RRDEN and ViCAARP
CY 2018

Inter-Agency RDE Review
(Agriculture and Fisheries, Environment and Natural Resources)

Extension Project

I. **Basic Information**

Program/Project Title: Increasing Agricultural Productivity towards Food Security and Poverty Alleviation: Extension Support to the Twenty-two Provinces with Highest Poverty Incidence in the Philippines

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Designation: Center Director, Assistant Center Director, Project Coordinator, M&E Assistants

Implementing Agency: Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 8

Cooperating Agency(ies)   : Provincial/Municipal Local Government Units

Funding Agency: Agricultural Training Institute
Budget:
    Total Amount of Release: Php 187, 279, 401
    Total Expenditure(s): Php 187, 279, 401

Duration of the Project: March 2017 – present

Project Location: Selected Municipalities in the Provinces of Leyte, Samar, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, and Biliran

Executive Summary

The program seeks to increase the productivity of communities in provinces with high poverty incidence through extension interventions that would improve the knowledge, attitude, skills and aspirations of the beneficiaries and increase their engagements toward agriculture and fishery development. It supports the present administration's thrust of ensuring food security and poverty alleviation particularly in the agriculture and fisheries sectors.

The program is implemented in the identified provinces in Region 8 with high poverty incidence, namely: Leyte, Samar, Eastern Samar, and Northern Samar. Four orientations were conducted, one for each of the provinces included in the program. But after the four orientations, not all 110 targeted municipalities participated as some failed to submit their proposals. Hence, the available slots were offered to the Province of Biliran, since its poverty incidence in 2015 is 21.3% (PSA, 2016). A 5th orientation was conducted for the province of Biliran.

Of the 118 municipalities of the five identified provinces, only 88 municipalities signed the Memorandum of Understanding including the City of Baybay in Leyte. The program has a total 3,187 beneficiaries.

The program followed the strategies outlined in its operationalization guidelines. It conducted a baseline survey among its beneficiaries using a questionnaire. It trained 117 agricultural extension workers (AEWs) and community organizers on social preparation, participatory planning and project proposal making. All participating municipalities including Baybay City conducted an orientation and participatory planning among its beneficiaries in 124 program sites (barangays/communities) to determine training and extension support needs as basis for their project proposal. All 88 municipalities submitted their proposals for review and 100% of these proposals was approved by the ATI. The proposals served as the basis in determining the suitable extension support (production and enterprise inputs) for their respective beneficiaries.

Majority of the beneficiaries (91%) were into agricultural production, crop and livestock while the rest (9%) were into fishing. Seventy two (82%) of the municipalities were into swine production while 45 (51%) municipalities were into vegetable production. Only 1 (1%) was into cut flower production.

Some program beneficiaries had already provided input for the next in line beneficiaries (passing the gift and roll-over schemes) as their sustainability strategy of the program.

The action plans formulated by the coordinators in the implementation of the program in their areas were monitored by the assigned community organizers. Coordinators were also required to submit a monthly monitoring reports. Problems met in the implementation of the program included: (1) poor monitoring from partner LGUs; (2) low submission of monitoring reports; (3) some beneficiaries were already inactive after the 1st cycle; and (4) a high number of mortality of livestock and poultry due to stress and diseases.

To encourage sustainability, ATI-RTC 8 will sponsor a contest for best project implementation. It will recognize best performing household beneficiaries, assisting coordinators from the municipal and provincial LGUs together with the municipal and provincial agriculturists in the 1st semester of 2019. A results based evaluation will be conducted in 2019.

II.   Technical Description

Rationale

It is the thrust of the government to ensure food security and poverty alleviation particularly in the agriculture and fishery sectors. While research and development produce knowledge and technologies, the country's extension service harnesses the potentials of the agriculture and fishery sectors towards economic and social development.

The Tier 2 program is a technical assistance intended to provide extension support exclusively to the 22 provinces with the highest poverty incidence in the country. It aims to provide farm families with extension services towards the improvement of living that is, increasing their income by making their farms productive as they engage in farm enterprises. Through the partnership forged by the ATI and the local government units (LGU), the program entitled "Increasing Agricultural Productivity Towards Food Security and Poverty Alleviation: Extension Support to the 22 Provinces with High Poverty Incidence" was able to connect to different farming and fishing communities of the 22 poorest provinces in the country, which include the province of Leyte and the three provinces in the Samar Island.

While improving the conditions of these communities is a gigantic task, the government is keen in assisting the LGUs through this program. Moreover, it is presumed that investments for the poor will yield greater impact towards the realization of reducing poverty incidence.

Hence, the program maximizes the use of extension interventions that are best fit for the provinces. Following the National Extension Agenda and Programs (NEAP), the program centers on the theme of empowering the agriculture and fisheries communities with knowledge, attitude and skills that will make them competitive and resilient. The extension interventions include, but not limited to good extension practices that had been generally tested nationwide. The thematic programs outlined in the NEAP capture these extension interventions of providing up-to-date knowledge and information, exhausting all means to capacitate different stakeholders; making sure that all extension services of stakeholders are well coordinated; employing innovations;

addressing the hardly irreversible impact of climate change; and being supported by an enabling environment.

Objectives

As an extension intervention, the program aimed to build the capacities of stakeholders in agriculture and fisheries sectors in the target provinces to make them productive. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Strengthen LGUs' capabilities in managing extension programs and projects directed to their farming and fishing communities;

2. Enhance LGUs' capabilities in capacitating the farmers and fishers and their communities through appropriate extension interventions based on their needs;

3. Increase collaboration with partner agencies to support the needs of LGU extension as well as farmers and fishers; and

