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MINDANAO

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# Bringing Inclusivity to Rural Communities in Mindanao



Department of Agriculture  
**PHILIPPINE RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**  
Mindanao Cluster



THE WORLD BANK



Co-funded by  
the European Union



The Indigenous People (IP) leaders of the Tibolo Farmer Workers Association (TIFWA) share beautiful smiles as they pose with their red coffee cherries from their farm which they regard as a treasure and a gift from their ancestors to help them achieve success for their community. (Photo by RPCO 11)



# BREWING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IP COFFEE FARMERS

by : Janelle T. Flores | RPCO 11

**T**he ultimate dream of the Bagobo Tagabawa tribe is to have their own coffee shop with a breathtaking view of the majestic Mt. Apo in Sitio Basak, Barangay Tibolo, in the Municipality of Sta. Cruz in Davao del Sur.

Jeciry Antic wakes up everyday with a hope that one day, this dream will become a reality.

Growing, harvesting and processing robusta and arabica coffee has always been the livelihood of this tribe from generation to generation.

Traditionally, after planting the coffee seedlings, they just let it grow on its own. They would only visit the coffee field after a few months to see if it already has fruits.

Jeciry witnessed their poor production of coffee beans because they still follow the traditional way of farming coffee.

Concerned about how they would survive in the coffee industry, Jessa and her fellow Bagobo Tagabawa tribe organized themselves into an association - the Tibolo Farmer Workers Association (TIFWA) - with the determination to increase their production and improve the quality of coffee beans.

The creation of TIFWA, led them to many opportunities such as the availment of technical trainings for coffee production from the DA-HVCDP through the provincial and municipal agriculture office.

They have received technical assistance from the municipal agriculture office of Sta. Cruz and other government agencies including non-government organizations.

After sometime, there have been some changes in the way they grow coffee and produce beans. They have availed of through

the assistance of the Sta. Cruz Municipal Agriculture Office, other government and non-government agencies by attending capacity and capability development trainings. They have learned farm sanitation, fertilization, harvesting techniques, and even learned the processing of coffee beans.

But tagging along with their slow/gradual increase/success of coffee farming were the middlemen who would snatch, if not all, a bigger chunk of their income.

One day, Jessa was invited to attend a meeting where the different government agencies presented the services they offer including the programs and projects they are implementing. It was then when Jessa learned about the Philippine Rural Development Project or PRDP.

Becoming a proponent group of PRDP was a big challenge to TIFWA, hurdling different obstacles along the way as they brainstorm in preparing their business proposal for the Green Coffee Beans Marketing Enterprise

subproject worth P18.4 million. The moment they got the nod from the RPAB was already a victory for them. It was like a green signal to finally take off with flying colors, as colorful as their traditional clothing they wore during the RPAB deliberation.


With the intervention of PRDP through a European Union fund, they will have a warehouse with coffee postharvest and storage facilities and a hauling truck and a start-up capital.

To increase the buying capacity of the association, PRDP will be granting TIFWA P500,000 as a start-up capital to increase their purchasing power. It will enable them to buy more coffee berries from their farmer members and even from non-members of their association.

One of the constraints that TIFWA is dealing with during harvest season is the lack of a hauling truck to pick up harvested coffee cherries from the farm. This time, with the provision of a hauling truck from the PRDP, more farmers will be encouraged to sell their cherries to the association.

Once collected, the berries will then be delivered to the warehouse for processing.

TIFWA's coffee beans has already landed in other countries through the Paramount Coffee which is based in Davao City. After the completion of the project, the Green Coffee Beans Processing and Marketing Enterprise, they will be able to increase their production and more beans will be market throughout the country and even overseas.

To encourage the farmers to sell their coffee produce to hauling truck will also be given to the association as part of the interventions from PRDP. 



TIFWA is now processing their own coffee beans and marketing their products under the "Sandawa" brand name. (Photo by RPCO 11)



# EUROPEAN UNION FUNDING BOOSTS SUPPORT FOR SK COFFEE FARMERS

by : Joy M. Montecalvo | PSO Mindanao

**T**he coffee convergence in Sultan Kudarat has led to the conduct of three batches of trainings for coffee growers in the province.

The “Knowledge on Agri-preneurship and Productivity Enhancement” (KAPE) Training, which started in December 2022, aims to improve the entrepreneurial skills and management of coffee growers of Sultan Kudarat. With funding from the European Union Co-Financing Grant through DA-PRDP’s I-PLAN sub-component 1.2, the KAPE training has resulted in the certification of twenty coffee trainers which in turn have trained forty coffee farmers to become agricultural entrepreneurs or agri-preneurs. The coffee trainer’s role is to mentor coffee farmers in crafting their respective coffee farm and enterprise business plans.

With more enterprise support from DA-PRDP and Provincial Local Government of Sultan Kudarat, there is a need to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of farmers to be more competitive in marketing their products and handling their enterprise subprojects.

The inaugural batch of KAPE training was conducted with partners from Nestle Philippine through their Government and Industry Affairs Executive Donnel Jun Tiedra who was the resource trainer for the first batch of trainers from Sultan Kudarat State University, and Department of Agriculture. The training was attended by MAOs of Sultan Kudarat in particular, the municipalities of Lebak, Kalamansig, Esperanza, Bagong Bayan, and Senator Ninoy Aquino as well as professors and technical staff on agriculture from SKSU.

