

Bohol and Cebu Farmers Benefit from CATP Agricultural Technologies

The Community Agricultural Technology Program (CATP) transfers agriculture technology and knowledge from university research centers to indigenous farmer groups in order to improve their productivity, farm income and overall economic well-being.

Technical assistance is transferred through trainings, seminars and workshops on topics such as forage management and feed production, soil sampling, corn research, cattle fattening and parasite control. A crucial component of the technology transfer process is the exchange visits among farmers from different villages in the project area. The visits facilitate the exchange of ideas, skills and technical know-how between farmers, encouraging them to work on improving agricultural practices by adopting technologies best suited to meet local needs and conditions and which require minimal capital expenditure.

Since the start of CATP, a twenty percent improvement in income from increased corn yield and cattle production was reported by farmer-beneficiaries of the *Mag-uugmad* Foundation Inc., an IIRR partner-NGO in Cebu Province, Philippines. *Mag-uugmad* applied technology developed by agriculture researchers at the Visayas State University with funding from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research.

In Bohol, 38 farmer-beneficiaries of the Soil and Water Conservation Foundation Inc. (SWCFI) reported a 57% average increase in income from goat herding after having adopted research on endoparasite control and the planting of improved grasses along the boundaries of their field lots.




Goats housed in improved sheds and fed with fodder and grasses.



Improved grasses planted in one of the farmer's experimental farms in Bohol.

"We have seen a lot of change at the micro-level among farmer groups," said Mike Luz, IIRR's president. "Now we would like to document this technology transfer process and develop the model further for application not only in the Philippines but also in other parts of Asia among farmers."

The CATP program will run through 2009. Currently, participants are documenting the agritechnology transfer process in a participatory manner and this, in turn, will be the foundation for a writeshop that will lead to a publication. 

Pastoralist Education Project Continues to Spur Enrollment

Across the northern stretches of Kenya, from the border of Uganda to the south of Ethiopia, pastoralists move their livestock and camels in a continuous, year-round search for water and grazing lands. Formal models of education are incompatible with their nomadic lifestyle and, unsurprisingly, school enrollment is extremely low. In Kenya and Ethiopia, the national gross enrollment rates are 91% and 90% respectively, compared to 40% and 35% in pastoralist communities. IIRR is helping to address this educational enrollment gap through its *Pastoralist Education Program (PEP)*. PEP facilitates the enrollment of pastoralist children and adult learners in "learning centers" or non-formal schools in what has become a successful cross-border learning endeavor in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya.



Pastoralist students enjoying their studies.

Over the past two years, IIRR has worked in fourteen pastoralist communities through nine locally-based organizations to address the distinctive educational needs of pastoralists. Involvement of school management committees and district education offices ensure local ownership of learning centers established by the project.

As a result of PEP, 25 learning centers, 13 pre-school classes and 10 functional adult learning centers have been established in Kenya. In Ethiopia, 23 learning centers and 15 functional adult learning centers have been set up. All 48 learning centers have been recognized by the Ethiopian and Kenyan Ministries of Education, thus enabling access to government support in the form of subsidies for school feeding programs, newly constructed classrooms, teachers' salaries and books.

The Pastoralist Education Program has enrolled 1,046 children in Kenya and 1,631 in Ethiopia, of which nearly 50% are girls. Taking into consideration that fewer than 25% of pastoralist girls are enrolled in the formal school system, this is a significant achievement. Furthermore, while the

"We need to build a system that is flexible and responsive. For instance, mobile schools made up of semi-structures or tents are the model for communities that move about in very remote areas in search of water and pasture. Using such models, it becomes possible to enroll children that are left out of the formal school system."

- Mengistu Edo Koricha, Senior Advisor to the Pastoralist Education Program

Enrollment	Kenya			Ethiopia			Learning Centers	
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Kenya	Ethiopia
School age children	576	470	1,046	976	655	1,631	25	23
Pre-school children	107	93	200	-	-	-	13	-
Adults	51	316	367	367	192	537	10	15
Facilitators	35	10	45	45	15	50		
Districts	6			8				

transition rate from year-to-year at the primary school level in the *formal* school sector is 63% for girls, the transition rate for girls in PEP has been 94%.

This significant increase in enrollment and retention rate can be attributed in part to IIRR’s use of innovative models of learning, including:

- Development and implementation of alternative curricula with a focus on life skills relevant to the pastoralist way of life, such as conflict mitigation, disaster risk reduction and drought cycle management;
- Training of local facilitators/teachers in learner-centered educational methods;
- Integration of income generating activities in adult

literacy classes;

- Integration of local dress and use of local language into the classroom environment in an effort to make learners feel comfortable; and
- The creation of mobile schools that travel with the community, after-hour classes that allow for shepherding during the day and feeder schools that enable students to attend classes closer to home.