4. Increase access to information, communication and other support services by the stakeholders.
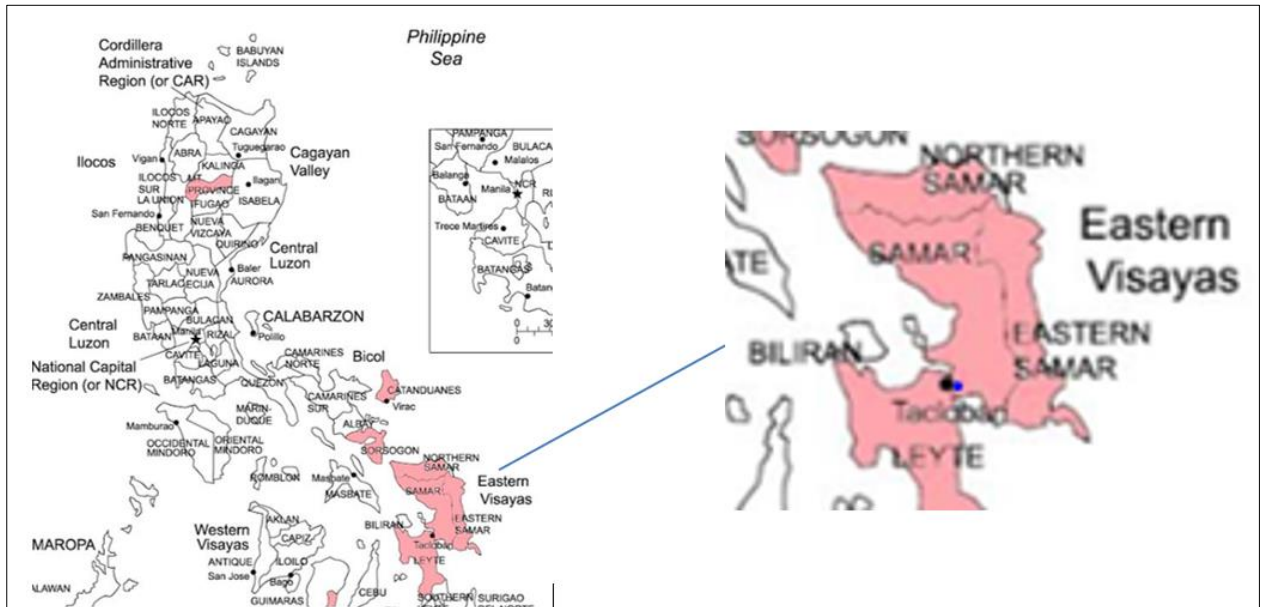
III.   Methodology

Locale of the Study

Figure 1. Location map of the 4 poorest provinces in Region 8

The beneficiaries of the Tier 2 program came from the four poorest provinces in Eastern Visayas namely: the province of (1) Leyte, (2) Samar, (3) Eastern Samar, and (4) Northern Samar.

Table 1 shows the list of the 22 provinces and its corresponding poverty incidence, percentage

Table 1. List of the 22 Provinces with Highest Poverty Incidence

Rank	Province	Poverty Incidence * Among Population (%)
1	Lanao del Sur	74.3
2	Sulu	65.7
3	Sarangani	61.7
4	Northern Samar	61.6
5	Maguindanao	59.4
6	Bukidnon	58.7
7	Sultan Kudarat	56.2
8	Zamboanga del Norte	56.1
9	Siquijor	55.2
10	Agusan del Sur	54.8
11	Eastern Samar	50
12	Lanao del Norte	50
13	Mt. Province	49.9
14	Western Samar	49.5
15	North Cotabato	48.9
16	Catanduanes	47.8
17	Leyte	46.7
18	Negros Oriental	46.6
19	Zamboanga Sibugay	44.9
20	Sorsogon	44.8
21	Tawi-Tawi	
22	Basilan	

* Source: PSA, 2015

Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Training Institute

Northern Samar ranked 4th with a poverty incidence of 66.4%. Eastern Samar ranked 11th place with a poverty incidence of 50%, while Western Samar had a poverty incidence of 49.5% in 14th place. Leyte was ranked 17th with poverty incidence of 46.7%..

The program adopted the Training Services Enhancement Project-Rural Life Improvement (TSEP-RLI) participatory approach along the three components: production or livelihood, rural living condition and community environment. The approach incorporated collaborative learning activities to integrate mobilization and awareness raising processes. It promoted people's participation in the activities that would lead to the improvement of their quality of life which is directed to provide opportunity to the people to re-examine their ways of life and plan together for better future by sharing ideas among themselves.

As provided in its operational guidelines (Memorandum No. M17-03-114 dated February 3, 2017), the program implementation followed these strategies: (a) provincial orientation, (b) forging memorandum of understanding with LGUs, (c) selection of site and beneficiaries, (d) capability building for extension workers, (e) social preparation and participatory planning with the

beneficiaries, (f) training and extension support to beneficiaries, (g) monitoring and evaluation with sustainability plan embedded.

It capacitated the beneficiaries through the conduct of either the Farmers Field School, Farm Business School or Climate Smart Farm Business School, Farmer Livestock School and other capability building activities that capacitated beneficiaries in their chosen livelihood project, to ensure that the extension support provided for agriculture and fishery production and enterprise served its purpose and is not compromised.

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Provincial Orientation

ATI-RTC 8 conducted provincial orientations for each identified province to brief governors, provincial agriculturists, local chief executives and municipal agriculturists about the program; to discuss the draft MOU particularly on the responsibilities of each stakeholder; and to solicit suggestions to facilitate smooth implementation of the program.

There were four orientations conducted for the four provinces included in the program. But after the four orientations, not all 110 targeted municipalities participated in the program and some failed to submit their proposals. Hence, the available slots were offered to the province of Biliran, since its poverty incidence in 2015 is 21.3% (PSA, 2016). Another orientation for the province of Biliran was done.

There were 121 participants, including the local chief executives, local officials and agricultural extension workers representing the 86 LGUs which attended the orientations.

Table 2. List of Tier 2 Program Orientations Conducted

Date	Provinces	Participants			No. of Municipalities Represented
		M	F	Total	
March 22, 2017	Leyte	17	14	31	24
March 28, 2017	Samar	14	17	31	21
March 29, 2017	Northern Samar	18	10	28	17
March 30, 2017	Eastern Samar	14	7	21	16
August 29, 2017	Biliran	5	5	10	8
Total		68	53	121	86

B. Forging Memorandum of Understanding with LGUs

Following the orientation briefing, ATI ensured the engagement of the LGUs in the implementation of the program by entering into a MOU. A Memorandum of Understanding was executed between Provincial Governors and ATI-CO through OIC Director Dr. Luz A. Taposok and between Municipal Mayors and ATI-RTC 8 through Center Director, Vilma M. Patindol.

Table 3 shows the number of Memorandum of Understanding submitted per province. There are 88 LGUs (Leyte – 25, Samar – 21, E. Samar – 18, N. Samar – 17, Biliran -7) who have inked the MOU with ATI-RTC 8 for the Tier 2 program. The five provincial local government units also entered into an MOU with the Institute.

Some of those who attended in the orientation backed out and some of those who did not, talked to their governors and asked for the vacant slots. Thus, resulting to a total of 88 LGUs participating in the program.

Table 3. Number of MOUs Submitted per Province

Provinces	No. of LGUs
Leyte	25
Samar	21
Eastern Samar	18
Northern Samar	17
Biliran	7
TOTAL	88

C. Selection of Site and Beneficiaries

The sites were selected based on the following criteria: lower income class communities with higher concentration of poor farmers/marginalized groups, high potential for agriculture and fisheries enterprises based on color-coded maps, high vulnerability to disaster, area not too dangerous for ATI personnel due to peace and order issues, and distance not too remote for extension support to be delivered. An initial list of household beneficiaries was provided by the LGU through the Municipal Agriculture Office based on the set and agreed criteria. The list was

validated by the community organizers assigned in each province. A minimum of 10 and a maximum of 40 household-beneficiaries was set per municipality/city.

