



GLOBAL GRANTS COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Use this form to report community assessment findings to The Rotary Foundation when you apply for a global grant.

Assessing the strengths, weaknesses, needs, and assets of the community you plan to help is an essential first step in designing an effective and sustainable global grant project. See [Community Assessment Tools](#) for full instructions and helpful tips.

This form will help you report the results of your community assessment, and it's required when you apply for any humanitarian or vocational training team grant. Complete a separate form for each beneficiary community (e.g., school, health care system, or village), using information that is both current and specific to each community. Remember, you can't use global grant funds to cover the cost of doing an assessment, but you can use district grant funds.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Describe the characteristics (such as geographic information, main sources of income, population size, and access to education and health services) of the specific community where this project will take place.

Barangay Casalat is one of the 36 barangays in the municipality of San Ildefonso, Bulacan. This upland rural community is estimated at 83.6 meters (274.3 ft) above sea level. A large portion of the service roads in the barangay is still rough road, making it difficult to access, and sometimes inaccessible during heavy rains.

Based on the 2020 Census data, its population reached 2,030, representing 1.75% of the total population of the municipality (philAtlas.com).

Brgy. Casalat is primarily an agricultural community as 80% of its working population sourced out their income from their farming activities while the remaining 20% earned from private and public employment. Elementary students attend school at Casalat Elementary School which is located at the center of the barangay while high school students take their secondary schooling at Akle High School, just one barangay away from Casalat (2.3 km away) or at Upig High School (12 km away). Upon reaching college level, students usually take their college degrees either from Bulacan Agricultural State College (BASC-DRT campus (6.5 km away) or from BASC- Main Campus (18 km away) depending on the course they want to pursue.

. There is a barangay health center and an ambulance attending to the emergency health situation

of the residents and providing first aid medical assistance to the community people. Community people may also seek medical services from either private or public hospitals located in San Ildefonso, San Miguel, Baliuag and other nearby towns

COLLECTING COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT DATA

When you conducted the assessment, who in the community did you speak to? At least two different community representatives and beneficiaries who are not involved in Rotary (such as teachers, doctors, or community leaders) should be included in the discussions.

The Rotary E-Club of Bulacan True North (RECBTN) with the help of the Extension Workers from Bulacan Agricultural State College (BASC) gathered data on the current status of the farming community of Brgy. Casalat, San Ildefonso, Bulacan as the target beneficiary community of the proposed project.

A total of 35 rural farmers who are all active members of Casalat Adventurers Farmers Association (CAFA) in Casalat, San Ildefonso Bulacan served as the survey respondents. Meanwhile, three key informants composed of the Chairman of their Association - Mr. Elinor R. Zausa, the Barangay Councilor in-charge of agriculture sector in their barangay, and one potential farmer beneficiary were the participants of the FGD.

When in the last year did the discussions occur?

January 25, 2024

What methods did you use to collect information from community members (such as community meetings, interviews, or focus groups)?

The team employed a combination of survey and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) techniques in gathering data from the respondents. The survey questionnaire used was divided into six parts which collected data about their personal information, farming practices, farm production, marketing practices, financial information and problems being encountered by them hindering their farm productivity and income. On the other hand, guide questions used by the team during the FGD asked information on the community background and situation, community needs, strengths and priorities as well as concerns on their environment, if any.

TARGET POPULATION

Who will benefit directly from the project? List the groups that will benefit (such as schools, hospitals, vocational training centers, cooperatives, or villages).

The proposed project will directly benefit the 50 farmers-members of the Casalat Agventurers Farmers Association (CAFA). Their association is still young as it was just formed last year

Among the different groups of farmers in the municipality, farmer-members of CAFA were selected to be the target beneficiaries because they have exhibited strong dedication on their farming activities despite frequently suffering from low productivity, low income and sometimes even incurring net loss if struck by unfortunate events such as natural calamities and infestation. Members of the association have been engaged in agricultural production for several years. They were also beneficiaries of the ongoing extension project of BASC on rabbit production and BASC project team has witnessed their being receptive to change and innovation that could improve their current standard of living.

Describe the process of how the beneficiaries were identified.

Target direct beneficiaries will be selected based on the following criteria: (1) must be an active member of the association; (2) have been engaged in agricultural production suffering from low productivity and low income, and (3) must be willing to adopt the technology intervention to be provided to them to increase their production and farm income.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS, NEEDS, PRIORITIES, AND PROJECT DESIGN

Describe what members of the community said matters to them during the assessment.

During the assessment, farmers have identified low productivity and income as their top priority needs, which they thought, if addressed, could really create a big difference in the lives of the people in the community. Their regular harvest was only 40 cavans or 2 tons (2000 kg) of fresh paddy per cycle compared to national average of 80 cavans or 4 tons.

According to them, low farm productivity was due to old farming practices such as using cheap/poor quality or free seeds from government , limited application of fertilizers relying only on government subsidies as fertilizers are very expensive, and farm irrigation not being closely monitored. Due to lack of financial resources to support their planted crops, they become indebted to loan sharks to whom they were forced to sell their harvest at low price.

Describe the community’s strengths and resources.

Brgy. Casalat has 379 hectares of irrigated rice lands and 58 hectares are rainfed for a total area of 437 hectares based on the record of Municipal Agriculturist Office (MAO). It has one of the largest areas available for farm production among the 36 barangays in San Ildefonso. Most of the people (80% of the working population) living in the target community are engaged in agriculture and have been cultivating

their lands since they were young.