Despite severe drought, unpredictable food shortages and conflict over limited resources, the Pastoralist Education Program continues to grow and demonstrate that education – if appropriately adapted to the unique needs of specific communities – is of great import to families, regardless of region, culture or tradition. ♣

Gender and Entrepreneurship Training Course held in Pakistan

Twenty-five participants from the Farm Forestry Support Project (FFSP) and their partner NGOs attended a 7-day international training course on gender and entrepreneurship conducted by the Regional Center for Asia in Pakistan. The training, held at the Human Resource Development Center of the Sarhad Rural Support Programme in Peshawar, was led by Sheilah Vergara, program manager of IIRR’s Community Agricultural Technology Program (CATP). Sheilah served as the resource person for gender and community enterprise. Muhammad Azam Farooq, Vice-Chancellor of the Institute of Management Sciences in Peshawar, was co-facilitator and resource person for entrepreneurship and business planning.



Meeting held with women beneficiaries engaged in microenterprise projects in Haripur.

The training focused on how gender concerns could be integrated into enterprise development activities among the projects run by FFSP partners. Business planning inputs looked at how women could receive guidance and support in the implementation of microenterprise projects.

FFSP is an initiative funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). FFSP assists small farmers in the rainfed Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan. The project supports entrepreneurship development in the farm forestry support

chain including managing forest seed nurseries, plantation of local forest species, and wood utilization. The initiative also helps forest-farmers with technology on how to grow other non-timber forest species from non-timber trees and bushes.

Participants included FFSP staff members, Intercooperation Pakistan, the Pind Hashim Khan Network, the Dehi Development Society, the Mashaal Development Organization, Community Development and Gender and Development, Women Education Development, Khwendo Kor, Strengthening Participatory Organizations, and the Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority.

IIRR’s relationship with FFSP began when FFSP participated in an international training course held at the Y. C. James Yen Center in late 2007. ♣

Disaster Risk Reduction in the Horn of Africa

Building on the success of the two-year Kenya Drought Cycle Management project, IIRR and Cordaid signed a two-year grant to extend the work to Ethiopia and Uganda. The new *Horn of Africa Capacity Building for Effective Participation in Disaster Risk Reduction* project will contribute to improved disaster resilience among communities in Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda. Specifically, this project intends to improve the organizational



Hazard ranking by Maasai women in Narok.

effectiveness of Cordaid partners in disaster risk reduction and mitigation strategies. Furthermore, the project aims to demonstrate that local actors and vulnerable communities can be instrumental in safeguarding themselves against the negative and debilitating effects of manmade and natural disasters such as drought, famine and conflict.

Eight partners in Ethiopia, seven in Kenya and six in Uganda will be involved in the project. Specific project activities will include:

- Disaster risk assessments in six pilot communities;
- Customized trainings for each implementing partner in areas such as community-managed disaster risk reduction facilitation, lobbying and advocacy, and documentation of processes and impact; and
- Cross-border exchange visits at the country, regional, district, community and organizational levels.

IIRR's learning communities under this project will also serve as action research centers where innovative and promising practices can be tested, demonstrated, modified and replicated. Implementing partners and the community organizations will use lessons learned to influence disaster risk reduction policy review and formulation in the three target countries as part of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2005-2010) established under the leadership of the African Union (AU) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). 

HIV/AIDS in the Workplace

IIRR's *HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming* project assists Ethiopian NGOs in developing and implementing HIV/AIDS workplace policies and mainstreaming them throughout their organizations. The goal is to create an awareness of HIV/AIDS in the workplace and to reduce the vulnerability of employees and their families. Outputs of the project include a workplace program that focuses on in-house prevention and health maintenance of personnel. The project is also contributing to national efforts of the government of Ethiopia in combating and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS.

With the continued impact of HIV/AIDS on communities throughout Africa, IIRR, in partnership with the Dutch-based Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation (ICCO), has expanded the three-year HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming project to include nine more partner organizations, bringing the total to 20.

Thus far, this project has been able to successfully work with partners on developing HIV/AIDS workplace policies that facilitate a culture of awareness, openness, acceptability and support. Another 12 are conducting HIV/AIDS risk assessments, which help the partner organization shed light on how the HIV/AIDS pandemic affects their workforce. All of the partner organizations have incorporated gender equality issues in their policy and practices and a number have initiated free counseling and testing services for their employees and dependants. Two partners have established a secure fund to support their infected and affected staff. Staff members contribute a fixed portion of their salaries each month which is pooled as capital for the fund.

Monthly discussions among the partners regarding key HIV/AIDS issues have encouraged a pro-active culture of openness and transparency that is breaking the silence about the disease in the workplace, while partners have started to address misconceptions that lead to exposure to the disease.

To ensure the continuous follow-up on HIV/AIDS implementation activities, partner organizations have assigned HIV/AIDS focal persons and established internal HIV/AIDS committees. These committees and focal points form the core of a learning network that shares experiences, documents best practices and which eventually hopes to replicate such learning beyond the IIRR community to communities across the African continent. 