There are 124 sites (communities/barangays) in the five provinces with a total of 3,715 beneficiaries. The province of Leyte has 44 sites with 1,386 beneficiaries; Samar has 27 sites with 808 beneficiaries; Eastern Samar, 20 sites with 538 beneficiaries; 21 sites and Northern Samar 563 beneficiaries; and Biliran, 12 sites with 420 beneficiaries.

Table 4. Number of Sites and Beneficiaries

Provinces	No. of LGUs	No. of Sites (Brgys./Communities)	Number of Beneficiaries
Leyte	25	44	1,067
Samar	21	27	674
Eastern Samar	18	20	538
Northern Samar	17	21	558
Biliran	7	12	350
TOTAL	**88**	**124**	**3,187**

D. Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Beneficiaries

This part discusses the selected characteristics that may influence the success of a program. The socio-economic factors used in the analysis were age, civil status, gender, educational attainment, household structure, household size, house ownership, residential lot ownership, sources of income, average monthly income, household expenses, materials used in housing, and household assets.
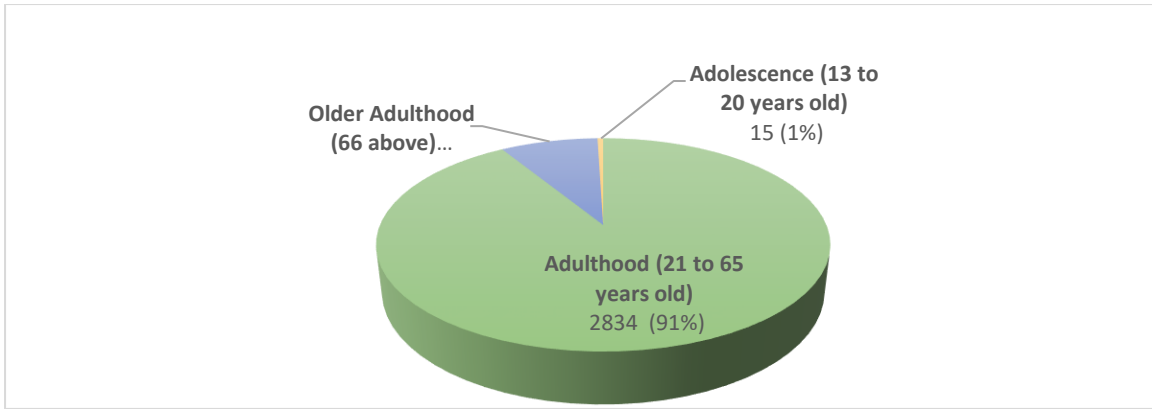
Figure 2. Age distribution of the beneficiaries

Most of the beneficiaries were in their adulthood (91%), 2, 834 of the total population. It was followed by older adulthood (258) and adolescence (91). Their average age was 44 years old. Human development is categorized into five stages based on their age such as infancy (0 to 5 years old), childhood (6 to 12 years old), adolescence (13 to 20 years old), adulthood (21 to 65 years old) and lastly the older adulthood (66 and above) (Essays, UK, 2013).
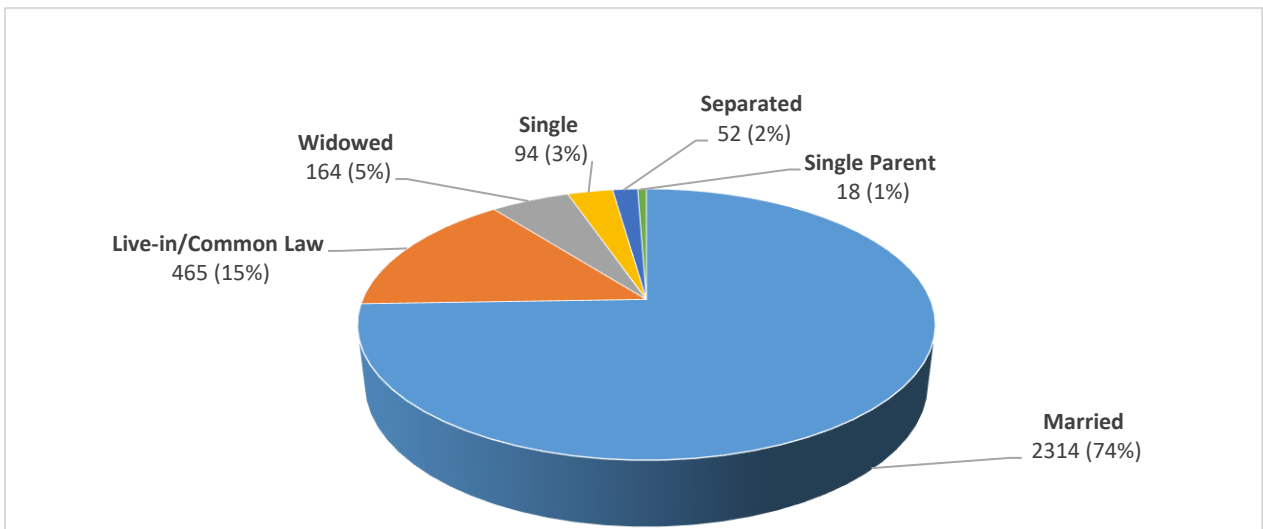

Figure 3. Civil status distribution of the beneficiaries

Civil status is categorized into: married, live-in/common law, widowed, separated and single parent. Out of its 3,107 beneficiaries, 74% (2,314) were married, 15% live-in (living together but unmarried couples), 5% widowed, 3% single, 2% separated, and 1% single parent.
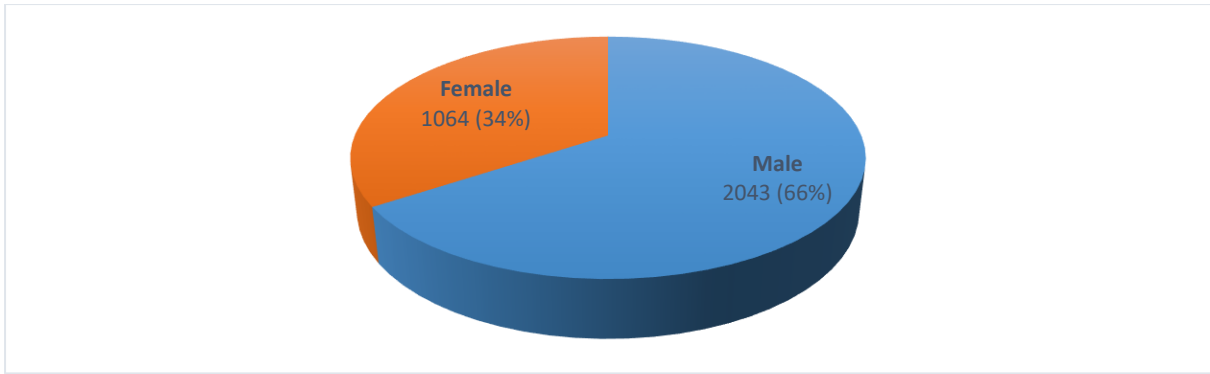
Figure 4. Sex distribution of the beneficiaries