Aside from the available irrigation system, other sources of irrigation water that can be tapped include the DRT-Casalat river, other water streams and deep well. The community also has two drying pavements being used for drying their harvested palay. There is also one solar-powered pump installed in the barangay.

The target barangay has a peaceful rural and agricultural community with very supportive local government units and cooperative farming community.

Describe any challenges and gaps in the community’s behaviors, skills, and knowledge.

Limited access to farming technology, insufficient farm mechanization, lack of soil analysis for proper soil nutrient application are some of the counter-productive situations of the agriculture sector in the community that hampered the farmers’ opportunity to enjoy a better quality of life. Such situation if addressed properly could help farmers to become more productive.

Community people are very willing to adopt innovative farming technologies that could help them increase their farm productivity and income. Their desire to learn new knowledge and skills in farming is very evident during the FGD conducted. In fact, they set aside their other schedules at work just to give time and be part of the community assessment. However, they are being constrained to innovate because of financial limitations.

The level of education in the community is also improving as only 20% of the total population are elementary graduates, while around 50% and 30% have reached high school and college level, respectively.

What issues will the project address, and how does the community currently address those issues?

Among all the farm issues identified, the proposed project will be addressing first the quality of seeds that will be used and the inappropriate fertilization being practiced by the farmers because they are the major causes of crop failure. At present, there are a few farmers who already tried soil testing of their farms. They are those who have undergone training from the Bureau of Soil and Water Management (BSWM) on how to use a soil test kit. However, majority of them have not followed the recommended fertilization due to limited financial resources to purchase fertilizers and other soil conditioners. Despite knowing the importance of applying the recommended amount and variety of fertilizer through balance fertilization, farmers cannot help themselves but resort back to their traditional way of farming.

Provide the specific details of the project design and how it will solve these issues.

Through the proposed grant, the farmer beneficiaries will be provided with technical, skills and values formation training, and necessary supplies and technical support without incurring additional cost on their part, to encourage them to adopt the right technologies that will help boost their production and income. Following are the technical support that will be provided to the farmers using the grant funds:

- a. Soil testing and analysis, fertilization recommendation and crop management.
- b. Supply of appropriate and more affordable and longer lasting farm inputs such as seeds, biofertilizers, , foliar spray fertilizers, etc.
- c. Technical assistance throughout the planting season for proper crop management, farm irrigation and precise application of inorganic and bio-fertilizers and foliar spray, if and when needed.
- d. Identify other cash crops that can be planted by the farmers.
- e. Develop rice varieties that can be identified as exclusively produced by San Ildefonso farmers (for example: Dinorado of Mindoro)

The progress of the proposed project will be monitored through farm visits conducted twice a month collaboratively by RECBTN members, AKAP Community Phil., Inc. and BASC faculty extensionists and their students. This experience for students will add valuable skills to them and make them more employable in both domestic and international settings.

The right technology will be available to farmers through this project, rather than using unsuitable remedies for misdiagnosed situations. During harvest time, farmers will also receive assistance with proper drying and storage to prevent spoilage especially during the rainy season.

In the first cycle of the project implementation, farmers are expected to achieve an increase of up to 150% in rice production, from 40 cavans to 100 cavans. On the 2nd cycle, harvest is expected to increase further by 30 cavans, another increase of 30 cavans on the 3rd cycle and a 20 cavan increase on the 4th cycle so that the harvest will reach 180 cavans at the end of the 4th cycle.

Describe the long-term plan for the project (such as oversight, financial responsibilities, and expected behavior change) after Rotary’s involvement ends.

The grant project will be closed after the completion of at least 2 cycles and when the amount of harvest has increased from the current 40 cavans to 130 cavans or an increase of 225%. However as the CAFA farmers will be organized to become a Rotary Community Corps (CAFA-RCC) to be sponsored by RECBTN, and since about 84% of the grant fund will serve as a revolving fund for the RCC (as shown in the Financial Projections attached in the online application), that will be used, returned and reused on the next planting cycles, the project should continue over the long term. RECBTN will continue to ensure that the project objectives are maintained and attained by the CAFA-RCC including the handling of finances. RECBTN will continue its collaboration with the suppliers and partners involved in the project as needed.

The CAFA-RCC will be provided the needed training to effectively function as a business unit so that later it can exist as a self-managed organization. In-house technical expertise will be developed so that the

dependence of CAFA-RCC with third parties will be reduced. At least for the coming 4 planting cycles, training budgets are provided for every cycle for various technical and value formation training including livelihood seminars such as intercropping. It is expected that through this project, the lives and livelihood of the farmers will significantly improve. The RCC will then become the model of a farming community that is able to break free from poverty by adopting proven new farming technologies that increase farm production and farmers' income. And at the same time becoming disciplined and responsible member of the family and community as a whole.

RECBTN's is envisioning its next major project for the RCC which is an economical drying facility that will enable the farmers to dry its harvested fresh paddies, such that they can store it with minimized risk of spoilage. As an RCC, it can engage in selling dry palay which will result to higher profits, or better still if they will have the dry palay milled then sell it as well milled rice, wherein much bigger profit per can be realized by the farmers.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (FOR ALL ENVIRONMENT AND WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE PROJECTS)

What are currently the greatest environmental threats to local land, air, water resources, and the ecosystem?

List any cultural practices that are relevant to the project (such as agricultural techniques or traditions).

What positive and negative environmental changes do you expect to result from the project?