

Impact of the “Utan sa Tugkaran” Vegetable Garden Project for Identified Communities in Cagayan de Oro City, Southern Philippines

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Abstract

Community-based gardening projects contribute toward food security as gardens provide fresh vegetables and income. This study assessed the social and economic impacts of the “Utan sa Tugkaran” (vegetable garden) project for three locations in Cagayan de Oro City, Southern Philippines. Primary data was gathered using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The social impacts included creating safe places, access to area, community development, building social capital, and education opportunities. The economic impacts covered job creation, training, business incubation, market expansion, savings for food, and increased home values. Results show that majority of the respondents were female (92.12%), aged 46 and above (44.12%), married (61.77%), and with an average of four children in the family. Interviews revealed that 60% engaged in community development, 30% availed the educational opportunities, and 10% practiced building social capital. In economic impacts, 15% of the respondents were provided jobs, 70% joined the training and cultivated vegetable gardens, 10% engaged in business incubation, and 5% experienced market expansion. FGDs reveal that 40% of the beneficiaries were able to save money at the rural and cooperative banks in the city due to sufficient fresh food vegetables for their family, and 50% of them received additional income from vegetable gardens. Recommendations include educating beneficiaries on new ways of cultivating home gardens in vacant lots in their areas and assisting them in establishing a cooperative for gardeners.