Figure 4 shows the sex distribution of beneficiaries. Out of 3,107 beneficiaries, 2,043 (66%) were male and 1,064 (34%) were female. It was also indicated that the male were mostly the household head of family-beneficiaries.
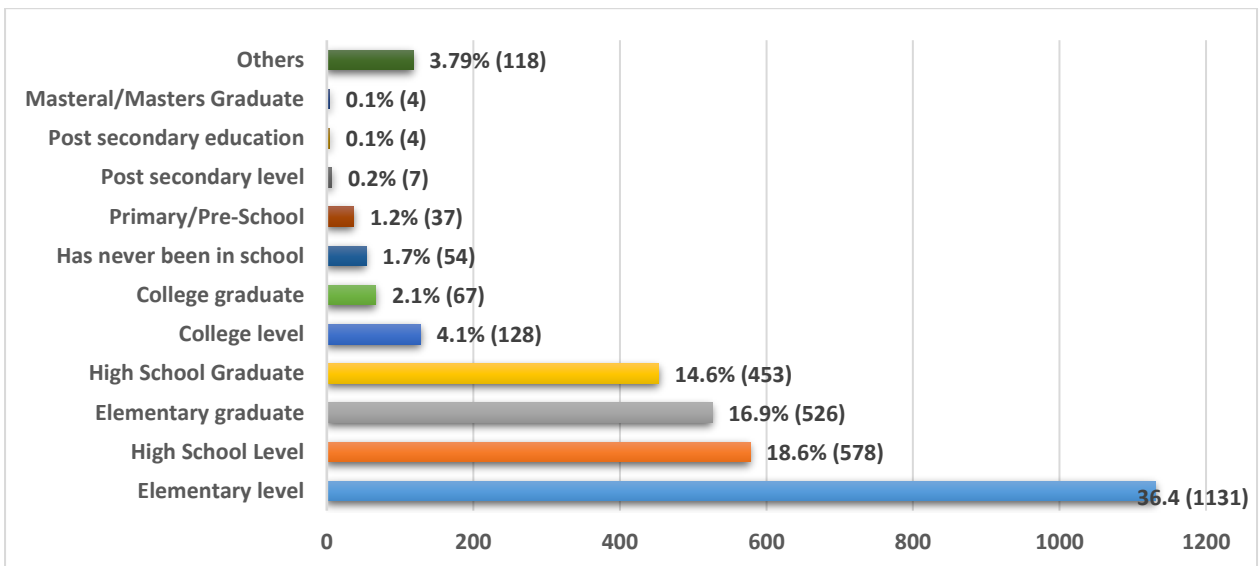

Figure 5. Educational attainment of the beneficiaries

Most of the beneficiaries were at elementary level (36.4% or 1,131) followed by high school level (18.6% or 578), elementary graduate (16.9% or 526), high school graduate (14.6% or 453) and college level (4.1% or 128). Sixty-seven beneficiaries were college while 54 had no education at all.
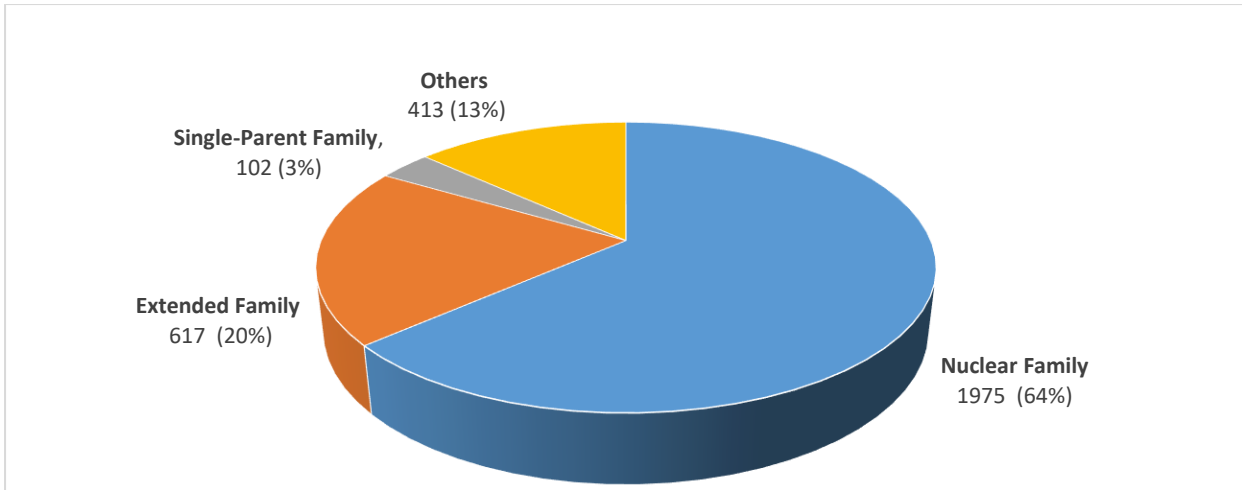
Figure 6. Household structure of the beneficiaries

