CIDA visit to Southeast Sulawesi

Representatives from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) visited AgFor’s site in Southeast Sulawesi in November 2012. The field trip included the villages of Lirmumara, Simbume, Andresengga, Dangga and Wonuahua to meet and discuss with farmers’ groups. ‘The visit enables us to evaluate progress made since the project began,’ said Irawati Tjandra, another researcher involved in the study.

In addition, farmers mentioned that practising agroforestry by combining crops and trees on their farms helps to improve their income. The farmers also revealed challenges and problems faced in the field, such as pest and disease attacks on cocoa and pepper trees and how long droughts often destroy seedlings.

The discussion with farmers not only gave a chance to hear of progress but simultaneously served as an opportunity to gain valuable feedback that can be used to improve the project.

During the visit, a meeting with Konawe District Planning and Development Agency was also conducted in order to strengthen the collaboration with the local government, ensuring that the AgFor project continues to synchronize effectively with local strategies.

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- New vulnerability assessment method applied in AgFor project
- Communication survey in South and Southeast Sulawesi
- Farmer Agroforestry School on garden management
- Marketing and entrepreneurship training
- Farmer demonstration trial meeting
- Casava focus group discussion in Kolaka district

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CIDA and AgFor team visit farmers’ demonstration plot in Lawunua,

One of the farmers with postcard in the communication survey.

Furthermore, the communication survey sought to recognize farmers’ preferred methods and media for obtaining agricultural and agroforestry knowledge. The researchers wanted to better understand the role of ‘farmer-to-farmer’ communication as a method applied in extension work. The farmers-to-farmer method has been widely applied, including in several projects conducted by the World Agroforestry Centre in Indonesia. This method emphasizes interpersonal communication between farmers to transfer information, and is considered by many as a very efficient and effective way of sharing knowledge.

At the same time, data about media preferences has continually in motion.

keeping the knowledge transfer process to farmers face-to-face interactions were considered the favorite media ownership, usage and habits’, said Enggar Paramita, another researcher involved in the study. ‘Our early findings note cellphones, televisions and radios in the top-three list of media ownership.

Beyond that, audio-visual, practical sessions and face-to-face interactions were considered the favorite communication methods among the respondents,’ Paramita said.

Reports from the communication survey will be available later this year, complete with recommendations on alternatives for effective and sustainable ways of keeping the knowledge transfer process to farmers continually in motion.

February 2013

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- New vulnerability assessment method applied in AgFor project
- Training workshops: building the capacity of rural people
- Communication survey in South and Southeast Sulawesi

CIDA visit to Southeast Sulawesi

Photo by: ICRAF / Enggar Paramita

Agenda

April

- Farmer demonstration trial meeting
- Farmer Agroforestry School on garden management
- Marketing and entrepreneurship training
- Market vulnerability assessment for South Sulawesi
- New vulnerability assessment method applied in AgFor project

One of the goals of the AgFor project through its environment component is improved, integrated management of landscapes and ecosystems by local stakeholders through enhanced capacity.

Local stakeholders, who include governments, NGOs and communities, need to be able to identify vulnerabilities in their natural, food and income resources. Distinguishing the vulnerabilities will allow stakeholders to adapt to fluctuations in weather and markets. AgFor researchers believe that conducting a vulnerability assessment is crucial in order to identify the exposure to risks and find ways to adapt.

The assessment method the researchers developed is known as Capacity Strengthening Approach to Vulnerability Assessment (Casava) that is specifically designed to understand the causal links between hazards, capacities and impacts. Casava will help to reveal vulnerabilities and subsequently help to reduce them by strengthening the capacity to adapt to shocks.

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Preparatory meeting at Lawunua, one of the AgFor project’s sites.

New vulnerability assessment method applied in AgFor project

Casava focus group discussion in Kolaka district.

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Southeast Asia Regional Office

CIDA and AgFor team visit farmers’ demonstration plot in Lawunua

Photo by: ICRAF / Enggar Paramita
In the second year of the AgFor project, the governance component accomplished notable progress, which can be seen in the series of training workshops that helped to develop new governance models.

A series of training workshops was conducted from July until October 2012 across the AgFor project’s sites, including Kayu Loe, Labbo, Lepmil in Southeast and Balang in South Sulawesi, Nipa-nipa, Tawanga-Sanggona, Ladongi, Simbune, Asaki and Lumbende, in improving participants’ understanding about good management of natural resources. An active learning approach using games and simulations was incorporated into the materials in order to make the message easier to understand. And the workshop did succeed in improving participants’ understanding about good governance because they were able to confidently develop a draft work plan at the end of the event.

The first training workshop on participatory governance was conducted in June 2012 in Makassar. It was aimed at building the capacity of partners in facilitation methods related to governance issues in participatory empowerment, making social and political changes to adapt the fluctuations. Such a survey was carried out by environment facilitators supported by local scientists to understand local perceptions and knowledge on alternatives for effective and sustainable ways of doing livestock. Reports from the communication survey will be available later this year, complete with recommendations.

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