The second batch was held last February 21-24, 2023 at Senator Ninoy Aquino Sultan Kudarat with the third batch held last February 28-March 2, 2023 at Kalamansig Sultan Kudarat.

The KAPE training provided coffee farmers knowledge and skills on coffee farm plan, basic



Integrated Nutrient Management and Integrated Pest Disease Management (IN-IPDM), and coffee farm business management.

Apart from the training, the farmers were provided with farm tools – pruning shear, grafting knife, and a saw for coffee rejuvenation and farm maintenance.

With the coming in of the PRDP Scale-Up, more support for the coffee industry in Sultan Kudarat will be provided through Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) with partnerships with corporations such as Nestle Philippines and state universities and colleges (SUCs) such as Sultan Kudarat State University among others.

PRDP’s inter-agency convergence continues to serve as a platform to institutionalize synergistic partnership among various value chain enablers in addressing gaps, constraints of priority value chains in the agri-fishery sector. 🌱



A technician demonstrates the proper transfer of coffee seedlings from the nursery to the farm. (Photo by RPCO 12)



# EU, WB TEAM MEET WITH PRDP MINDANAO PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

by : Joy M. Montecalvo | PSO Mindanao

**T**he European Union and World Bank Team met with five farmer beneficiary groups through PRDP Mindanao's online platform on March 28, 2023.

Through PRDP Mindanao's online knowledge sharing platform, the Mindanao Online C.A.F.E. or the Convergence for Agriculture and Fisheries Enterprise, the European Union led by their Head of Cooperation Christoph Wagner and the World Bank Team led by Task Team Leader Mio Takada and Co-Task Team Leader Maria Theresa G. Quiñones, met with five of PRDP Mindanao's farmer beneficiary groups.

With the topic, "Promoting Inclusivity in Mindanao Rural Communities", the Project Support Office Mindanao (PSO Mindanao) through their InfoAce Team and I-REAP component or enterprise development component, brought together both project beneficiaries and funding partners in a meaningful exchange to talk about challenges and lessons learned in subproject implementation.

In her message, I-REAP Component Head Bernadette F. San Juan emphasized the significance of bringing together in a dialogue the funding partners and subproject beneficiaries.

"This activity is essential as it provides opportunities for our funding partners to understand the role of these enterprises in promoting inclusivity in rural communities in Mindanao," said San Juan. "This activity is an excellent opportunity for us to share our insights and best practices on how we can promote rural inclusivity in Mindanao." San Juan added that the pandemic has emphasized the importance of digital technology in ensuring that everyone is included in the process of rural development. "Let us work together promoting rural inclusivity and ensuring that no one is left behind in our development efforts," San Juan said.

The five groups that joined the virtual meeting include the Brgy. Anitapan Improvement Community and Farmers Association (BAICFA); Tibolo Farm Workers Association (TIFWA); the Dinas Small Coconut Farmers Federation (DISCOFAP); the Kababayenhan Alang sa Malamboong Panginabuhian (KAMAANAN); and the Kauran Christian Upland Farmers Agriculture Cooperative. These groups currently have enterprise subprojects funded under the PRDP's Second Additional Funding and European Union Co-Financing Grant (AF2-EU).



In 2021, the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) was granted a US\$280 Million Second Additional Financing (AF-2) which was retrofitted to support the economic recovery efforts of the Department of Agriculture to respond to the effects of the corona virus outbreak of 2019 and it was supplemented by the European Union's (EU) co-financing grant of EUR 18.3 million through a stand-alone, country-specific, co-financing trust fund for the PRDP.

"We are fortunate in Mindanao because of all the clusters in PRDP, it is only in Mindanao the sole recipient of the EU Co-Financing Grant and we are really thankful to the World Bank and EU for providing this grant to Mindanao," said PSO Mindanao Deputy Project Director Noel T. Provideo.

In her message, World Bank Task Team Leader Mio Takada also thanked their partners from the European Union for their grant to PRDP.

"From the World Bank, we would like to thank our partners from the EU for the EU grant which made it possible for PRDP to reach out to low capacity LGUs, conflict affected areas, and remote areas in Mindanao," said Takada.

The five groups, in turn, also expressed their gratitude to the support they received from the World Bank and European Union through DA-PRDP.

The KAMAANAN, a women's group from Region

13, thanked the World Bank and the European Union for supporting a group in a far-flung community in Mindanao. "We are thankful that we were able to avail of the extended support from our brothers and sisters in Europe, and everyone in the World Bank and PRDP."

EU Head of Cooperation Christoph Wagner, in his message also expressed his appreciation for the online activity.

"Thank you letting me take part of this Mindanao Online C.A.F.E.," said Wagner. "It was heartwarming and also very eye-opening in many ways because I feel that there is a lot of effort going into this for many project sites." Wagner added that the EU Grant will ultimately benefit not only their respective farmer groups but also their communities as well. "In the end if you succeed in making the enterprise last, it's for you, your families, and your children," he said. "This is support is making the livelihood of your communities better and we are happy to be part of that."

The online exchange marks the 11th episode of the Mindanao Online C.A.F.E. which was established in 2021 by PRDP Mindanao to provide a venue for the stakeholders of various priority commodities in Mindanao to share and exchange knowledge, and establish linkages between farmers, traders, and other private institutions.

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