More than half of the beneficiaries (64%) were from a nuclear family which is usually composed of a wife/mother, husband/father and children. Some of them from extended families and single-parent families at 617 and 102, respectively. Other household structures included childless family, grandparent family and step family.
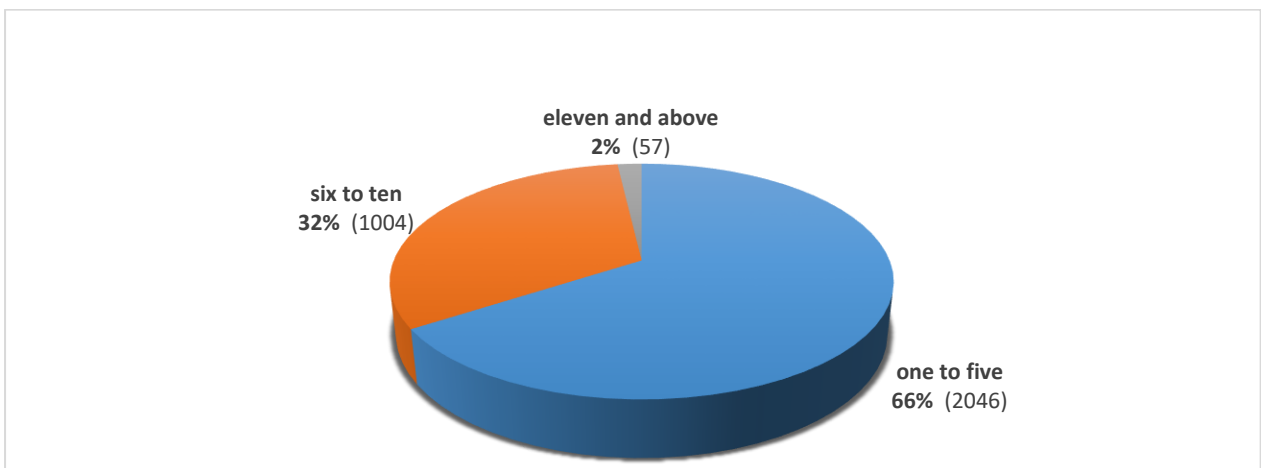

Figure 7. Household size of the beneficiaries

Of the 3,107 beneficiaries, 66% percent (2,046) had a household composed of 1-5 family members followed by 1,004 (32%) who had 6-10 family members. Only 2% (57) had above eleven members. The average household size was 5.
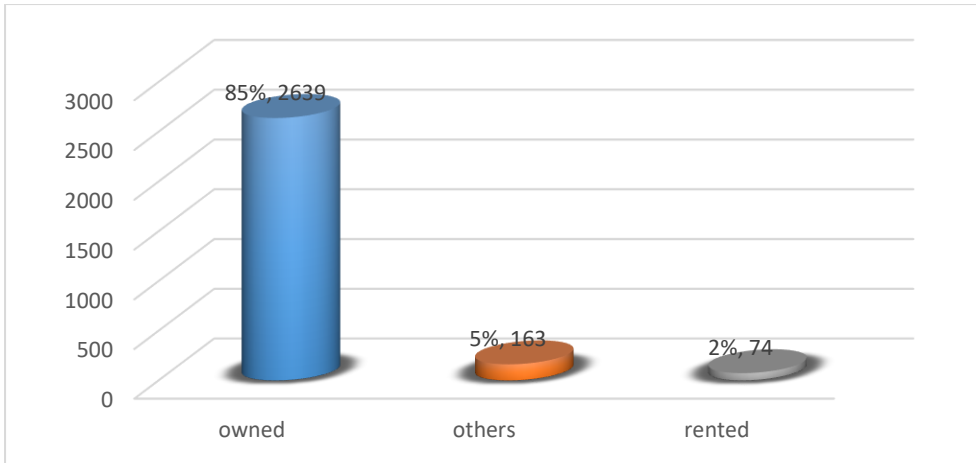
Figure 8. House Ownership of the beneficiaries

Majority of the beneficiaries owned their houses (85% or 2,639) and the rest (2% or 74) are renting. Some beneficiaries acquired houses through family inheritance or given by the government or non-government agencies. Others stayed in houses for free which are either commonly owned by family members, farm owner and other relatives. There were beneficiaries who had no house and lived with another family.
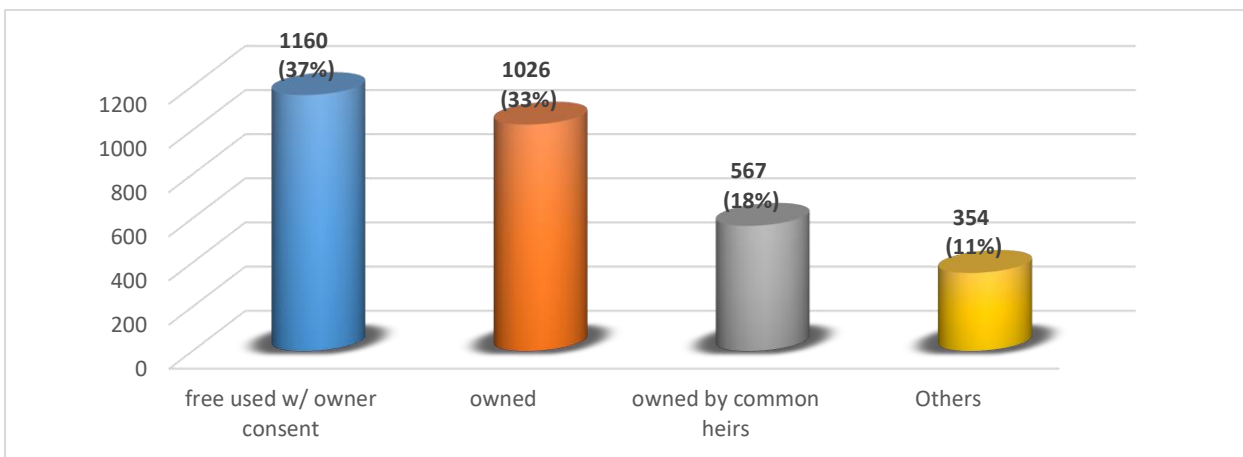

Figure 9. Residential Lot Ownership of Tier 2 beneficiaries

Most of the beneficiaries didn't own residential lots. As presented in Figure 9, only 33% (1,025) of the beneficiaries owned the lot where they built their houses. Most of them either used the residential lot owned by others who allowed them to stay (37%) or owned by common heirs (18%).
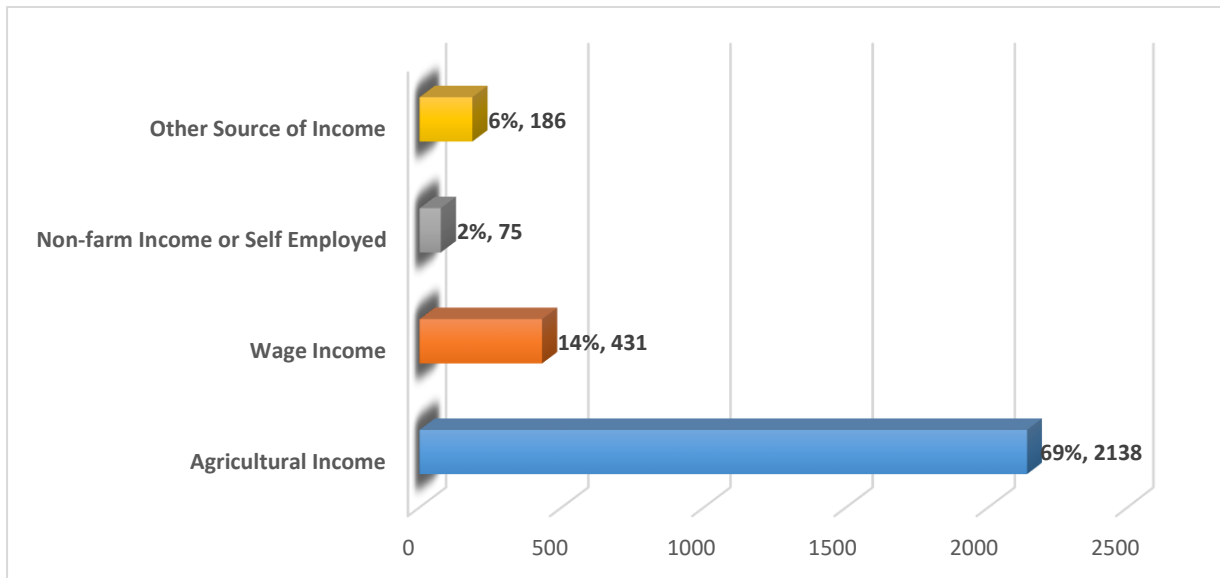

