



Canada
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◀ A female abaca producer in Antique showing how stripping is done in the farm.

Photo taken by Dennis Amata, CARE Philippines

TYPHOON HAIYAN RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE (THRA) PROJECT MID-TERM EVALUATION (MTE)

Background

The “**Typhoon Haiyan Reconstruction Assistance in the Philippines (THRA)**” is a four-year initiative (2015–2019) implemented by CARE Philippines and CARE Canada with funding from the Government of Canada through the Global Affairs Canada (GAC). It supports the economic reconstruction of people affected by typhoon Haiyan that struck the Visayas Region in November 2013. The THRA Project aims to address the root causes (such as the traditional gender stereotyping of roles; products or services inappropriate to the needs and capacities of men and women; weak governance) that are preventing men and women’s access to knowledge, skills, products and services, with a particular focus on strengthening women entrepreneurs and community-managed enterprises. CARE’s interventions intend to contribute to the economic well-being of women and men living in remote rural areas where the economy and infrastructure were severely affected by typhoon Haiyan. The project works in 10 focus and 22 non-focus municipalities in Antique, Iloilo and Leyte, applying a value-chain development approach on the following commodities: abaca, cassava and other rootcrops, herbs, seaweed and vegetables.

This paper presents the synopsis of the Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) report covering the period from September 2015 to February 2017.

Project approaches

- Selected value chains of commodities with high potential to provide additional income for project participants are the entry points of the project.
- A facilitating partner (FP), with technical support from CARE Philippines’ field staff and Quezon City-based specialists, leads the implementation in each of the provinces.
- The facilitating partner (FP) mobilizes and supports Community-Based Development Facilitators (CBDFs) to train community members.
- The project focuses on the capacity building of stakeholders within the value chain.
- The marketing of products is facilitated by the establishment, and strengthening of lead enterprises for each of the commodities.
- The stakeholders in the different functions and enabling environment are encouraged to meet as Provincial and Municipal Technical Quality Working Groups (PTQWG and MTQWG).
- Capacity building and advocacy with local government units for gender-responsive and risk-informed support services to support value chain development.

MID-TERM EVALUATION (MTE) HIGHLIGHTS:

Findings, Lessons learned, Challenges and Key recommendations

Findings

Output-level achievements [updated as of March 31, 2017]

20,250 producers and entrepreneurs (13,990 females, 2,530 males) trained on Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED)

13,251 producers and entrepreneurs trained on financial literacy (FinLit) and gender awareness trainings

86 Community-Based Development Facilitators (55 females, 31 males) trained and currently providing services

6 micro-insurance and micro-finance products promoted or modified for targeted clients

22 technology and common services -9 in production and 13 in processing—accessed by targeted clients

6 commodity value chain studies completed (abaca, cassava, seaweeds, vegetables, herbs and moringa)

151 barangay-level risk-informed, gender-responsive value chain orientation and analysis workshops completed

78 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) clustered and operational for specific purpose such as production, marketing, and usage of technology

495 technical assistance on value chain related challenges completed

12 formal agreements signed for marketing, provision of farm tools and equipment, and use of common service facilities

4 Community-Based Development Facilitators (CBDFs) formally recognized through executive order in Laua-an, Antique

20 Business Development Service and Financial Service (BDS & FS) providers identified for partnerships in providing risk-informed and gender-responsive products and services to assisted communities

