

Identifying Priority Government Interventions for Agriculture Value Chain Development: The Case of Seaweeds in the Philippines

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Abstract

The provision of government support programs to the seaweeds industry in the past emulates the conventional top-down approach characterized by being centrally managed and largely supply-driven. In such case, the active participation of the local governments and other industry stakeholders in the decision-making process is quite limited. Under the Agriculture and Fishery Modernization Plan, scientific tools such as value chain analysis (VCA), which engages key actors from production down to end-product users, were established as fundamental in the process of planning government interventions. This paper therefore aims to present how VCA and the use of the a supplementary tool, the participatory systems analysis (PSA), have enhanced and facilitated the identification of priority government interventions for seaweeds industry. Information were elicited through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and stakeholders consultations. The results of the study show that, at the national level, priority interventions for the seaweeds industry constitute (1) establishment and maintenance of seaweed nurseries and culture laboratories for sufficient supply of quality seedlings, (2) provision of access to financial resources and conduct of trainings to capacitate farmers, (3) availability of productive assets for more efficient seaweed farming and postharvest like boats and dryers, (4) access to crop insurances to guarantee incomes and expand economic returns to farmers, and (5) enactment and enforcement of favorable policies to enhance seaweed farming conditions.