Figure 10. Sources of income of the beneficiaries

Sources of income are used as a determinant in knowing how much money a household earns. Having multiple sources of income does not always mean that a household or an individual earns more than those who only have single source of income. Figure 10 shows the sources of income of the beneficiaries.

Agricultural income is the primary income source of the beneficiaries. Sixty nine percent rely on farming, vegetable gardening, corn farming, copra, abaca weaving, tuba gathering, charcoal making, swine raising and fishing. Four hundred thirty one or 14% earned wages from working as laborers and service workers. The remaining 2% derived their income from self-employment or from non-farm income (remittance, official's honorarium, and income from being a government official/employee). On the other hand, 6% of the beneficiaries relied on other sources of income such as pension or 4P's subsidy.
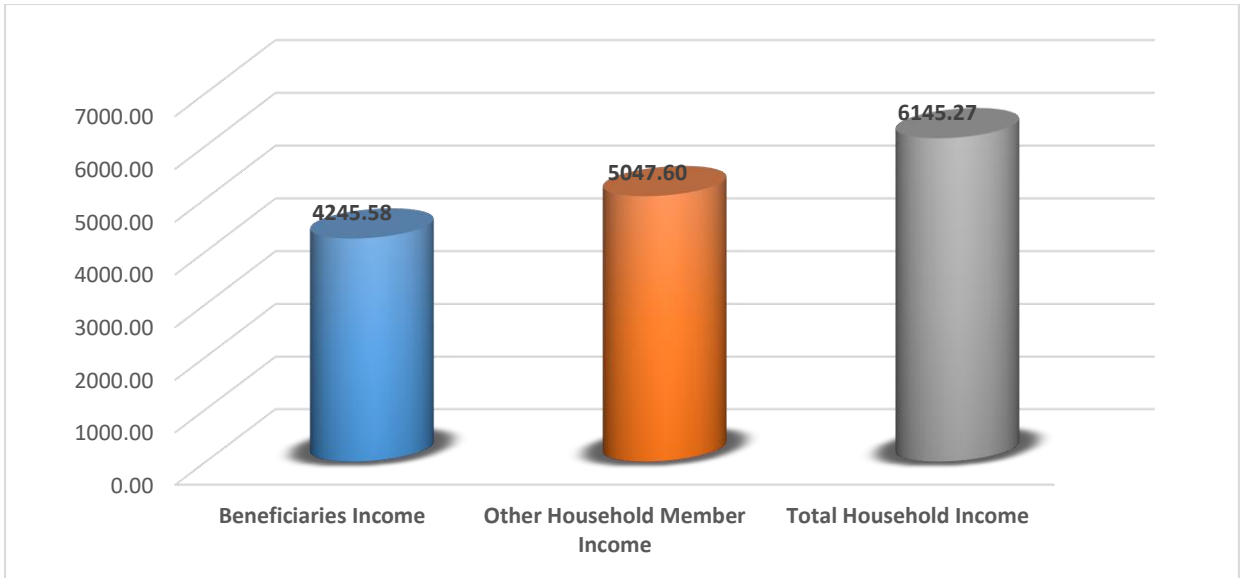
Figure 11. Average Monthly Income of the household of the beneficiaries

The total combined average monthly income of the beneficiaries and other family members was PhP 6,145.27. The average income of the beneficiaries was PhP 4,245.58 while that from other family members was PhP 5,047.60.
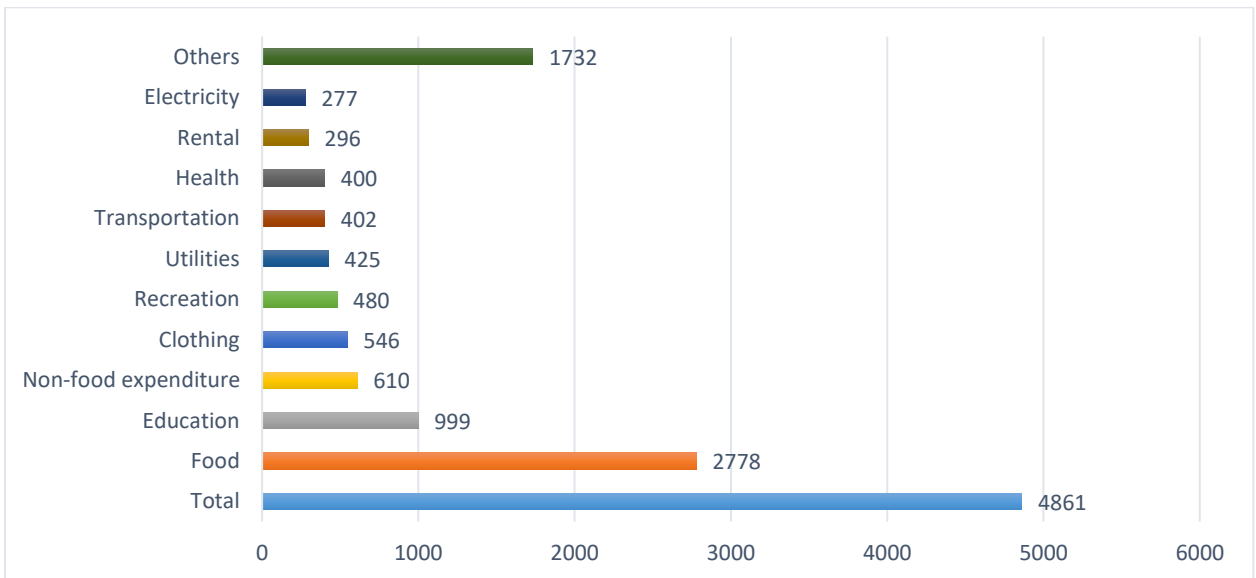

