

Breaking Barriers, Sowing Success: Stories of Women Planters in Taranuman Project

Joemar V. Orpano, Aileen B. Sarte

College of Social Sciences and Philosophy,

Bicol University, Daraga, Albay

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2024.1104025>

Received: 15 March 2024; Revised: 02 April 2024; Accepted: 05 April 2024; Published: 07 May 2024

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the stories of women planters in the implementation of Taranuman Project in the Third District of Albay. Particularly, this explores and documents the experiences, challenges, and successes of women planters involved. By understanding their stories, this undertaking shed light on the motivations and aspirations of women planters, the barriers they have experienced, and their strategies to achieve success. The researchers used descriptive-qualitative research and made use of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). From the collection of the respondents' narratives, three (3) recurring themes emerged on the motivation and aspirations of women planters in Taranuman Project; Taranuman para sa Pagkasararo (Social cohesion, belonging and unity), Taranuman para sa Pangkabuhayan (Economic empowerment), and Taranuman para sa Karapatang Pampulitika (Political rights, engagement and participation). This study also revealed major challenges in its implementation including infertility of the soil, the distant location of the lands to be cultivated for the project, and the insufficiency in the supply of tools and equipment. However, despite the emerging problems, strategies to counter the difficulties were also formulated. Even so, the researchers strongly recommend that implementers should expand the Taranuman Project in all of the district's municipalities, enhance women planters' financial and communication skills through training, maintain close partnerships with agencies for project support, encourage beneficiary communication, and develop comprehensive strategies to overcome ongoing challenges and ease beneficiaries' burdens.

Keywords: Women Planters; Taranuman Project; Social Cohesion; Economic Empowerment; Political Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality and limited access to resources have long been prevalent issues in the agricultural sector, particularly for women. In many societies, women face numerous barriers hindering their participation and success in farming (Doss et al., 2011). These barriers range from limited access to land, credit, and markets, to cultural and gender norms that restrict their involvement in the male-dominated field of agriculture.

The Taranuman Project was launched in 2016 during the tenure of former Congressman Fernando Gonzales, with Fernando Cabredo, the current representative of Albay's third district and then-chief political affairs officer, recognized as the key figure behind the project's inception (Guarin, 2020). With a focus on rural development, the district's advocacy has been on enhancing the agricultural sector and empowering women through diverse initiatives. Rather than allocating substantial funds for infrastructural developments, they have directed their resources towards meeting agricultural needs and supporting the plights of their

constituents.

The expansion and widespread recognition of the Taranuman Project occurred in 2019 under the leadership of Congressman Cabredo, who extended it to additional barangays within the district. Since then, women planter groups have been consistently registered as Rural Worker's Associations (RWA) with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to gain access to national government programs and projects. Objectively, the Taranuman Project aims to address many aspects including (1) additional source of livelihood through selling their produce, (2) food security at the barangay or local level, (3) gender and development through empowering women's roles in agriculture, (4) health and nutrition and lastly (5) peace and order through maintaining camaraderie among each member.

As of 2022, the project already catered to 53 women planter groups consisting of 2, 855 women planters of the 53 upland barangays districtwide from six (6) municipalities; Guinobatan, Pioduran, Libon, Oas, Ligao City, and Jovellar. Witnessing the project's early achievements and aiming to secure its long-term viability within the district, Congressman Cabredo enhanced the project's scope. Leveraging the support and resources from collaborating government entities like the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Department of Labor and Employment, they supplied the women's groups with alternative livelihood options and farming necessities. Consequently, a diverse array of crops and vegetables, including corn, peanuts, ube (purple yam), pechay (bok choy), radish, and string beans, were incorporated into the selection that these women could grow.

This qualitative research delved into the experiences and narratives of women planters participating in the Taranuman Project. By exploring their stories, the researchers gained valuable insights into the challenges they encounter, the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges, and the impact of their participation in the project on their lives.

