



TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONGER:

A closer look on farm and fisheries consolidation and clustering program in the Philippines



One of the consultations in Region 4-A during F2C2's field validation. Photo credit: DA-F2C2

Following the success of developed and developing countries on land consolidation, it surely didn't go unnoticed specially in the eyes of the decision makers in the Philippines. In fact, the Philippine Government already saw the potential of the application of land consolidation as early as 1970's.

In 2018, the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF) commissioned a policy study with Center for Agri-fisheries and Biosystems Mechanization (BIOMECH), College of Engineering and Agro-industrial Technology (CEAT), and University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) on the implementability of contiguous farming on rice and corn areas in the Philippines.

The study highlights RA 10601 also known as the Agricultural and Fisheries Mechanization (AFMech) Law underscored the importance of contiguous farming as a method to maximize the benefits of agri-mechanization in the Philippines. It shall also provide the legal basis to which contiguous farming can be applied in major crop producing areas where the implementation is technically, socially, and economically feasible.

This policy study, together with other pertinent laws and acts, and the initiative from the Philippine government, served as a stepping stone for the Department of Agriculture's (DA) farm and fisheries consolidation and clustering (F2C2) program possible.

DA's F2C2 program: More than meets the eye

Distributing government interventions, implementing government projects and programs are easier when coursed through associations or groups rather than to individual farmers and fisherfolks. This follows the "Economies of Scale" where production

can be increased while lowering the costs which is achieved through increased efficiency.

By consolidating adjacent farms, pooling resources, and uniting farmer and fisherfolk groups, they can enjoy faster and easier access to government services and interventions. This will also help the government to easily identify the beneficiaries and farmers/fisherfolks groups that need assistance, making it a win-win situation for both parties.

Through Administrative Order No. 27, Series of 2020, the F2C2 program was born which seeks to advance the interest of Filipino small farmers and fishers through clustering and consolidation of their production, processing, and marketing activities as a community business enterprise which includes pooling of assets, labor, and other resources in order to reap the benefits of the program.

According to DA, The F2C2 Program is not simply merging contiguous land properties and assets. The program also seeks to group together the agricultural and/or fishery products producers within a community or adjacent communities on the basis of proximity of production areas, similarity of inputs, shared production activities/processes, and/or common final products where there is a possibility for unified management of production activities, sourcing of inputs, access to financing, processing, logistics, storage, marketing, and enhanced quality of produce.

Programs under F2C2

The F2C2 program is composed of support and assistance programs to promote the development and success of farm and fisheries clustering and consolidation in the country.

Pre-production Assistance program (F2-PAP)

Composed of activities and programs to focus on institution building and training.

Production Support Program (F2-PSP)

Provides programs to facilitate access to high quality farm inputs, machinery, equipment, protection and support to climate change adaptation as well as land preparation/levelling services.

Post-Harvest/Post-Production Processing (F2-PHP)

Provides support and assistance towards acquisition, establishment, and use of equipment and technologies to preserve and prolong shelf lives of agri-products.

Packaging and Storage (F2-PacS)

Assistance facility on technical and financing support in the packaging and storage to prolong the shelf lives of primary farm and fishery produce as well as agricultural commodities.

Transport and Logistics (F2-TL)

Includes support projects and assistance programs on the acquisition of transport equipment for farm produce, ICT hardware and software for digital logistics, and communication equipment to support marketing networks.

Credit and Project Financing (F2-CPF)

Empowers beneficiaries to access credit and project financing.

Marketing Assistance (F2-MarA)

Links F2C2 participants to promotion and marketing services towards stronger engagement with sales channels and networks for agricultural produce.

F2C2 BY THE NUMBERS

Minimum requirements for communities for clustering:

100
ha/cluster

**RICE, FRUIT TREES,
FIBER CROPS, AND
PERENNIALS**

75
ha/cluster

CORN

565

**FARMER COOPERATIVES
AND ASSOCIATIONS
PROGRAMMED FOR
CLUSTERING**

152,502

**INDIVIDUAL FARMER
MEMBERS PROGRAMMED
FOR CLUSTERING WITH**

166,317.42

**HECTARES OF AREA
COVERED**

For more info, visit www.da.gov.ph



Distribution of Training Kits to MiHFA, REAC, and PISO, Inc. on February 5, 2021. Photo credit: DA F2C2

F2C2 way forward

DA will also collaborate with Local Government Units (LGU's) and other relevant agencies where the department source and channel development funds to enhance the presence of infrastructure that will complement F2C2 production groups in every province which may include but not limited to farm-to-market roads, farmland development, establishment of agricultural trading centers and warehouses, cold storage facilities, bulk transportation and agricultural shipping terminals, and fish landing and processing centers that will directly support F2C2 projects. DA shall also encourage domestic and foreign investments through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in irrigation systems and rainwater harvesting facilities.

Special complementary programs and projects will also help the F2C2 program to further encourage and promote the development of clustering and consolidation. Special partnerships will also be forged like with Social Security System (SSS) where a separate social security arrangement for the agriculture sector and special financing window for F2C2 shall be negotiated, Special partnership with LGU's to institutionalize a system that will provide subsistence support for the family living expenses of F2C2 participating farmers and fishers. Communication and Networking, Scholarships and Education Initiatives, Partnerships and Investor Linkaging, and External trade arrangements shall also be made in support to the F2C2 program.