Figure 12. Average Household Monthly Expenses of Tier 2 Beneficiaries

The average monthly expenses of the beneficiaries amounted to PhP 4,861.00. Most of their earnings were spent on food (PhP 2,778.00) while an average of PhP 999.00 were spent on education. Other forms of expenses were clothing, recreation, utilities, transportation, health, rental, electricity and others.
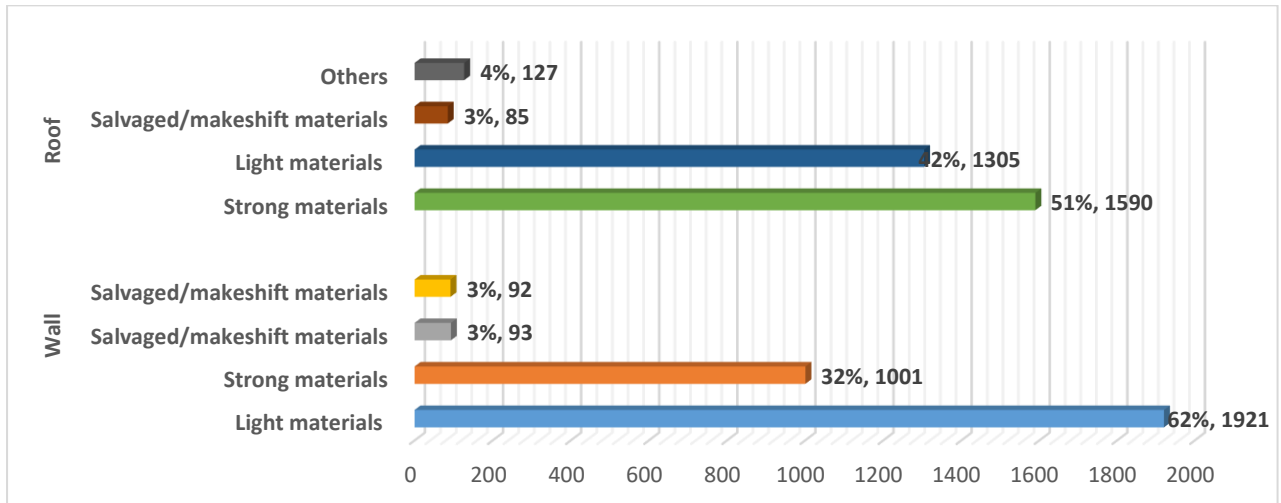

Figure 13. Materials used in housing of the beneficiaries

Fifty one percent (1,590) of the beneficiaries used strong materials and 42% used light materials for the roof of their houses. On the other hand, 62% of the beneficiaries used light materials and 32% used strong materials for the walls. Strong materials used referred to concrete, brick, stone, wood, galvanized iron and asbestos while the light materials were bamboo, sawali, cogon and nipa.
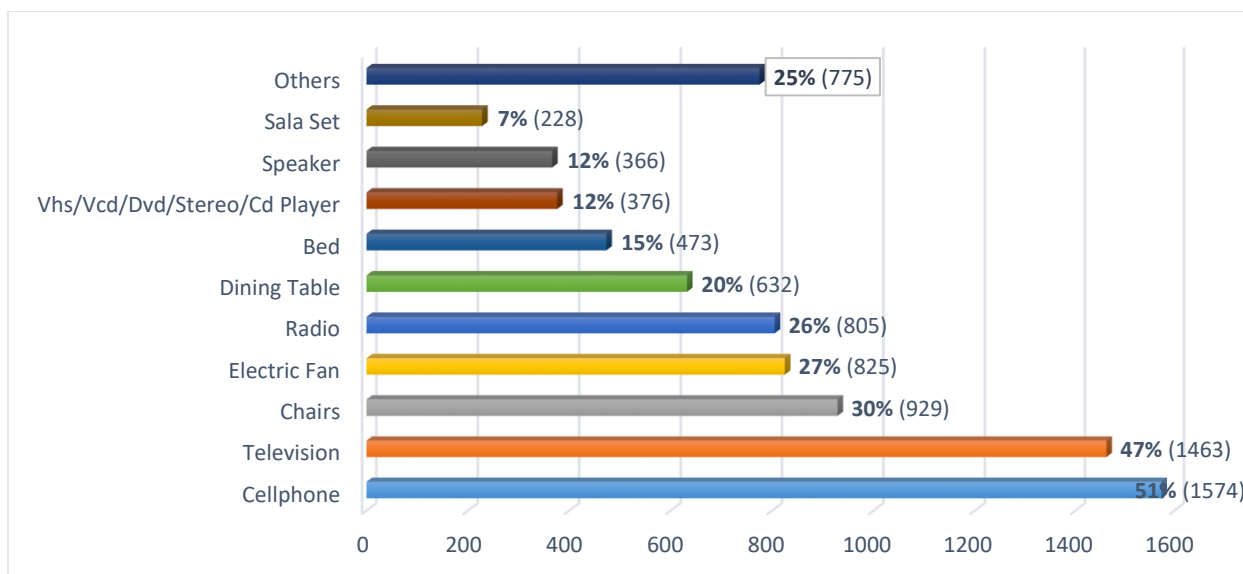
Figure 14. Household assets owned by beneficiaries

More than half of the beneficiaries (51%) owned cellphones; 47% had television sets; 30% has chairs; 20% had dining tables; 15% had beds; 12% had cd/dvd players and speakers; and 7% had sala sets. Other household assets owned include: refrigerator, rice cooker, LPG/electric stove, tablet, washing machine, portable DVD/CD player, and camera.

E. Capability Building for LGU Implementers

A training was conducted among the agricultural extension workers who were assigned by the LGUs as program coordinators to assist ATI-RTC 8 in the implementation of the program in their respective municipalities/cities. The training dubbed "Learn and Lead: Evoking Participation and Formulating Proposals" was done in five batches. The participants were trained on social preparation, participatory planning adopting the TSEP-RLI approach and in formulating project proposal. The 5-day training included an orientation on the survey questionnaire that was used to gather the baseline data. Outputs were action plan per municipality and draft proposal by group as exercise following the required format. The trainings conducted got an average overall rating of 4.09 (very satisfactory).