OBJECTIVES

This research study was designed with the following objectives: (1) Understanding the Motivations and Aspirations of Women planters in Taranuman Project, both the intrinsic motivations—such as personal fulfillment, self-improvement, and a sense of autonomy—and extrinsic motivations, including financial incentives, community expectations, and familial responsibilities, that influence women's decision to pursue a role in this agricultural endeavor; (2) Identify the challenges experienced in the implementation of Taranuman Project, encompassing issues that may hinder women's full participation in agricultural activities, tangible obstacles such as limited access to resources, difficulties in securing lands, and the impacts of climate change on this undertaking, and lastly; (3) Identify the Strategies employed for overcoming these barriers, documenting the range of approaches taken, from individual coping mechanisms that women develop to maintain resilience, to collaborative efforts that leverage the strength of community action. It will also examine the role of both formal and informal support networks that provide crucial assistance and empowerment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Respondents

The researchers used a purposive sampling method to select the respondents of this study. Initially, the researchers asked the Office of Congressman Fernando Cabredo for a master list of Women Planters in the district and this was later used to identify the final roster of participants based on the inclusion criteria: (1) a woman; (2) a permanent resident of any of the barangays and municipalities in the third district of Albay, and (3) a beneficiary of Taranuman Project and a member of women planter groups in the third district of

Albay. The participant is not qualified if: (1) not a woman; (2) residing in any barangays and municipalities in the third district of Albay but not permanent, and; (3) not a beneficiary of the Taranuman Project and does not belong to any of women planter groups in the district.

Creswell & Creswell (2018) highlighted that although the exact number of participants in qualitative research depends on the nature of the research and the specific questions aims to address, the ideal number of participants for a research study is not set in stone, some scholars suggest that a range of ten (10) to 50 individuals can be adequate. In consideration of the study's design and objectives, the researchers arrived at identifying 3 representative participants from each municipality of the district, applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the researchers identified A total of eighteen (18) women planters from the Municipality of Ligao, Guinobatan, Oas, Libon, Jovellar and Pioduran for the interview. Twelve (12) of which have participated in the focus group discussion (FGD), while the remaining six (6) acted as key informants representing the group per municipality wherein a one-on-one interview was conducted.

Data Collection

Data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FDGs) with the women planters of the Taranuman Project. In-depth interviews were conducted individually, allowing participants to share their experiences, challenges, and successes in a more personal and detailed manner. Focused Group Discussions (FDGs) were also utilized, allowing the participants to engage in group discussions, stimulating conversation, and exchanging ideas among women planters.

Subsequently, Interview and FGD guides were developed based on the research objectives and covered topics such as motivations and aspirations of women planters in joining the Taranuman Project, the challenges faced, and the strategies employed to overcome these barriers.

The data collected was analyzed thematically involving several iterative steps, including familiarizing the data, coding, theme development, and interpretation. Throughout the analysis process, efforts were made to ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings, including member checking, where participants will be allowed to review and provide feedback on the preliminary findings to enhance the validity of the interpretations.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and confidentiality. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their rights as participants, and the handling of their personal information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study explored the experiences of women planters participating in the Taranuman Project, seeking to capture their stories specifically, the study's primary objectives include knowing the motivations and aspirations of women, identifying the challenges encountered, and the strategies these women employ to navigate and overcome barriers. By doing so, the research intends to offer insights that can inform future initiatives and policies aimed at supporting women's roles in agriculture and strengthening their success in such empowering projects.

Motivations and Aspirations of Women Planters in Taranuman Project

The establishment of the Taranuman Project has provided the people of Albay's third district, especially women, with an avenue to participate in agriculture, creating a space beyond their homes and classrooms for

them to discover and gain knowledge from one another while participating in the project’s activities and programs. These women have transitioned from cultivating a range of crops and vegetables in their shared gardens to becoming beneficiaries of support and programs from the project’s allied agencies, including the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers initiative, as well as receiving agricultural supplies from the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The researchers looked into the aspirations and motivations of women planters in the Project and were able to identify three (3) themes based on the respondents’ responses: (a) *Taranuman para sa Pagkasararo (Social cohesion, belonging and unity)*; (b) *Taranuman para sa Pangkabuhayan (Economic empowerment)*, and (c) *Taranuman para sa Karapatang Pampulitika (Political rights, engagement and participation)*:

a. Taranuman para sa Pagkasararo (Social cohesion, belonging and unity)

The result of the one-on-one interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the respondents showed that the motivation to join the Taranuman Project often stems from the desire to be part of something larger than oneself. As presented in Table 1, women planters are drawn to the idea of contributing to their community’s well-being while also seeking personal growth and fulfilment. The project’s emphasis on social cohesion, belonging, and unity serves as a beacon of aspiration, encouraging women to envision and work towards a harmonious and prosperous community.

