



## **Rice Mill Outcome Evaluation**

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Project: CFCA Quezon, Philippines

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Report Date: November, 2010

**Program background:** The Miracle Seed Rice Mill is one of the major livelihood projects of CFCA-Quezon Project focused on building a path to economic self-sufficiency with sponsored members and their families. This mill was born to address the specific needs of rice farming families who comprise 90% of sponsored in the Agoos subproject. Low purchase rate of ‘palay’ grains by the middle men and other mills was resulting in insufficient income for farmers to repay their capital borrowed for planting and support their families.

Initiated and constructed by the sponsored families, the mill was completed by mid October 2009 and the operation began by purchasing palay from farmers and supplying 455 sacks of milled rice to 2,000 sponsored members. The mill had been in operation for 11 months prior to the evaluation. It is run by 8 workers, and numerous occasional workers. All employees are fathers of sponsored members and occasional workers include some scholar students. Sixty percent of the farmers using the mill are sponsored families (approx. 1,000) and 40% are non-sponsored.

**Purpose of the evaluation:** The project initiated this evaluation to determine whether the rice mill livelihood project is sustainable and viable for replication, as well as to determine whether or not the mill is really benefiting sponsored families.

### **Methods:**

Group Interview of rice mill operators

Survey questionnaire and individual interview of 300 randomly selected farmers

Observation and visual inspection of the mill, including financial records review

### **Key findings and Conclusions:**

- All farmers expressed that they were benefiting from the mill. All experienced an increase in income; however this was often very moderate.
- The primary uses of the increased income are an improved food supply for the farmers’ families and funds for the education of their children.
- Other benefits to farmers include the quality of their families’ diets, sources of employment for both mill workers and independent retailers, independence from middle men and accessibility.
- The mill is currently earning enough money to sustain daily operations.
- Accounting system lacks organization and some questions about long-term financial sustainability remain.

### **Learnings and Report recommendations:**

- Management should hire a designated individual to manage financial records and do cashiering.
- A regular audit and business management training conducted by the Quezon coordinating unit is recommended before viability and replication can be assessed.