



POLICY BRIEF

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Emergency Quick Response and Psychological Interventions for Disaster Stricken Communities of Coconut Farmers

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Key Findings and Policy Implications

- The common challenges experienced by the participants from different places within Northwestern Cagayan were working conditions, economic conditions, and social conditions. The findings revealed that these experiences reflect the unpleasant conditions of the participants.
- Most of the participants revealed that problem-solving and positive thinking were believed to be the coping mechanisms to manage their encountered experiences.
- The COVID-19 virus impacted the lives of coco farmers, who needed support from their families, communities, and the government. Majority of the participants disclosed that the support extended to them included moral support, financial or material aid, and seminars or trainings.
- To endure the effects of the pandemic, coco farmers showed resilience through strong faith, engaging in physical activities, and adopting innovative practices and learnings.



Background

In Northwestern Cagayan, home to the country's largest coconut variety, coconut farming is more than a livelihood; it's a way of life. Yet today, this life is under threat.

Despite the crop's value, the industry remains neglected: underfunded and overlooked. With little support, farmers face declining production and an uncertain future.

This study captures their voices, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing their struggles, resilience, and the pressing need for meaningful intervention.



Figure 1. Coconut farmers working in the field, reflecting their continued efforts to sustain their livelihood despite challenges.



Research Objective

This study generally explore the coconut community work experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, it sought answers the following research questions:

- What are the experiences encountered by the participants amid Covid-19 along working conditions, economic conditions, and social conditions?
- How did the participants cope up with their experiences?
- What are extended to the participants in terms of family, support, community support, and government support?
- How did the participants boost their pandemic resilience?



Methodology

This study employed qualitative method using narrative inquiry. This method is interested in understanding something about the participants' experiences through their own words, phrases, expressions and voice.

The study involved eight (8) coconut farmers aged between 21 and 40 years old. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on those who had been infected with the virus, were knowledgeable, and willing to share relevant information. The study took place in Northwestern Cagayan, Philippines, a known coconut farming area, covering the towns of Sta. Praxedes, Claveria, Sanchez Mira, Pamplona, Ballesteros, and Abulug.



Key Findings

Challenges Encountered by Coco Farmers During COVID-19

- 👉 Working Conditions
- 💰 Economic Conditions
- 👥 Social Conditions

Coping Mechanisms of Coco Farmers

- 🧠 Positive Thinking
- 🔧 Problem-Solving

Support Received by Coco Farmers During COVID-19

- ❤️ Moral Support
- 💰 Financial/Material Aid
- 🏠 Seminars/Trainings

Pandemic Resilience Among Coco Farmers

- 🙏 Religiosity
- 🚴 Physical Exercise
- 💡 Innovative Learnings

Figure 2. Key findings on challenges, coping mechanisms, support, and resilience of coconut farmers during COVID-19.

The figure presents the experiences of coconut farmers during the COVID-19 pandemic, showing the challenges they faced in their working, economic, and social conditions. It also highlights how they coped through positive thinking, problem-solving, and support received, while demonstrating resilience through faith, exercise, and innovative practices to sustain their livelihood.





Recommendations

Alternative work as source of livelihood – The Local government units may consider assisting coco-farmers in their difficulties by providing programs to assist them economically such as but not limited to the provision of alternative work as source of livelihood for farmers.

Government may extend support projects – The government through its relevant agencies may also consider extending projects to farmers in support to their individual coping mechanisms.

Regular Assistance – The coco-farmers may be provided with regular assistance to alleviate the effects of the pandemic.

Livelihood Programs – The resiliency of farmers can be boosted with appropriate livelihood programs that can be provided by the government.



Conclusions

The participants experienced difficulties along working, economic and social conditions during the pandemic; Positive thinking and problem-solving strategies were employed by the participants in coping-up for the effects of Covid-19 pandemic; The participants were given moral, financial/material, and seminars/trainings as support to their needs in the pandemic time; and, Resiliency of the coco-farmers was boosted by religiosity, physical exercises and innovative learning.



Regulatory and Legislative Agencies/ Organizations Benefiting from the Results



Figure 3. Coconut farmers showing cooperation and mutual cooperation in the field.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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Figure 4. The peaceful coconut farm in Ganja, Abulug during the pandemic.



Figure 5. A coconut farmer opens the fruit of his labor.



Figure 6. Coconut farmers in Sanchez Mira attending Information Caravan on Industry Development Plan in 2022. Photo by ATI R2.



Figure 7. A coconut farm in Sanchez Mira, Cagayan.

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