Establishing the Taranuman Project in the third district of Albay has given the beneficiaries room to develop self-confidence and learn how to converse with their fellow as they go along in their communal gardens and daily errands. Their exposure allowed them to uplift and empower each other, “*Ngana, nagkaugwa ako oportunidad para maparahay ko ang sadiri ko lalo sa pakikipagkapwa*” (Now, I was able to have the opportunity to improve myself especially in interacting with other people). They were able to share personal experiences and relate to each other, further strengthening one’s self-confidence and developing a bond where everyone felt belonged and were supported. One of the respondents narrated, “*Dahil sa Taranuman mas naging close po kami sir na mga magkataraning*” (Because of the Taranuman Project our neighborhood became much closer).

Table 1. Motivations and Aspirations of Women Planters

Recurring Themes	Collective Description
a. Taranuman para sa Pagkasararo (Social cohesion, belonging and unity)	The Taranuman Project helps the beneficiaries to develop self-confidence and become socially active, it also stimulates a sense of belonging and mutual support among the beneficiaries and establishes harmonious and peaceful relationships among stakeholders of the project.
b. Taranuman para sa Pangkabuhayan (Economic empowerment)	The Taranuman Project created an additional source of income for the beneficiaries, improved the economic status of the beneficiaries, and helped alleviate food scarcity in their community.
c. Taranuman para sa Karapatang Pampulitika (Political rights, engagement and participation)	The Project encourages a positive recognition of government projects and programs, beneficiaries were able to realize their rights and privileges as constituents of the district, became more participative in community programs and activities, and were able to express their concerns and grievances through government channel

Also, the project helps in fostering a harmonious and peaceful relationship between the implementers of the project and its beneficiaries. One of the respondents, who is a leader in one of the women planter groups in the district, shared how consultation before doing their tasks in the Taranuman Project soothes a serene

ambiance among members of the group.

Morta (2011) emphasizes the importance of the participatory approach as an effective way of mobilizing communities and or any particular groups. An approach that considers and builds a strong base for the intervention in the community. It should include a process that builds trust and empowers each other, both between your organization and the community and among the individuals involved. This trust can serve as a foundation for future community development and action. In the context of the Taranuman Project, social cohesion is seen as vital for sustaining collective efforts in agricultural activities. It promotes a sense of solidarity among women planters, who often face similar challenges and share common goals. A sense of belonging is an intrinsic human need. The Taranuman Project aims to create an inclusive environment where women planters feel valued and integral to the community. By doing so, the project enhances individual self-esteem and encourages active participation and contribution to the common good.

b. Taranuman para sa Pangkabuhayan (Economic empowerment)

Another motivation and aspiration of the members in becoming part of the Taranuman Project is its capacity to create additional sources of income, consequently improving their economic status and contributing to alleviating food scarcity in their community. At the heart of the Taranuman Project's goals is the aspiration for financial self-sufficiency and security among its women participants. By providing opportunities for women to engage in planting and other agricultural activities, the project serves as a platform for them to earn a livelihood and support their families.

The respondents' common narratives highlighted the Taranuman Project's economic effects. The sales of their harvested produce, and as recipients of some government subsidies integrated under the project, such as the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers, allows them to generate an alternative source of income for their families.

Aside from the additional source of income, the respondents highlighted that the Taranuman Project, in general, improves their economic status and contributes to alleviating food scarcity in each of the beneficiary communities. Their perseverance to plant a variety of crops in their communal gardens provided them with food to offer to their families. In addition to that are the profits and wages (for integrated programs) they earned as beneficiaries of the Taranuman Project. Thus, these harvested crops and vegetables help the beneficiaries lessen the money spent on their day-to-day consumption, and instead, the money can be redirected to the family's other necessities.

Beneficiaries are also encouraged to cultivate in their backyards. A woman planter respondent shared, “*Sa harong mi pinagrequire mi po talaga na igwa kaming mga backyard para dai na kami minabakal ki ano mga gulay gulay ta dakulon man sana pong pananum, nagtatanum na po kami maski sa mga backyard mi*” (We are required to have backyard in our homes for planting vegetables and crops to save us from buying in the market) which is believed to be a good stepping stone in mitigating food shortage in their respective community through an increase in the availability, accessibility, and utilization of these food products.