87 Business Development Services and Financial Services (BDS & FS) staff (65 females, 22 males) trained

154 key local government unit (LGU) staff (108 females, 46 males) trained

6 enterprise-supportive policies passed in Antique and Iloilo

Outcome-level achievements

- The overall number of respondents and therefore their households living above the poverty threshold increased from 5% to 23%, or almost achieving the target of 25%.
- Despite the big overall improvement, the changes vary across the value chains: The biggest change is reported among cassava growers (38% of households above poverty line compared to 6% during baseline) followed by seaweeds growers from 3% to 13%. Abaca and herbs growers experienced only small progress towards the target from 3% to 8% and from 11% to 17%, respectively. There is no change in poverty incidence among vegetable growers.
- Male respondents (30%) are providing higher income figures than women (19%) during the Midline survey. At time of the Baseline the figures were almost the same (6% against 4%).
- Overall, average income has increased across all respondents in the five value chains: abaca, cassava, seaweeds, vegetables and herbs, noting increased income from agricultural and entrepreneurial activities specifically for cassava and vegetable value chains. Though overall income increased for families in the abaca, seaweed and herb value chains, the contribution of these value chains to family income decreased.
- The higher overall income could be attributed to other important livelihood activities like rice, corn and banana production; the provision of labor services in agriculture and construction; and women employed as domestic workers in the same localities or in other areas.
- There is an increase in male and female participation in sustainable economic activities. Males' participation increased from 39% to 58% while females increased from 46% to 49%.
- At the same time, the latest survey also showed increased shared responsibilities between men and women from 11% to 39%. Budgeting and marketing in particular have traditionally been associated with women; hence shifts that indicate more men involvement or shared roles are viewed favorably.

Good practices

- The value chain approach proved to be appropriate to the prevailing context. The choice of the selected commodities with high market potential provided focus to the project, and motivation of affected communities to participate. The conduct of gendered value chain studies with stakeholders identified key issues to address, allowing purposeful targeting of actors in the enabling environment and providers of market services.
- The work with the government agencies provides mutual benefits, skills and income opportunities for association members, and facilitates access of agencies to communities, a link they do not necessarily have. Sustaining and enhancing this engagement should be a priority in the remaining project timetable.
- The incorporation of gender equality, risk management and governance topics within existing training modules like the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) can have quick results towards promoting gender equality.
- The project has designed a module referred to as 'Couple Sensitization' to encourage gender equality within the households. There is feedback from participants that the training successfully increases understanding and removes misconceptions and stereotyping of the opposite sex. The module is a low-cost and effective activity to establish more equality in households and livelihoods.
- The project works through three facilitating partners (FPs) for project implementation. The project benefits from the local knowledge and strong links of facilitating partners (FPs) with provincial or municipal governments or having as their core activity the provision of micro-finance or other support services to members.
- The bulk of the trainings like Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) and Financial Literacy (FinLit) are conducted by the Community-Based Development Facilitators (CBDFs). The CBDFs are recruited within the Project locations and receive training in the required modules and supervised by project officers before they independently or in pairs conduct the trainings. The approach creates capacity among communities and continuing support opportunities beyond the project life.

Lessons learned

Capacity building and mainstreaming

- The use of existing modules and community facilitators for the training have resulted in immediate gains to the project. The capacity building activities contributed to the improved beneficiaries' individual business skills even beyond the priority value chain.
- Incorporating gender equality and risk reduction in the C-BED, Financial Literacy (FinLit) and other trainings is an effective approach in mainstreaming. The Mid-term evaluation records an increase of shared responsibilities among women and men in all economic tasks. Risk management, on the other hand, was incorporated early on in training, and mitigation and preparedness activities for climate change such as in organic production, promotion of forest preservation, and soil conservation technologies.
- Training CEFs and individuals in management and organizational

leadership skills are means of promoting more inclusive governance of formal and informal community organizations, and developing community abilities to engage official government structures.

Project management

- A key role of municipal officials is the formulation and adoption of supporting policies. The conduct of forums are an important tool, but more efforts may be needed in some municipalities to engage the executive and key department heads to institutionalize support in policy before the end of the project.
- Regularity and aligning surveys in accordance with the crop production cycles. If a change in income is to be measured, surveys should be aligned with crop production cycles, or data gathering needs to be done on a regular basis. Existing documentation processes of CEFs may be a good entry point to establish this.

Challenges

- CARE experienced difficulties in finding the right service providers to conduct technical assistance and studies such as Environmental Safeguard Studies.
- Poor product quality and selling outside the associations affect the ability of lead enterprises to meet commitments to purchase orders.
- There are challenges in quality of monitoring and evaluation data in terms of question formulation, timing of surveys and sampling to better present achievements at the end of the project.

