



Modesto Landicho

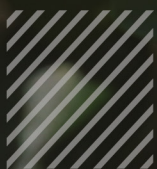


MARCCO

Matulatula Agrarian Reform
Community Cooperative

FARMERS' ORGANIZATION

Story



"I Chair the Vision, the farmers walk the Mission"

- Modesto Landicho



Participation on municipal gathering

Modesto Landicho, or *Ka Modi*, not only supports their farmers in expanding their market reach and increasing their income but also guides them in extending their patience to work hard.

He believes that farmers were meant and designed to be strong enough to work to provide food for everyone's tables and not only for their families.

As Chairperson of the Cooperative, he understands the value of service to their members. Also, his continuous monitoring of farmers' cluster meetings and daily operations are equally essential duties that require dedication and trust.

Household and Farming

Ka Modi: I am from a family of six, with my wife, children, and grandchildren and we have been farming for decades to sustain our daily sustenance. Our household economic situation is affected when the price of our farm produce, mainly calamansi, declines.

There are days that we suffer loss from our production, thus affecting our usual budget for food, electricity, transportation, and school or education expenses of my grandchildren.

Our farm size is two hectares with calamansi and we harvest 9 tons per hectare twice in a year. This is equivalent to 18 tons of annual harvest for two (2) hectares. We invested huge amount of money to install a drip irrigation system for our calamansi farm which our family believe will benefit us in the long run.

This investment allows us to achieve two (2) croppings a year harvesting 18 tons of calamansi fruits annually. Other members of MarCCO can only have 1 cropping a year. We use sprayer, grasscutter, machetes and pruning shears to manage our calamansi farm.

AsiaDHRRA: What is the environmental context of farming and how are farming practices affected by it?

Ka Modi: We are experiencing the effects of climate change, particularly longer dry periods, and continuous rain over a period. Long dry periods affect the fruiting capacity of calamansi trees, as the trees require a plentiful amount of water during flowering and fruiting.

But this has not affected our calamansi farm severely. Excessive rain over a period affects us most because excessive rain damages flowers, while under-exposure of calamansi trees to the sunlight prevents them from flowering, resulting in low production during the season.

"The key to expanding our membership is to show others how you treat your existing members, and it is always gratifying to see farmers who help themselves."



MarCCO's General Assembly

AsiaDHRRA: *What services does the Farmer's Organization provide to you? Did these Services change over time?*

Ka Modi: The cooperative provides services to its farmers extensively through technical training in farming and farm management, savings and low-interest credit services, and marketing of the products. After a few years of implementing the AFOSP and FO4A projects, the cooperative has improved its processes and services to its member farmers.

These changes were brought about by employing human resources who manage the cooperative's administrative, financial, and processing operations. Eventually, agricultural reform programs from the government provided the cooperative with bigger capacity calamansi and dalandan processing equipment, helped provide marketing outlets (public schools, tourism establishments, and government offices), and provided members with farming tools and inputs to members.

AsiaDHRRA: *How important are these services and the community in your daily life?*

Ka Modi: Credit and savings services are vital because they nurture our mindsets to save and provide low-interest rates to members who want to start or scale up their livelihood or individual business enterprises. In addition, seminars on farming technology advance the

farmers' knowledge, eventually leading to better production and income.

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AsiaDHRRA: *Are you involved in the governance of your Farmers' Organisation? If yes, what is your role?*

Ka Modi: I am the Cooperative's chairman and work with the general manager to monitor the office's daily operations. In addition, I also organize cluster meetings among member farmers to discuss our marketing, planning, processing, and other problems the farmers face that require resolution.

AsiaDHRRA: *What were the challenges you had to overcome in the past years and how did you do that?*

Ka Modi: Our cooperative faced a challenge in the water supply for our daily household needs and to grow our crops. We held regular meetings to discuss the proper organization and distribution of water supply to member farmers to address the water problem for household needs. We have recently asked for government support for a deep well facility.

There were also previous concerns with members' contributions, but we were able to resolve water supply for household needs through meetings to resolve conflicts.



Partnership discussion with agricultural confederation

production and income.

AsiaDHRRA: *Can you discuss more relevant matters?*

Ka Modi: The cooperative needs to offer good services to its member farmers because it's the **key ingredient to trust**. We are always ready to support our members who work fairly, help themselves, and keep their trust in the cooperative. This practice is similar to agri-agencies and the government, which sees the fruit of their support of the cooperative.



Ka Modi with Christie Marasigan and Program Managers from AsiaDHRRA, Cezar Belangel and Florante Villas during farm visit

AsiaDHRRA: *What are your plans for the future?*

Ka Modi: My long-term plan is to improve our services to encourage more membership. I also plan to increase our collaboration and partnership with the national and local government to support and provide more services to our members, especially on loan and technical training.

My personal goal is to increase my calamansi production by improving the processes of composting, pruning, and applying fertilizers to enrich the soil with more nutrients. This practice, specifically composting, will help other farmers to be inspired and imitate, which could eventually prompt them to care for their crops for better

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