Undeniably, the economic benefits of Taranuman Project served as one of the motivations of the beneficiaries, whether through their produce from the Taranuman directly or from the integrated programs of the project's different partner agencies. Taranuman Project shielded these women from the economic onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, thus preventing them from experiencing food scarcity and providing them with alternative chores, especially when quarantines and lockdowns are implemented, “*Kang pandemic po, dakulaong tabang po ang Taranuman ta ugwa po kaming nagigibo sa urualdaw mi maski nakaquarantine*” (It gave us something to work on during the pandemic though we were quarantined).

Agriculture plays an active role in economic growth through important production and consumption

linkages in addition to labour and food supply (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2018). For instance, agriculture can provide resources to nonagricultural production or demand inputs from the modern sector. Agriculture plays a critical role in the entire life of a given economy. In addition to providing food and raw materials, agriculture also provides employment opportunities to a very large percentage of the population. Since agriculture employs many people, it contributes to economic development. Hence, it aids in creating a good atmosphere for the overall economic development of a certain place or country (Cramedia, 2019). In the context of the Taranuman Project, the active participation of women challenges traditional gender roles such as subsistence farming, and limited household decision-making, and promotes gender equality in the economic sphere. By positioning women as key contributors to the agricultural sector, the project helps redefine societal perceptions and reinforces the importance of women's roles in driving economic growth.

c. Taranuman para sa Karapatang Pampolitika (Political rights, engagement and participation)

In the political aspect, most of the respondents shared they are motivated because that the project elated a positive recognition of the government projects and programs, beneficiaries were able to realize their rights and privileges as constituents of the district, became more participative in community programs and activities, and they were able to express their concerns and grievances through government channels.

One of the main reasons the Taranuman Project was established in the district is to ensure that the constituents, particularly the marginalized, could avail themselves of programs from different government agencies while giving space to women and youth in agriculture. The Office of Congressman Fernando Cabredo serves as a medium where women and youth can recognize the government's efforts in uplifting the lives of those in the far plunged areas. Aside from the integrated programs in the project, these beneficiaries, especially women planters, were also recipients of various livelihood programs made possible by their District Representative.

Also, beneficiaries realized their rights and privileges as constituents of the district. This initiative enlightened women planters that they are not just designated at home and that there are opportunities for them, as manifested by one of the beneficiaries. Apart from being housewives, the project helps them exercise their right to receive government help and fill some insufficiencies in available opportunities. It is the Office's way of conveying to women that the government has designed projects for them.

Moreover, this project provided women opportunities to become leaders and members of their groups which can be seen as a good move to provide the sector chances to occupy spaces rarely given to them. This opportunity enabled women planters to be more participative in government programs and activities and was able to express their concerns and grievances through government channels during meetings, forums and consultations, "*Halimbawa mga member ko dito minsan mahiyain pero minsan pag pinapatawag na may mga kumperensiya na gusto sabihin naibubukas nila, naibubukas namin.*" (Our members for example are quite shy but when we are called to attend conferences, we were to relay want we want to say), a leader of women planters' group said.

For many women involved in the Taranuman Project, gaining political agency is a key motivator. This includes the ability to articulate their needs and interests, access political resources, and navigate the structures of power that impact their lives and work. Political empowerment is seen as an avenue to ensure that their voices are heard and that they can advocate for policies that support sustainable agriculture and gender equity (Dacuyucy, 2018). It emboldens women to participate in different government programs and activities, giving them a prospect to convey their requests and concerns directly and know how to be more participative in community programs. Archer et al. (2008) highlights the importance of identifying these barriers to the adoption of sustainable practices and that the social, political and cultural context of agriculture should not be ignored. Indeed, regarding sustainability, the environmental and economic indicators are commonly well established, but what is lacking is an awareness of the social and political

issues surrounding such initiatives.

Challenges Experienced in the Implementation of Taranuman Project

At the start of the implementation of Taranuman Project, the identification of idle land to be cultivated is certainly required. Thus, the first challenge faced by women planters was gaining the consent of the land owners whose domains were unoccupied and suitable for cultivation. Some of the owners were hesitant to lend their lands for the project and it imposes a great challenge for the women planters to find other idle lands in a relatively small village. The respondents also added that there are instances where the already cultivated lands were reclaimed by the proprietors for private use. It leaves them no other choice but to find other property owners who will willingly offer their land for the Taranuman Project.

