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## Poverty Alleviation through Diversification: Potential and Constraints of Integrated Agriculture Aquaculture (IAA) for Poor People in the Rural Philippines - Evaluation at Farm Level

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### Abstract

Elaborating sustainable livelihood approaches to reduce poverty is a continuing challenge for development planners throughout the developing world. In Southeast-Asian countries, small scale farming, rice farming in particular, represents the dominant source of income. Due to low prices, stagnant or decreasing yields and changes in climate, rice production is becoming less profitable for farmers. The role of poor farmers in degrading natural resources while searching for accessible income sources is well known in the Philippines. Small scale farmers are confronted with the problem of declining productivity in rice farming and a limited farm output, which frequently is not enough to provide income or at least food for the farm household throughout the year. Farmers are forced to look for alternatives, which simultaneously favours farm diversification as a possible option. In this presentation, panel data collected in the Philippine province of Palawan are used to point out the conditions of small scale farming and predominant constraints farmers are facing today. Diversification of existing farming systems can play a significant role in improving livelihoods of the farming households. Basically, poor rural people do not rely for their livelihood on agriculture alone, but as long as there are few opportunities due to almost non-existing labour markets in remote areas, practical solutions on the field have to be elaborated to overcome food shortages. Data from an economic analysis of an integrated agriculture aquaculture (IAA) farming system at a model-project site “on-station” provides evidence of the potential of diversification to alleviate poverty of small scale farmers in the region. Utilizing this data as a foundation, attention focuses on practical possibilities “on-farm” of implementing IAA components to diversify individual production systems and to identify deriving economic impacts and constraints of the adjustment.

**Keywords:** Diversification, Integrated Agriculture Aquaculture , poverty alleviation