IIRR Introduces Writeshop Process in Pakistan

Eight years after first introducing forest-farm technology in Pakistan, the Forest Farm Support Project (FFSP) assembled project partners to create a publication on market-oriented farm-forestry development. To facilitate the writing, IIRR's Regional Center for Asia led a weeklong participatory *writeshop* to develop nine case studies that will comprise several chapters of the book.

"We need to reflect on our experience in farm forestry and begin to start sharing this with partners in an organized and systematic way," says Fauzia Malik, FFSP project coordinator. Fauzia served as the overall writeshop coordinator working with Dr. Jane Carter, knowledge management coordinator of Intercooperation Bern in Switzerland and Sheilah Vergara, IIRR program manager.



Photo of writeshop participants taken at The Green Retreat Hotel, Nathiagali, Pakistan.


The case studies will cover a range of subjects including:

- Redefining Farm Forestry
- Value Chains in Farm Forestry
- Evolution of Interest Groups
- The Culture of Local Service Provision
- Integration of Trees in Farming Systems
- Dryland Management (as an opportunity for livelihood improvement)
- Human Institutional Development (as a basis for sustaining local initiatives)
- Human Rights-Based Approach in Farm Forestry Practice
- Working in Conflict-Prone Areas: Strategies and Lessons Learned.

"We were very serious and busy in the writing and refining of the draft cases," said Fauzia. *"With the inputs and insights of the writeshop group, we produced a draft output after only five days and are excited that we will be able to release the book by the end of the year."*

The writeshop is a community approach to capturing learning from the field and which facilitates the creation and distribution of publications documenting best practices in rural development. Over the past decade, numerous writeshops have produced more than 60 publications documenting a variety of topics and policy recommendations critical to rural development.

Writeshops bring to the forum multiple perspectives and often conflicting views. Silent farmers and indigenous practitioners have the opportunity to be heard alongside the experts who bring their technical knowledge and practical hands-on experience.

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Bio-Intensive Gardens (BIG) for School Health and Nutrition in the Philippines

High levels of undernourishment and malnourishment are often seen among Philippine elementary school children. This has a direct impact on the achievements and learning capacity of students. Among school aged children 6-10, 30% are underweight and 41% show signs of stunted growth for their age group. Two-thirds of elementary school students are iodine deficient and over one-third are anemic.

Due in part to low levels of nutrition, high dropout rates can be seen in school children in grades one, two and three. According to the Philippine Department of Education, approximately 24% of children who enter grade one will not make it to grade four.



Composting in support of Bio-Intensive Gardens.


In order to provide a school environment that facilitates retention and learning, in-school nutrition programs are imperative. While the Department of Education supplies schools with food during 90-120 days out the school year, children go without for the remaining 85-115, thus creating a significant gap that impedes educational attainment.

IIRR is addressing this gap by implementing a strategy known as Bio-Intensive Gardening (BIG) in schools. BIG uses available land to grow produce on a year-round basis. Harvesting produce in these gardens not only teaches students practical

farming methods, but also provides for their nutritional needs on a year-round basis without gaps in distribution.

BIG is a biological (as opposed to chemical) form of agriculture in which a small area of land is intensively cultivated, using nature's own ingredients to rebuild and maintain the soil productivity. Efforts to improve the soils' capacity to nurture and sustain plant life are the heart of this agriculture methodology.

The history of IIRR's work using BIG dates back to 1984 when IIRR introduced BIG as a response to widespread hunger and starvation on Negros Island in the Philippines during the food crisis, which was brought about by the collapse of the sugar industry. As part of a comprehensive hunger mitigation strategy, IIRR (supported by UNICEF funding) worked with local communities to establish thousands of bio-intensive gardens throughout the province. BIG is now being reintroduced at the school level to support in-school health and nutrition programs.

In 2007, IIRR introduced BIG to students at the Sisters of Mary School (SOM) in Cavite as part of the curriculum. The SOM schools are live-in facilities that provide education for thousands of boys and girls from very poor families from all over Luzon Island. This year, IIRR began collaborating with local school boards to implement BIG programs for many more additional in-school nutrition programs. Work began with the Davao City local school board in Mindanao to set up gardens in 50 public elementary schools. School boards from the provinces of Sorsogon, Albay, Camarines Sur, and Cavite have also collaborated with IIRR to implement BIG programs in their respective districts. 



Students working the Bio-Intensive Garden at the Sisters of Mary School in Cavite.

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Many thanks for helping IIRR and the communities we work with preserve the natural resources that are so crucial to our survival.

IIRR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-governmental global development organization. Our Regional Center for Asia is in the Philippines, and the Africa Regional Center is in Nairobi, Kenya. The headquarters is also in the Philippines, with a small liaison office in the United States that operates out of New York. Contributions are tax deductible for US taxpayers to the full extent allowed by law and may be sent to: IIRR-US Office, 40 Exchange Place, Suite 1111 New York, NY 10005. IIRR's annual report is available upon request. Contact us at us.office@iirr.org or +1-212-880-9147.