Table 2. Challenges experienced in the implementation of the Taranuman Project

Challenges experienced
Difficulty in attaining consent from the land owners and when cultivated, domains were reclaimed for private use
The limited supply of seeds, saplings, and fertilizers
Insufficiency in the supply of tools and equipment.
Low selling price due to the surplus of supply in the market
Presence of pests, insects, and the inevitable natural calamities
Infertility of the soil and distant location of the lands
Poor and or defective quality of produce

Before planting, the beneficiaries need to have a safe and fertile land to cultivate their vegetables and crops. In addition to the challenges experienced by the implementers in accumulating idle lands, the respondents commented that they have experienced difficulties due to the infertility of the lands cultivated. Some of the land offered by the implementers was firm and dry. Likewise, there were cases where the lands were located far from the street and were quite distant from the houses of women planters.

The next challenge experienced by the respondents was in line with the necessary agricultural supplies such as seeds, saplings, and fertilizers. They also stressed that the supply of seeds, saplings, and fertilizers given by the implementers was often insufficient and in turn, affected their desired outcomes. The answers from the beneficiaries confirmed that their preferred seeds and saplings were being overlooked and disregarded due to budget limitations on the part of the Department of Agriculture. The beneficiaries also confirmed that the distribution of fertilizer in particular was a primary cause of the problems in the landsite because it often comes late and sometimes most of the procured fertilizers were ineffective.

Similar to agricultural supplies, there were also insufficiencies in the quantity of needed tools and equipment for the efficient cultivation of vegetables and crops. As a result, it becomes a challenge and a responsibility for the beneficiaries to provide for such insufficiencies. For example, the beneficiary stated that there were times when they used sharp wood for burrowing due to the lack of necessary tools. This problem somehow shifts the beneficiaries' focus to finding farming tools and equipment rather than concentrating on planting and improving their production.

Following the harvest, the beneficiaries of the Taranuman Project in Albay's third district face difficulties in selling their crops, largely due to the high number of local farmers cultivating the same types of crops and vegetables, such as pechay (bok choy) and camote (sweet potato). This often results in an excess of these products in the market, driving down the prices buyers are willing to pay. Additionally, the beneficiaries were having difficulties especially when the quality of the produce was considerably poor resulting in a low

price offered by the buyers.

The last set of challenges identified by the respondents is the presence of pests, diseases and natural calamities. The vegetables and crops were often damaged due to pests, diseases and animals roaming around the cultivated lands. The plants also end up unconsumable because of the frequent typhoons and droughts. These problems were inevitable for farmers, yet they still deserve an effective and functional solution.

The researchers observed that the commitment of the beneficiaries to plant was hindered by the distant locations of the lands they were cultivating. Also, the low range of prices offered to the produce of the beneficiaries which was seen as a minor problem poses a significant effect on their morale and enthusiasm to continue participating in Taranuman Project. In line with coordination, the inconsistencies of the members of the beneficiaries which we often overlooked could later be the cause of a greater challenge not just in the unity of their organization but also to Taranuman Project as a whole – which objective includes developing camaraderie among the beneficiaries.

The challenges faced during the roll-out of the Taranuman Project are instrumental in shaping future tactics for both the project’s enhancement and the broader development of the agricultural sector in the district. It is now incumbent upon the project’s implementers to assess the setbacks, which could ultimately lead to effective resolutions for the issues encountered during its execution. According to the Program Evaluation Theory by Donna M. Martens and Amy T. Wilson, evaluation is seen as an organized method that generates and consolidates data to help reduce uncertainty for decision-makers and stakeholders regarding a particular program or policy (Martens & Wilson, 2019). Additionally, Mollasgo (2007) asserts that agricultural initiatives in the area have a promising outlook, provided that challenges are aptly tackled, and farmers are engaged actively in the process—a sentiment echoed by the findings of this study.

Strategies Employed in the Implementation of Taranuman Project

The land is an important factor and is certainly required for the implementation of Taranuman Project. In terms of the strategy in identifying the land, women planters tried to meet an agreement with the owner specifying that the land would be temporarily cultivated so that it could be of use in the meantime when there was still no infrastructure built in the area. It was agreed upon that after the harvest, a portion of the harvested product would be given to the landowners.

