



Higa-onon Tribal Communities, Mindanao, Philippines

Development Stage



This project aims to address the enduring poverty in the Higa-onon tribal communities, which has led to and been compounded by the destruction of the rainforest. In search for livelihoods, the tribal communities have engaged in mining, logging and wildlife trading and destroyed their sacred forests in the process. These communities are also now dealing with the aftermath of a super typhoon, which has destroyed their homes and land. This project will support their recovery by establishing viable livelihoods which work in tandem with the forests.



LOCATION:

Iligan City, Mindanao, Philippines

SIZE OF PLANTED PLOT:

10 ha

SIZE OF POTENTIAL AREA:

300 ha

KEY CROP:

Coffee, abaca and mangosteen

INDUSTRY:

Agribusiness

GOAL:

Create socio-economic and environmental impact, whilst increasing the economic resilience of the tribal communities of Northern Mindanao, Philippines through regenerative agriculture.

MAIN FOCUS:

Establish a sustainable food system and mitigate rural poverty

PARTNERS:

Tribes and Nature Defenders Inc.

Finance & Planning



40,000

Investment



Datu Lanelio T. Sangcoan

Initiator





Assignment & Impact

Number of expected beneficiaries

800 community members with the potential to impact 3500 members of the Higa-onon tribe.

Development Challenge

Even though the Higa-onon tribal areas are suitable for agricultural production, tribal eco farmers are experiencing climate-related challenges and price instability. The fluctuating market price, especially for coffee, abaca fiber, and fruit trees products has reduced the income of the communities. There is a need for new supply networks to ensure improved and stabilised prices for tribal products that increase the living standards of farmers whilst restoring the environment.

Intervention

Tribes and Nature Defenders Inc. will work with reNature to implement a Model Farm in the Higa-onon tribal area. This plot will incorporate coffee, abaca fiber and mangosteen as primary crops. A diversified production system will lead to economic resilience by creating new market opportunities. The organisation has a good level of engagement with other tribal communities in the local area who wish to cultivate these crops. Following the implementation of the first Model Farm, the model will be replicated with these surrounding communities and provide capacity building where needed.



800

Community Members



61% More

Biodiversity



45% More

Soil Humidity



23% More

CO2 sequestration
per ha/year

Financial Details

reNature Model Farm: est. € 30,000 - € 70,000

Objective

Create a business model that ensures socio-economic and environmental impact in the long-term production of sustainable coffee, abaca and mangosteen.

Inspirational Impact

Tribes and Natures Defenders Inc. has a strong relationship with tribes in the local area. They will use this network of trust to support knowledge exchange on how to produce high-quality regenerative coffee, abaca, and mangosteen with low inputs and better environmental impact. The organisation also has strong connections to research organizations, universities, governments, and NGOs who can support the project to scale.



Environmental Impact

Agriculture is one of the most important sources of income for the Higa-onon tribal communities, but it has brought destruction and deforestation through “Kaingin” - the slashing of big trees. Today, only 40% of Higa-onon tribal sacred mountain's original ecosystem remains, with 60% transformed by extractive industries. Despite some conservation efforts, exploitation continues to put pressure on the remaining sacred forest. To counteract this process the project will promote agricultural production methods that enhance, not exploit, nature. They will build on their own indigenous knowledge to use methods that view the farm as a living organism and manage it in a comprehensive, diversified way that respects natural cycles.

Social Impact

Lack of a viable livelihood has increased levels of poverty and created ruptures in the community, with some members finding work in industries that exploit the sacred forests. This regenerative agriculture transformation will inspire thousands of farmers from the local tribes by showcasing a viable livelihood that enhances the environment. The Model Farm will serve as the basis for a regional Model School which will encourage replication of such practices, but also serve as a meeting place where scientifically validated knowledge can be exchanged. With this project, the Higa-onon tribal communities can build a network of producers from different parts of Mindanao, Philippines to achieve a better future.

Economic Impact

The objective is to transform the paradigm of the coffee, abaca and fruit tree value chains with the Higa-nono tribal communities. This project will recalibrate the risks and costs involved in this transformation by creating equitable

models where producers, and every actor in the value chain, obtains the right price for their work. New opportunities will be created in a network where trust has been built between the coffee, abaca and fruit tree producers and other stakeholders. The increased quality of the products also means that producers will be able to sell their products for a higher price in the domestic and international markets.

Impact Metrics

Outcome Metrics

- 1) Increase the soil health of the tribal area
- 2) Increase the quality of coffee, abaca and fruit trees in the area
- 3) Maintain and enhance the regenerative farm management in the tribal communities
- 4) Generate knowledge transfer to the wider community

Evaluation Method

- 1) Measurement of soil health through various methodologies (for example through lab analysis of soil samples)
- 2) Conduct an FAO TAPE assessment to evaluate impact on local community.