

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Contact Information

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Organization Name	Philippine Rootcrops Research & Training Center (PhilRootcrops)
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Organization website	www.lsu-visca.edu.ph/prrtc
Organization type	National research center
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Organization description and date established	A national research institution, established in 1977, with a mandate to lead rootcrops research, development and training in the Philippines

II. Project Details

Title of Proposal	Mobilizing CGIAR Science to Enhance Civil Society Capacity: The Case of Linking Rootcrop Farmers With Markets in the Philippines
Project Duration using Grant Funds (in month)	24
Countries of Implementation	Philippines

III. Primary CGIAR Center Partner

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CGIAR Center Name	International Potato Center
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IV. Other Partners

Name of other Partner Organization(s)	Tarlac College of Agriculture
Type of Organization	Agricultural college
Name of partner	Lilibeth Laranang
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Name of other Partner Organization(s)	Asian Network for Sweetpotato Genetic Resources (ANSWER)
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Type of Organization	NARS-led regional research network
Name of partner	Algerico Mariscal
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V. Project Questions

1) **PROBLEM DEFINITION:** Rootcrops – such as sweetpotato, cassava, taro and yam – are associated with poor farming households in the Philippines. They have been traditionally accorded lesser priority in research, extension and government policy.

In the Philippines, rootcrops are grown in about half a million hectares and contribute roughly four percent of gross value added from agriculture. About 3-4 million people, 80% of whom are resource-poor, depend on rootcrops for livelihood because they cultivate marginal land where only these crops can grow and yield productively with minimal care and input. To these poor households, rootcrops are a key livelihood resource for food supply and cash income. Moreover their value-adding potential is now increasingly recognized, given the crops' rapidly expanding industrial and other commercial applications.

In partnership with the International Potato Center (CIP), Philippine civil society organizations (CSOs) have undertaken research and development efforts to support sustainable rootcrops livelihood in the Philippines. Uptake and use of these research products have been facilitated through the establishment of community-based enterprises now engaged in commercial-scale production of: 1) high-quality planting materials, 2) fresh roots and tubers, 3) dried chips for industrial uses, 4) livestock through use of local feeds, and 5) snackfood products. As of 2006, at least 2000 farmers have already participated in training and pilot projects on sustainable rootcrops livelihoods.

Several assessments have shown that the sustainability and further development of these rootcrops-based enterprises are constrained by farmers' poor linkage with markets. Among the key constraints are: 1) mismatch of products with market requirements such as timing, volume and destination; 2) loss of quality during post-harvest, transport and storage; 3) untapped opportunities for market demand of newer, higher value products; 4) high wastage from product processing operations; 5) weak policy and institutional support for quarantine and product quality certification; and 6) limited entrepreneurial and marketing capacities.

CSOs have been able to sustain their efforts to support local rootcrop livelihoods – through their own financial and material resources and through external grants. However they also realize the continuing need to strengthen their own capacities to facilitate not only technological innovations, but also socio-institutional innovations for linking farmers with markets. To address this capacity development challenge, Philippine CSOs recognize the potential of mobilizing the relevant pool of CGIAR knowledge, i.e. enterprise development, market access, participatory research and institutional learning and change.

Pursuing this – particularly by tapping the knowledge, expertise and resources at CIP – will represent a new phase in the Philippine civil society’s partnership with the CGIAR rootcrops science community.

2) **OBJECTIVE:** The main objectives of this project are

a. To enhance capacity of Philippine CSOs in effectively linking rootcrop farmers with markets by mobilizing CGIAR rootcrops science.

b. To strengthen rootcrop farmers’ link with markets by enhancing their participation and benefit in market chains, and ultimately improving their incomes and livelihoods.

3) **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:**

The project will work through three existing CSOs-supported community-based rootcrops enterprises in the Philippines. These provide the learning platforms for a series of joint activities to explore needs and introduce innovations in linking farmers with markets.

Overview of existing civil society partnerships

<i>Community-based organizations</i>	<i>Location (province)</i>	<i>Products</i>	<i>Supporting organizations</i>
Sweetpotato producers cooperative	Southern Leyte	Fresh sweetpotato roots, dried chips	Research center, municipal govt, commercial feeds company
Local network of food processors	Tarlac	Rootcrop snackfoods	Agricultural college, municipal govt
Informal learning group of beef cattle growers	Tarlac	Beef cattle fed with sweetpotato	Research center, govt extension, NGO

Potential innovations for improving market linkage can be tentatively grouped into: 1) technological (e.g. varieties, crop management, postharvest handling, 2) commercial (e.g. products, services), 3) institutional (e.g. marketing agreements, regulations, support services, organizations).