Table 3 shows that in terms of limited agricultural supplies—such as seeds, saplings, and fertilizers, from the narratives of the respondents, it appears that one of the effective strategies they have adopted to mitigate these insufficiencies is the frequent and proactive request of the necessary supplies that pose a significant challenge to the success of their planting endeavors because according to them, these supplies are critical to the initiation and sustainability of their agricultural activities, and shortages can severely hamper productivity and yield.

Table 3. Strategies employed to the challenges

Strategies employed
Lands were recommended by the Punong Barangay. Owners were assured that they would be compensated with the harvested products. In terms of the infertility of the soil, the Department of Agriculture is being contacted for the use of tractors and supplies of fertilizers.
Intensified requests for seeds, saplings, and fertilizers or procurement using their group’s budget.
Employ alternatives such as innovating tools that are more cost-effective or can be locally sourced, e.g., using their family’s agricultural tools and equipment at home.

The Office of the Congressman and the Department of Agriculture provide channels and linkages to the market (e.g., LCC). Export it to the other provinces or sometimes in Manila in case of surplus.

Asking for assistance from the Office of the Congressman to rehabilitate their affected products or farm site. Use of pesticides or insecticides may it be organic or synthetic. In terms of typhoons, they harvest what can be consumed already.

Request to the implementers for the use of tractors and supply of fertilizers.

Rather than offering defective products for sale in the market, women planters transform them into prepared meals for sale. On occasion, they also distribute these products to local community members as an act of charity.

Tools and equipment were also a requirement for the cultivation of lands. In terms of the insufficiency of tools and equipment, beneficiaries try to explore and employ options including creating tools that are both more affordable and obtainable locally, for instance, by utilizing the agricultural tools and equipment available within their household.

Subsequently, in terms of their difficulty of selling their produce due to surplus, they are offered assistance by the Office of Congressman Fernando Cabredo and the Department of Agriculture by providing channels or linking them to established markets like LCC. The implementers also help the beneficiaries to consolidate what they produce and sell it in other provinces or regions and even in Metro Manila.

When the quality of the produce is considerably poor and when the prices offered by the wholesalers are low, the women planters repurpose them into cooked dishes for commercial sale. Sometimes, they also provide these items to residents in the local area as a charitable gesture. Oftentimes, especially during the pandemic, the beneficiaries take pictures of their vegetables and crops and then post it online. Others have mini grocery stores which are regulated by their women's organization.

The approaches taken to address the challenges faced during the execution of the Taranuman Project in Albay's Third District demonstrate that both the implementers and recipients are actively working towards the anticipated results, aligning with the project's objectives. The strategies developed to navigate issues in various domains—such as securing and selecting land for cultivation, procuring agricultural supplies, acquiring tools and equipment, marketing harvested crops, selecting beneficiaries, and enhancing coordination and communication—indicate that the project is progressing and flourishing in the face of challenges at the time of this report. Nonetheless, the researchers have observed that certain areas, particularly those affected by natural and human-induced disasters, continue to present difficulties due to the unpredictable nature of these events and the limited resources available to those involved.

The initiative was successful in trying to test and come up with a strategy on how to pursue upland farming in a sustainable way and at the same time pursue the goal of improved production, income, and environmental security (Mapula & William, 2012). In terms of social dynamics, the establishment of farmers' organizations is recognized as a strategic approach to ensuring the long-term viability of upland farming (Lu, 2010). This perspective is underpinned by the Diffusion Model within the Theory of Agricultural Development, which posits that agricultural progress is based on empirical evidence of significant disparities in land and labor productivity across different farmers and regions. According to this model, the path to agricultural growth lies in the enhanced distribution of technical know-how and in reducing the gaps in productivity levels between various farmers and geographic areas. (Udemzue & Osegbue, 2018)

CONCLUSIONS

Agricultural projects and programs are effective measures to reach the most impoverished sector of society.

This study caters to the aspirations and motivations of women planters, identifies the challenges encountered during the implementation, and the strategies employed to the challenges experienced.

