-Directors of UDP.

Analysis on the critical factor for the sustainability of the network

The network members, particularly the BEWs and FTGs demonstrated their interest and sincerity to perform their roles and responsibilities to increase farm production of their own and of their neighbors in the community. However, they as volunteers need the support and leadership from the MA thru the ATs. Their enthusiasm will be alive when there will be regular interaction and feedback among the municipal extension network members led by the MA.

The MA occupies the critical position for the sustained functionality of the municipal extension network which will spur widespread adoption of technology. As an agricultural country, the MA shall be the start of investments in agriculture, particularly on building his capability and sincerity to the service.

Recommendations

To strengthening the municipal extension network, the following activities shall be made before the close of the UDP:

1. Forums with the regional research and extension network members with the MA at the center position to firm up the linkage and support to the municipal extension network. The forums shall include reporting the outputs of this workshop by the MAs as gesture of commitment.
2. Revisit to the newly elected LCEs of MLGUs and PLGUs.

GLOSSARY OF ABEVIATIONS

AT	Agricultural Technician
BEW	Barangay Extension Worker
BLGU	Barangay Local Government Unit
CY	Calendar Year
DFS	Diversified Farming System
FTG	Farmers Training Group (Sitio Extension Worker)
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
LCE	Local Chief Executive
LS	Learning Site
LGU	Local Government Unit
MA	Municipal Agriculturist
MEP	Municipal Extension Plan
MLGU	Municipal Local Government Unit
OPAG	Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (same office as PAGRO)
PA	Provincial Agriculturist
PAGRO	Provincial Agriculturist's Office (same office as OPAG)
PLGU	Provincial Local Government Unit
PPO	Provincial Project Office