

A Descriptive Study of Four Institutions' Experience of Implementing the LIFE Model in Conflict-Vulnerable Areas of Mindanao, Southern Philippines

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Abstract

The ACIAR Mindanao Agricultural Extension Project (AMAEP) developed LIFE (Livelihood through Facilitated Extension), a model for agricultural extension in conflict-vulnerable areas of Mindanao. The model, after being tested and replicated in different areas, was implemented in 2017 by various institutions—two local government units (LGUs), one nongovernment organization (NGOs), and one academic institution. This paper describes the experience of these institutions in terms of their previous program implementation, challenges faced implementing the LIFE model, changes they have made in their programs as a result of their experience, and suggestions on how to improve the delivery of agricultural extension services. Data were gathered through key informant interviews and project workshops. Results indicate that LGUs implement their programs previously without sufficient, if at all existing, consultation with the farmers. Constraints in implementation included lack of expertise, delay in the release of funds, and several programs being implemented at the same time resulting in the lack of time. Despite these challenges, all of the institutions signified their intention to continue adopting the model in the implementation of their programs as they found it effective. As a result of their implementation of the LIFE model, the NGO expanded its programs, which primarily focus on peacebuilding, and now include a socioeconomic program, while the academic institution intends to integrate the model in their curriculum's agricultural extension course. The LGUs have allocated funds for the continued implementation of the model to include more *barangays*. Recommendations for the sustainability of the model include institutionalizing it through ordinances, resolutions, and policies.