Gathering and analyzing the stories shared by participants revealed three consistent themes regarding the drives and goals of female cultivators in the Taranuman Project. These themes include “Taranuman for Social Harmony” which encompasses social integration, a sense of belonging, and unity; “Taranuman for Livelihood Development” which focuses on economic empowerment; and “Taranuman for Political Empowerment” which covers political rights, involvement, and active participation.

In the implementation of the project, most of the individuals involved have faced a wide range array of problems in selling produce, struggles in communication, and problems with regard to natural and man-made calamities. Nevertheless, despite the findings of challenges encountered in the implementation of the project strategies were employed as a result of the collective effort of all entities involved to counter the difficulties in the implementation of the project. However, despite the efficiency of some of those strategies, there were still certain areas of concern that were left unsolved and hindered by the limited means and resources of the stakeholders involved. including difficulty in identifying lands to be cultivated for the project, insufficiency of agricultural supplies, difficulty

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings and conclusions drawn, the researchers suggest the following recommendations: (1) The Office of the Congressman should consider the expansion of the Taranuman Project across all municipalities within the district, such as by initiating Women Planters groups in the Municipality of Polangui; (2) In partnership with government agencies, the Office of the Congressman should facilitate seminars, workshops, and training programs aimed at enhancing women planters’ capabilities in financial management and communication skills, which will contribute to their social and economic advancement; (3) The Office of the Congressman ought to sustain a close working relationship with partner government agencies and Local Government Units to address and focus on the issues and feedback raised by the project’s participants; (4) The beneficiaries are urged to actively communicate their concerns and needs throughout the project’s implementation; and finally, (5) The Office of the Congressman should work in conjunction with government agencies and Local Government Units to devise effective strategies that will address the persistent challenges faced during the Taranuman Project’s execution and to alleviate the hardships experienced by the beneficiaries.

REFERENCES

1. Doss et al. (2011). The Role of Women in Agriculture available at <http://www.fao.org/3/am307e/am307e00.pdf>
2. Guarin, L. P. (2020). Women and Youth in Albay 3rd district gets P1.4 million assists from DA HVCDP. Available at <https://bicol.da.gov.ph/women-and-youth-planters-in-albay-3rd-dist-gets-p1-4m-assist-from-dahvcdp/#:~:text=To%20support%20these%20women%20and,planters%20under%20FY%202020%20budget>.
3. Morta, A. N. (2011). A review of the Implementation of the Conservation Farming Villages Project in Ligao City (Undergraduate thesis, Bicol University College of Agriculture and Forestry, Guinobatan, Albay, Philippines)
4. Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. SAGE Publications.
5. Dacuycuy. (2018). Crafting policies and programs for women in the agriculture sector (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, Policy Notes). Available at <https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidspn1808.pdf>
6. Archer et al. (2008). Social and political influences on agricultural system. Available at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S174217050700169X>

7. Mertens, D.M, & Wilson, T. (2019). Program Evaluation Theory and Practice. ISBN 9781462532759
8. Mollasgo, C. M. (2007). A Process Review of the Implementation of Agricultural Projects Implemented in Doña Mercedes, Guinobatan, Albay (Undergraduate thesis, Bicol University College of Agriculture and Forestry, Guinobatan, Albay, Philippines)
9. Mapula, C., & Patola, W. A. (2012). A Review of BU-BIDANI Program at Barangay Doña Mercedes, Guinobatan, Albay (Undergraduate thesis, Bicol University College of Agriculture and Forestry, Guinobatan, Albay, Philippines)
10. FAO Representation in the Philippines. (2018). Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture and the rural sector in the Philippines. Retrieved September 08, 2020 from <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/CA1345EN/>
11. Department of Agriculture (2013). On the Income of Poor Farmers/Fisherfolk: Review of the Evidence. Available at <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/76b3/bfa87a5d45f7234860814688a23949a41496.pdf>
12. Lu. (2010). Gender Analysis of Women in the Philippine Agriculture and Their Occupational Issues. <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol11/iss4/5/>
13. Ocfemia, J. F. (2006). A Review of the Status of the LGU's Food Security Project in Guinobatan, Albay: A Special Problem (Undergraduate thesis, Bicol University College of Agriculture and Forestry, Guinobatan, Albay, Philippines)
14. Horst, M., McClintock, N., Hoey, L. (2017). The Intersection of Planning, Urban Agriculture, and Food Justice: A Review of the Literature. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2017.1322914>