Potential innovations in improving farmers’ link with markets

<i>Community-based enterprises</i>	<i>Technological innovations</i>	<i>Commercial innovations</i>	<i>Institutional innovations</i>
Sweetpotato producers cooperative	locally adapted sweetpotato varieties	novelty sweetpotatoes for niche markets, dried chips for feed companies	quarantine protocols for planting materials, marketing contract with feed companies
Local network of food processors	processing-type sweetpotato varieties	increased substitution of rootcrops for expensive fruit ingredients in snackfoods	micro-finance, certification of product quality standards
Informal learning group of beef cattle growers	feed-type sweetpotato varieties, sweet potato-based feeding strategies	beef cattle during off-season	micro-finance, animal dispersal system

The proposed action learning project seeks to build on the above-mentioned civil society partnerships to promote sustainable rootcrop livelihoods. While earlier efforts focused on

technological innovations developed/adapted together with CIP, the proposed project will put more emphasis on complementary institutional and commercial innovations towards enhancing market linkage.

The proposed project will provide capacity development support to CSOs through a series of joint, field-based learning activities as follows:

1. Training on participatory market chain approach (PMCA) for CSO partners.
2. Participatory market chain assessments with pilot community-based enterprises
3. Development and implementation of PMCA implementation plan in each of the three sites (learning platforms) with CSO partners and community-based enterprises
4. Field monitoring and follow-up support by CIP, market chain actors and other project partners
5. Sharing and dissemination of pilot experiences with other CSOs and CGIAR organizations
6. Final project evaluation

PMCA is a participatory methodology that involves market chain actors in identifying, analyzing and putting into practice innovations for enhancing farmers' access to market. It was first developed by CIP in Latin America and subsequently adapted in Africa. CIP has since then produced training and other capacity development products for PMCA practitioners (see <http://papandina.cip.cgiar.org/fileadmin/PMCA/User-Guide.pdf>).

4) **INNOVATION:** The project aims to establish an inter-institutional, multi-level learning platform for Philippine CSOs-CGIAR partnership. Community-based enterprises provide the nexus for CSO partnerships in learning about market-driven agricultural innovation systems. The project will bring together a wide range of partners, from research and academic institutes to NGO and commercial company. In forging CSO partnership with the CGIAR, the project draws upon scientific support from CIP and the Asian regional network on sweetpotato genetic resources research (co-supported by Bioversity International).

5) **RELEVANCE and INNOVATIVENESS of PARTNERSHIP:** Partners were identified for their potential to contribute to and benefit from the three types of innovations which form the core of this project – technological, commercial and institutional. The mix of partners also promotes complementarity of expertise/resources.

6) **EXPECTED RESULTS:** Based on the project objectives, the main results that can be expected and corresponding ways of measure are as follows:

<i>Expected Results</i>	<i>Indicators/Measures</i>	<i>Methods</i>
Improved <u>capacity</u> of CSO partners in linking farmers with markets	Documented changes in organizational practices, policies, procedures that demonstrate market-chain orientation	Self-assessment, checklist, performance audit, review workshop, case studies
Increased farmers' <u>participation</u> and <u>benefit</u> in market chains	Technological/commercial/institutional innovations introduced, business opportunities generated, increases in net economic benefits, enhancement of social	Questionnaire survey, household/enterprise recordkeeping, checklist, PRA and other ethnographic tools

	and human capitals	
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7) REPLICABILITY: The project idea has high scaling-up potential because it is consistent with the value-adding strategy adopted by regional/global rootcrops research and development efforts. In addition, the socio-economic and agro-ecological context in the Philippines is comparable to many other rootcrop farming communities in the developing world.

8) SUSTAINABILITY: Two key characteristics of the project help ensure its sustainability: 1) It focuses on capacity development of CSOs, making them more self-reliant in undertaking activities, and 2) Farmers to derive economic incentives from market participation, rather than through artificial and/or doleout schemes.

VI. Proposed Budget

Item	Proposed budget (in US\$)
Personnel	55,000
Research supplies and services	60,000
Equipment	25,000
Training and other knowledge-sharing activities	50,000
Travel	35,000
Communication	27,000
General Administrative Expenses	28,000
TOTAL Project Cost	280,000
Co-Financing and Funding (no less than 30% of total project cost)	85,000
GRANT Funding Request (no more than 70% of total project cost)	195,000
Details of co-financing and funding sources	PhilRootcrops (35,000) TCA (20,000) CIP (30,000)