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Ryuichi Izumi joined the staff of the International Development Journal in 1984 and became the Director of the Business Planning, Editorial Department in 1996. He is well-versed in development problems in Asia and Africa through his work in reporting on and studying ODA projects for the International Development Journal.

Projects Evaluated:

Field Survey: February 2005

The Philippines

- Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project (1)
- Rural Farmers and Agrarian Reform Support Credit Program

ODA Loan Assistance and the Determination of the Philippines to Undertake a "Poverty Reduction Plan" through Agrarian Reform

In February 2005, I carried out a study on ODA loans to support agrarian reform in Mindanao and Luzon in the Philippines. The purpose of the study was, first of all, to investigate from an onsite perspective the current state of agrarian reform, which is one of the national issues in the Philippines, and how the lives of the so-called landless farmers who received land allocations have changed. The second purpose of the study was to see what sorts of effects have been produced by the Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project (ARISP) (1), a Japanese ODA loan project initiated in August 1995 for the purpose of supporting farmers who received land allocations, and the Rural Farmers and Agrarian Reform Support Credit Program, another ODA loan project for the same purpose.

ARISP is made up of two components, one to strengthen farmers' organizations and one to develop infrastructure for agricultural production such as small-scale irrigation facilities, farm roads, and post-harvest processing facilities for the purpose of supporting farmers who received land allocations. Seeing this infrastructure installed, I keenly felt once again the effectiveness of irrigation facilities to increase agricultural production such as that of rice. In La Union Province, a region I visited that benefited from ARISP, one crop per year was produced prior to support, but after receiving support, it became possible to achieve five crops per two cropping seasons. In contrast, no large increases in harvests were visible in regions that received no support.



An irrigation sluice constructed through ARISP (Nabunturan, Compostela Valley Province). What I keenly felt once again when investigating this project is the power of irrigation facilities to achieve higher agricultural yields.

Moreover, the strengthening of farmers' organizations, which has been pursued by the executing agency together with NGOs and consultants, has produced favorable results, and the farm cooperatives which received support have been equipped with Articles of Association and accounting books. Moreover, a farm cooperative in Compostela Valley Province that I surveyed used agricultural financing from RASCP to produce and sell palm oil.



Farmer representatives gathered in the meeting room of the agrarian reform community in Pusonangtatay. Thanks to the installation of infrastructure such as irrigation, five crops of rice per two seasons became possible where before only one crop per season was possible.

I could feel that the ownership of the development in this region is gradually shifting to the farmers, and it can be said that the outcome of 10 years of ARISP is apparent in the farmers' fully confident expressions.

An issue for the future is to rectify the development gap between the regions with support and those without. For example, in a study conducted in La Union Province, there was a difference of six times in the average annual income of the two regions. In order to close such gaps, it is necessary to broaden the beneficiary areas from piloted areas to larger ones and to zone an entire area where development produces effects. The executing agency and the consultants are well aware that "a network is needed so that each agrarian reform area can link up with the others."



Ms. Tubianosa, a beneficiary farmer in the Nabunturan agrarian reform community. Since her income increased, she joined a school tuition insurance program to ensure her child's future.

(See p. 75 for Thematic Evaluations, The Philippines: Financial Assistance for Agrarian Reform)