Table 5. Number of Training Participants per Municipalities

Date	Provinces	Participants			No. of Municipalities Represented
		M	F	Total	
April 17-21, 2017	Northern Samar & Samar	15	20	35	22
April 24-28, 2017	Eastern Samar & Samar	20	12	32	23
May 2-4, 2017	Leyte	14	17	31	25
June 5-8, 2017	For those who were not able to attend the first 3 batches	6	5	11	11
September 6-8, 2017	Biliran	2	5	7	7
Total		**58**	**59**	**117**	**88**

F. Social Preparation and Participatory Planning with the Beneficiaries

The assigned AEW also conducted social preparation and participatory planning among the program beneficiaries to inculcate values and to determine their training and extension support needs which determined the inputs to the project proposal they will formulate for approval by ATI-RTC 8.

Eighty eight (88) municipalities conducted participatory planning at the municipal level. All of them submitted their proposals for review and 100% of these proposals were approved by the ATI which served as the basis in determining the suitable extension support (production and enterprise inputs).

Table 6. Number of municipalities who have conducted participatory planning and approved proposals per province

Province	No. of Participating Municipalities	No. of Municipalities		
		Participatory Planning	Proposals	
			Submitted	Approved
Leyte	25	44	44	44
Samar	21	27	27	27
Eastern Samar	18	20	20	20
Northern Samar	17	21	21	21
Biliran	7	12	12	12
Total	**88**	**124**	**124**	**124**

G. Training and Extension Support to the Beneficiaries

The assigned AEWs made the training design based on the outputs during the social preparation and participatory planning. He/she facilitated in the conduct of either the Farmers Field School, Farm Business School, Climate Smart Farm Business School or Farmer Livestock School together with other capability building activities. They tapped other AEWs and other project stakeholders to serve as resource persons.

Provision of extension support was per project proposal submitted and approved. Inputs available in the area were preferred following area/location-specific technology adoption approach. ATI facilitated the procurement of agricultural supplies and materials indicated in the proposal.
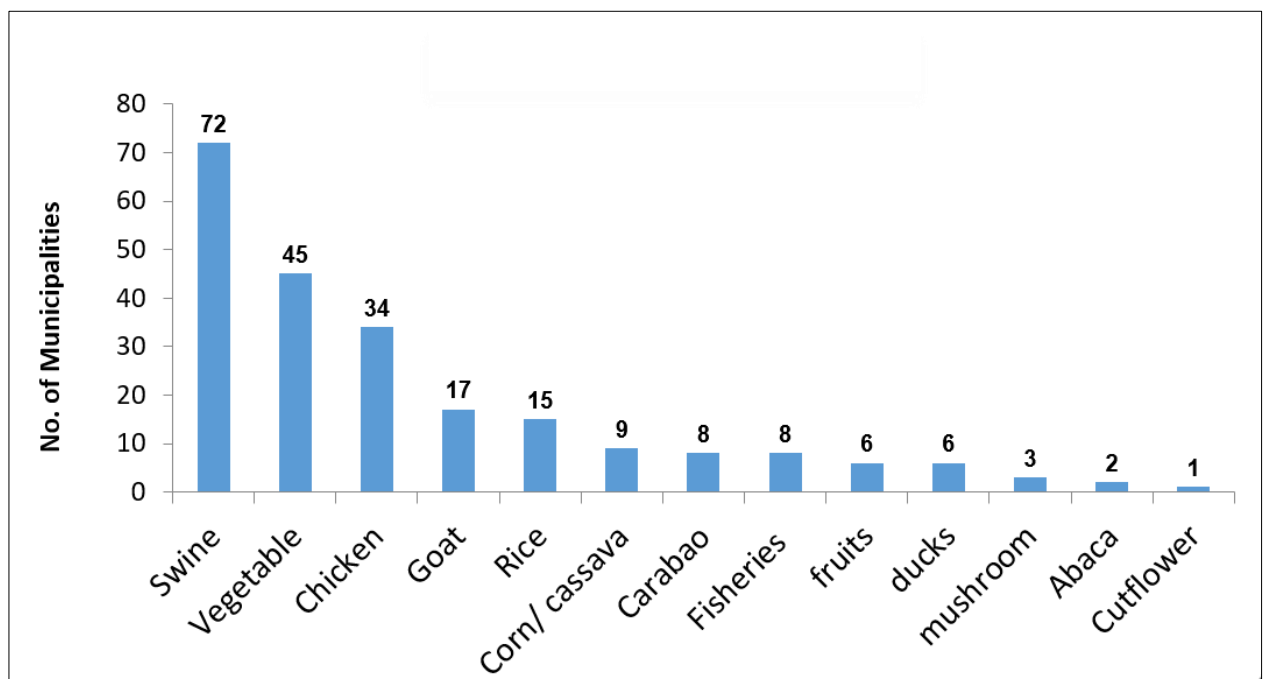

Figure 2. Components Provided Based on the Proposals

Majority of the beneficiaries (91%) were into agricultural production, crop and livestock while the rest (9%) were into fishing. Seventy two (82%) of the municipalities were into swine production, followed by 45 municipalities who were into vegetable production. The least requested (1%) livelihood project was the cut flower production.

H. Monitoring and Evaluation

A baseline survey was conducted adopting the questionnaire designed for the project which takes into consideration the data required in the Poverty Database Monitoring System that determines the household poverty level. Eighty six out of the 88 municipalities already returned their baseline survey forms. Three thousand one hundred seven (3,107) forms were already encoded.

Six (6) municipalities (Kananga, Caibiran, Giporlos, Barugo, Zumarraga, and Biri) submitted their monitoring reports. Likewise, the action plans formulated by the coordinators in the implementation of the Tier 2 program in their areas were monitored by the assigned community organizers.

Tier 2 infographic and a video of selected beneficiaries in the province of Samar was developed by the Information Services Section of ATI. A results based evaluation will be conducted in 2019.

I. Sustainability

ATI-RTC 8 will sponsor a contest for best project implementation and will recognize best performing household beneficiaries and the assisting coordinators from the municipal and provincial LGUs together with the municipal and provincial agriculturists on the 1st semester of 2019.

Each municipality had a Memorandum of Undertaking (MOU) with their beneficiaries to ensure full implementation and sustainability of the project. Further, a statement of commitment was also signed by the beneficiary testified by the LGU (represented by the municipal agriculturist and the Tier 2 Focal Person) and the ATI-RTC 8 Center Director as a pledge of commitment to the project. Some of the program beneficiaries are now passing the gift or into roll-over schemes to sustain the project and reach out to other families in need. Those who started the project early are already in their 3rd cropping cycle.

Problems Met

Different problems were met in the implementation of the project. These included (1) poor monitoring from partner LGUs; (2) low submission of monitoring reports; (3) some beneficiaries are already inactive after 1st cycle; and (4) high number of mortality of livestock and poultry.

V.   Literature Cited

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