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New Drive for Rural Development”

## Training Female Farmers as a Tool for Rural Development - A Review on Experiences from Bali, Indonesia

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### Abstract

Over the last decades Bali's economy has been flourishing due to the growing tourism sector. However, the sector has experienced a sudden decline after the Bali bombing in 2002. This incident caused many rural communities to lose their extra income from the tourist sector and made them rely on agricultural activities again. As the tourist sector is steadily recovering in some regions, direct profit for the rural population is still minimal. New ways have to be found to provide them income possibilities.

Although women are carrying out most of the work in Balinese communities, decision making is still lying in the hands of men. Thus empowerment of women in rural regions is also a key issue which needs to be addressed.

The demand of fresh, high quality vegetables by tourists is a possible income source for rural communities. The “Bali Fresh Female Farmers Partnership” (BFFFP) is a cooperation which was created to provide small farmers market access. A close network of local women with an input supplier, a sales company and horticultural experts was initiated, to ensure production and marketing of high-value products. The climate of the highlands of Kintamani, where the BFFFP is located, is highly suitable for growing vegetables. However, most farmers still restrict themselves to growing low profit crops, such as cabbage and onion. To enable the female farmers to produce high-value crops, such as bell pepper and various lettuces, practical and financial support was given in the beginning of the project.

Currently about fifty women are organised in small groups of ten farmers. Frequent meetings with all stakeholders along the production and marketing chain are held to ensure quality and marketability of the products. Adoption of improved production systems by the female farmers, to enable them to independently and continuously deliver the demanded vegetables to the tourist regions in a long run, is the target. Up to now still difficulties occur regarding amount and timing of fertilisation, as well as precise yield predictions. Therefore ongoing consulting and training is necessary. By increased expertise and money inflow local women experience a stronger position in the local community.

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