

From Simple Re-Entry Plan to a Successful LGU Project

It was my first time to meet Arlene (because I was on study leave when she attended the Trainers Course in 2004). Instantly, I felt that she is a very fun-loving and cheerful woman and that she has charisma to work with people.

No doubt when we visited one of her clients, Mrs. Helen Soriano immediately recognized Arlene and was happy to see her. Mrs. Soriano is the dispersal coordinator and No. 1 Barangay Kagawad of Amungan, Iba, Zambales. She works closely with Arlene in the implementation and monitoring of the dispersal project of the Provincial Veterinary Office (PVO) in the area.



TS Mariquez Sison interviews Mr. Arlene Gutierrez.

According to Mrs. Soriano, "the dispersal project started in 2002 with only 20 piglets. Now, we have 115 piglets dispersed in the barangay. So far, there is no problem in marketing the animals but we do have 30-40% non-repayment among members". To solve the problem, the PVO provided an incentive scheme for the organizations to ensure proper collection among members. "We give a certain amount to the organizations as collection fee which they can add to their funds. We go to the different organizations, farmers or fisherfolks for the dispersal project. As such, we are assured that collection would be properly carried out and on time", Arlene pointed out. Furthermore, beneficiaries are given lectures on proper pig management before they are given the animals.

The dispersal project was the brainchild of Ms. Arlene Gutierrez, an alumna of the National Trainers Course on Pig Husbandry in 2004. "When I was sent for training to ITCPH, my boss requested me to make a proposal for the rehabilitation of PVO's dispersal project. We had a big problem with the collection of debts since the 90s. Honestly, I did not like the idea because I do not know anything about pig production", she related. But something happened during the course, the training changed her mind. Arlene said, "I gained confidence because of the knowledge and skills I got from the training. I learned the trades of pig production. I am one of the lecturers on pig production". She had a master's degree in Agronomy and started with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA). She worked at PCA for 10 years, and transferred to the Provincial Veterinary Office where she is doing a very good job as an extensionist.

Presently, the dispersal project has spread to other barangays in Iba, Zambales. Barangay Amungan is the pilot area, but the project spread to Sta. Barbara and Palanginan.



Arlene's husband, Gabriel inside their farm

After the training, she did not only rehabilitate the dispersal project but also applied what she learned from ATI-ITCPH in her own pig farm. She constructed an 8-sow level at the back of their house in a land planted with mango trees. Together with her husband, Gabriel Gutierrez, they ventured into pig production. Because of agri-farming, they were able to buy a new car and build a house for Arlene's parents in Pampanga. They are now building a fishpond

near the pig farm for tilapia raising.

Mrs. Soriano has this to say about Arlene, "she readily helps us whenever we encounter problems with our animals and regularly she visits us. May she continue the good work that she had started". – *Liberty O. Inciong*