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Supporting Smallholder  
Farmers in Asia and Pacific  
Islands Region through  
Strengthened Agricultural  
Advisory Services  
(SAAS Project)

# BEST PRACTICE NOTES



## COOPERATIVE ADVISORY SERVICES TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

Siti Amanah

Faculty of Human Ecology, Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Indonesia (Rural Advisory Services for Southeast Asia)

### 5 Key Points

#### 1. Challenges and Constraints

- Organizational structure of extension institutions / attachment of extension workers to technical agencies
- Lack of support for extension/advisory services from local government

#### 2. Objectives

Cooperative advisory services aim to provide farmers with institutional guidance and a community learning platform to improve their capacity not only in agricultural knowledge but also in farm management, marketing and sustainable livelihood development.

#### 3. Methodology

Participatory Approach

#### 4. Highlight result

Extension/advisory services should also focus on developing farmers' capacity in managing the farm business.

#### 5. Highlight recommendation

Consistent facilitation, leadership development and the establishment of agricultural linkages is crucial in ensuring its sustainability.

### Introduction

- The smallholder farmers of Bogor District in Indonesia face many issues in managing their farms, especially in relation to poverty and the technical and environmental concerns that affect their business. Various institutions have made efforts in extending agricultural advisory services to these farmers, but these services are not always available in times of their need. Advisory services used to focus only on strengthening technical knowledge and enriching agricultural capacity. However, smallholder farmers recognize that they also need advisory services on marketing their product and business management.
- In order to find solutions to their socio-economic and environmental problems, the farmers formed cooperative agricultural advisory services as a platform for collaborative learning and innovation. It focuses on strengthening the capacity of farmers, especially women farmers, when it comes to managing the farm as a business.
- Majority of the farmers in Bogor District are smallholders with an average land area of less than 0.5 hectares. Men farmers are in charge of crop cultivation and animal husbandry, while the women farmers focus on running small food processing enterprises.
- The practice is integrated with the research and development program at Bogor Agricultural University, with about 501 farmer group members. Direct beneficiaries for the study were 201 selected farmers from four villages in Bogor (Benteng, Purwasi, Situgede and dan Cimahpar), 33% of which were women ranging from 20 - 60 years old (average age is 45).