

GENDER ROLES IN THE SEAWEED INDUSTRY CLUSTER OF SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES: THE DICCEP EXPERIENCE

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Cognizant of the various gender roles, the Seaweed Industry Cluster approach was implemented to enhance seaweed production in Davao, Southern Philippines. The goal of the seaweed industry cluster is to be an inter-agency, multi-sectoral initiative to plan a development road map for the seaweed industry and its stakeholders in the Davao Region to increase income levels of fisherfolk, improve contributions of the industry to regional output as well as sustain productivity and competitiveness of the seaweed industry. Anchored in the industry cluster approach, a capability building project was implemented through the DICCEP (Davao Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project) funded by JICA-DTI, and with the following participants Southern Philippines Agri-Business and Marine and Aquatic School of Technology, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Research Region XI, local government units, the private sector, the Philippine Council of Aquatic and Marine Research and Development Zonal Center, and the Peoples' Organization. After several training activities on the industry cluster approaches, three projects were implemented as pilots. The projects' outputs to date have been: 1) establishment of seaweed farms that benefit farmers, 2) a directory of seaweed farmers and traders, 3) a database on seaweed production and 4) the training of 95 farmers & housewives on seaweed value adding and entrepreneurship. The outcomes and impact of the project include: a) generation of income for farmers, b) development of new value-added seaweed products with Intellectual Property Rights and c) business start-up for seaweed farmers and housewives.