

Chapter 13:

Impact of SANREM CRSP/ Southeast Asia on PCARRD and the Philippine NARRS

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Introduction

The Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), one of the five councils of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), was created through Presidential Decree No. 48 on November 10, 1972. It serves as the country's main arm in planning, coordinating, evaluating and monitoring the national agricultural research program. It started as the Philippine Council for Agricultural Research (PCAR) whose mandate gradually broadened to cover natural resources (PCARR) and eventually the development function (PCARRD). PCARRD carries out five major mandates, namely: 1) formulating policies, plans, strategies programs and projects for science and technology development; 2) monitoring research and development projects; 3) programming and allocating government and external funds and generating funds for research and development (R&D); 4) developing the capability of institutions/organizations involved in R&D; and 5) promotion and commercialization of technologies.

PCARRD has established the National Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Network (NARRDN) comprising of national multi- and single-commodity and regional R&D centers, cooperating stations and specialized agencies.

Research activities are done by the member agencies of the regional consortia. The network and the consortia promote mutual sharing of resources and minimize duplication of activities. The two are separate but closely linked systems. Their interrelated management functions effect decentralized decision making at the regional level. At present, there are 14 regional consortia established nationwide.

Overall, PCARRD, the NARRDN and the regional R&D consortia compose the National Agriculture and Resources Research System or NARRS.

In its 28 years of existence, PCARRD has evolved as a major institution fostering excellence, relevance, cooperation and sense of urgency in the management of research and in generating technologies to promote national development and global competitiveness. PCARRD has been instrumental in the packaging and implementation of integrated R&D programs, which on the other hand, by their contribution and impact have also helped shape PCARRD and the NARRS. One such program is the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program (SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia). It is a comprehensive farmer participatory, interdisciplinary, research, training and information exchange program that aims to elucidate and establish the principles of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management at a landscape scale.

SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia had its Phase I implementation from 1993 to 1997 and is currently in its five-year Phase II implementation. The program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

This paper reports on the lessons learned and impacts of SANREM CRSP/Philippines to PCARRD and the NARRS.

Lessons Learned and Impacts

PCARRD's experience in SANREM has provided rich insights for infusing constructive improvements in the Philippine NARRS. Learnings from Phase I implementation of the program have been incorporated in PCARRD operations. These learnings and impacts are presented and discussed below.

Balancing Commodity Approach with Ecosystem Approach

For over two decades, PCARRD has been accustomed to the commodity approach in conducting research and development. That is, researches are planned and implemented focusing on narrow commodity-based categories such as vegetables, plantation crops, and wood production forest. The unsustainability of this system has led to the incorporation of the ecosystem approach to R&D. SANREM CRSP has provided practical basis and mechanisms in pushing this approach through its comprehensive agroecosystem and landscape lifescape-

based approach to R&D. The program has provided a helpful framework in harmoniously interrelating a commodity with the various components of the ecosystem including offsite effects of development interventions.

Rationalized Review of R&D Proposals

SANREM's participatory approach to project development and evaluation has helped provide impetus to PCARRD in improving further its proposal evaluation mechanism. Aside from holistic and interdisciplinary considerations, PCARRD has increased membership of farmers and private sector practitioners in its R&D Commodity Teams, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Governing Council (GC). PCARRD handles 22 R&D commodities each being managed by a 6-member Technical Team composed of a farmer, private entrepreneur or representative from non-government organization. The PCARRD TAC and GC, on the other hand, now have three farmers and a private sector representative each. These bodies screen, evaluate and approve R&D project proposals at different levels. This move is meant to ensure that the actual needs and welfare of the farmers and the industry are addressed by the projects under implementation.

Strengthening of Integrated Research and Development Program (IRDP)

Our experience on landscape-lifescape approach in SANREM CRSP has enriched our packaging of IRDP to comprehensively include all aspects of a particular program area including environment and human or socio-cultural components. We now have a total of 14 integrated R&D programs on agriculture and natural resources implemented and managed by our regional R&D consortia.

Institutionalization of Sustainable Development Concerns in Research

PCARRD's experience with SANREM has taught us practical approaches in incorporating sustainable development concerns in our research agenda, programs and thrusts. Our exposure with SANREM CRSP's landscape-lifescape approach has enhanced our capacity to balance economics, socio-cultural and ecological concerns in agriculture and natural resources research. To effect this, PCARRD has

promulgated a policy for compliance by the NARRS to address socio-cultural and environmental concerns as early as the conceptualization of projects up to technology packaging and commercialization stages.

