

What prompted the change?

Agriculture in the Philippines has long been marked by small-holders encouraged to invest in export-oriented cash crops, especially coconut oil and sugar-cane. The obvious risk for both local populations and the producers is a loss of food sovereignty and, in the worst of cases, a loss of food security.

This was precisely the situation that occurred when Hurricane Haiyan hit the Philippines in 2014, with an estimated loss of 700 million\$-worth of agricultural production and infrastructure. 74% of fishermen and 77% of farmers lost their property and source of income, including in such sustainable producer-owned projects as seaweed farming. In recent years there has been strong development in the Philippines of a solidarity economy-based urban-rural movement, and there have been increasing linkages developed between urban and rural areas to both feed the cities and ensure producers have access to local markets that provide them with decent income.

What is the new model?

The Community Supported Agriculture model was promoted by the national solidarity economy movement, and Dr. Doy Nacpil (with their organization, Stargrass Coalition) is the leading force behind this young network. The aim of the network is to change the agricultural model of cash crops to small-scale fruit and vegetable production that will guarantee local food security/food sovereignty in the post-Haiyan period, thus ensuring that local producers and communities become food secure. Interestingly, this movement has been consumer-driven, rather than producer driven, but nevertheless ensures peasant producers are guaranteed access to specifically defined local markets.

How does it work?

Producers and local restaurateurs sign an agreement, with upfront payment at an agreed price to raise pigs, rice, goats and various vegetables. Most farms are less than one acre in size but Dr. Nacpil says "Even small farmers can earn well by diversified, integrated farming". This agroecological approach ensures that it is easy to avoid any outside chemical inputs. The system in place uses inter-cropping, and ensures that the production is spread over the season. The local varieties of organically grown rice have proven far more productive and resilient.

Who does it benefit and what are the outcomes?

As the network has rapidly developed a high reputation for the organic products grown by these producers, many local (medical) doctors are requesting delivery of fruit and vegetables for patients who are suffering from cancer. The network supplies food to hospitals, schools as well as restaurants. It has been developed as a holistic local development network to build locally resilient food systems and ensure that both producers and the local populations would recover from the trauma of the hurricane. The approach used was to work from provincial level to regional level to

national, with a national consultation on Community Supported Agriculture, and the subsequent creation of a national network, (Philippine CSA Network (PCSAN).) The national solidarity economy network provided the means to do this. This project has now reached phase 3 in the Luzon and Mindanao regions, with provincial and national networks and a national coordinator. There are approximately 20 different organizations, each consisting of 20-30 farmers, each feeding around 100 families in their local communities. The farmers use the system of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) as a low-cost participatory organic certification method. In the immediate post-typhoon period this also helped the producers to find help for the next growing season. The national legislation introduced in 2016 that supports organic production also has helped provide post-Haiyan relief for the producers.

Conclusion

This is a clear illustration of how alternative economic solutions to free trade can support the connection of small-holders to local markets, thereby developing resilience to climate change and violent weather events in high-risk regions like the Philippines as well as building national food security and food sovereignty together with an economic paradigm change to solidarity economy.