Key recommendations

On productivity and competitiveness

- Conduct business continuity planning with all the groups to prepare them for crop failures or disasters.
- Community-based vulnerability and capacity assessments can be used to identify suitable and viable areas for production and processing facilities.
- Sufficient technical guidance and mentoring of farmer groups needs to be provided, especially in the cassava production where wrong intercropping technologies were adopted.
- Review the existing 'gendered value-chains' with women and men, and discuss desired changes in their participation and factor these into the business continuity planning.
- Continue the roll-out of financial literacy training among all CEF group members, and other interested community members.
- Develop and distribute among the CEFs and communities IEC material on production techniques for display and distribution in focus and non-focus barangays.

- Incorporate gender and risk management practices in CEF capacity assessments conducted by the FPs.
- Early and broad advertisement of the vacancies or possibly a contract packaging all commodities to a competent services provider may be considered by the management to address challenges in finding the right service providers.

On value chain governance

- Conduct capacity assessment with all CEFs. Transparency and accountability towards members are identified as important areas to strengthen. Required activities in relation to these recommendations are already included in the operational plans.
- Continue working with the FS providers on promotion strategies of new and existing loans services and micro-finance products to CEF members.



Female producers harvesting their seaweeds in Agdaliran, Iloilo.

Photo taken by Dennis Amata, CARE Philippines



In Leyte, cassava producers drying their chips using solar dryer.

Photo taken by Dennis Amata, CARE Philippines

>> continuation, key recommendations...

- Explore private sector participation/ leadership in the value chain Technical Quality Working Group (TQWG). Maximize existing development planning venues at the provincial level rather than having separate meetings for the TQWG.

On strengthening the enabling environment

- The continuing engagement, and where possible active participation, of government agencies with the Project should be encouraged. The local and national government agencies will be a constant factor beyond the project and enabling/ supporting policy development need sufficient time to become executive instruments.
- Continue to develop and sustain the work with the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) and CBDFs as facilitators in registering farmers in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and ensure enrollment in crop insurance as enunciated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC).
- Complete the fora in all the municipalities to ensure commitment of the MLGUs to development of resilient livelihoods, and for policy development. Further assess existing successful projects with strong MLGU participation and organize exchange visits.

- Pursue the mobilization of additional funds for value chain development, especially in production and processing expansion, from national agencies like the Department of Agriculture.
- Continue to orient and promote value chains among municipal officials such as those involved in gender focal point system, agriculture and livelihood/enterprise development as a framework for providing services and support to their constituents.

On inter-firm relations

- Training and orientation of producers in product requirements. This can include the exposure of potential buyers to the production area to increase partnership, understanding and support.
- FPs to strengthen the loyalty and resources of the association members preventing 'emergency sales' of members when they are in need of cash, and preventing the sale of products of poor quality to other buyers that can jeopardize the purchase orders of lead enterprises.
- Continue strengthening the links of lead enterprises and marketing associations with potential buyers. Support for example the participation of lead enterprises in agribusiness or sectoral trade fairs.

On gender mainstreaming

- Build on the existing capacity of FPs, for example TSKI's tools and experience, in the conduct of

capacity assessments for CBOs and business continuity planning. The tools can be further developed to include gender mainstreaming and risk management capacity.

- Roll out of the Gender Sensitization for Couples in all project areas. Adjust the process to ensure that both wives and husbands can attend, and are provided access to sufficient support that would enable both to appreciate and practice positive shifts in gender roles.
- Conscientization for gender equality is an area that requires more attention. Both women and men have had experiences under the project that can be built on further to sensitize them on the inappropriate and ineffectual nature of sexism.
- More vigorous THRA work with local governments and government agencies to create spaces and opportunities for women to ensure their welfare through public goods and services, and engage in governance and development processes to expand and strengthen control over power relations. In the course of this transformation, improvements in individual and organizational capacity can be gained to address imbalance of power between men and women in the public and private domains.



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