Input to the Localization of PA 21

The Philippine Agenda 21 (PA 21) is a comprehensive framework for the country's pursuit of sustainable development in keeping with our commitments in the 1992 Rio Summit. Through Presidential Memorandum Order No. 399 dated September 26, 1996, all sectors have been mandated to incorporate Sustainable Development in their programs and thrusts. Responding to the call of PA 21, the R&D sector stepped up the formulation and implementation of projects that promote sustainable development (SD). Specifically, SANREM CRSP has addressed interrelated PA 21 SD principles namely holistic science and appropriate technology, cultural sensitivity, self determination, local capacity building, gender sensitivity, intergenerational and spatial equity, ecological soundness and global cooperation. The localization process has been particularly guided by key concepts of integration, multistakeholdership and consensus building. Research results from SANREM CRSP continue to be valuable scientific inputs to environmental policy initiatives both at the local and national levels. During Phase I of SANREM, a total of 1250 local stakeholders were trained on landscape-lifescape development methodologies enabling them to participate actively in the program. The formulation and implementation of the Lantapan Natural Resources Management Development Plan (NRMDP) has helped institutionalize localization of PA 21 in Bukidnon.

Contribution to the Development of PCARRD as a Model in Research Management

Along with other parallel programs, SANREM CRSP had helped in the development of PCARRD as a model institution in research management. PCARRD's system for competitive research grants and research management for both local and foreign funded projects has been presented and commended as a model in a World Bank organized conference of National Agricultural Research Systems in Washington D.C. USA in June 1997. The presentation also highlighted partnership and collaboration between local and international institutions and capability building as is happening in the SANREM CRSP.

Fine-tuning Partnership between Scientists and Farmers

PCARRD is mandated to work for and partner with farmers and the private sector in the generation and transfer of technologies in agriculture and natural resources. The SANREM CRSP program has helped evolve effective approaches in working with farmers in the development of agroforestry and upland farming technologies and in the development of a comprehensive natural resource management and development plan, linking with indigenous systems for cooperation such as the *hugpong* and the local *barangay* (village). Development Councils have been found to be effective. So were the practices of leveling off with the grassroot partners and identifying researchable areas with them. These approaches are now adopted by PCARRD in its other programs.

Stronger Partnership with the CGIAR System

In recent years, there has been an expressed policy of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) to work with and help strengthen the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of developing countries. In addition, they have adopted natural resources management as a program thrust in line with their emphasis on sustainable development. Along these thrusts, the SANREM CRSP has provided opportunity for stronger collaboration between the Philippine NARRS and selected CGIAR Centers. These centers are the International Council for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). Local institutions that have worked closely with these CGIAR Centers through the SANREM Program include the Central Mindanao University (CMU), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Agriculture (DA), Ecosystem Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) and PCARRD. The partnership resulted in the sharing of knowledge and expertise and joint efforts in the development of approaches for sustainable agriculture and natural resources management. These approaches benefited from the high standard skills of international scientists balanced by the expertise and knowledge of Filipino scientists and local farmers. PCARRD, for its part, disseminated and shared this mechanism and its impact to the membership of the Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI).

Replication of SANREM CRSP Approach in other Areas

The SANREM CRSP/Philippines has served both as an inspiration and a model for other evolving agriculture and natural resource management-related programs. These include the University of the Philippines Los Baños program on “Landscape Approach to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development for Mt. Banahaw”, the DOST program on “Basin-wide Approach to Rehabilitation and Conservation of Laguna Lake and Surrounding Watersheds” and the Isabela State University’s “Cagayan Valley Program on Environment and Development”. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has also recognized SANREM CRSP as a model in pursuing improved strategy for watershed management in the Philippines.

Looking Forward

Phase I implementation of SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia has left a dent in PCARRD and the NARRS in terms of improved research management and strengthened program for sustainable development. Bringing these gains into the Phase II implementation of the program, we look forward to significant contributions of SANREM CRSP research for enhanced agroforestry and upland technology adoption, established decision support system for farmers and development workers and contribution to improved local and national policies for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. PCARRD and the NARRS look up to SANREM CRSP as a forerunner program in tracking the path to sustainable development particularly in balancing food production and environmental protection. This is expected to benefit not only the Philippines but also the rest of Southeast Asia.