

COOPERATIVES AS PARTNERS OF HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS IN MAKING  
ACCESSIBLE IN RURAL AREAS LOW-COST AND QUALITY MEDICINES

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ABSTRACT:

One of the components of the technical cooperation program focusing on health promotion that is being implemented in Kapangan, Benguet Province, Paracelis and Natonin, Mt. Province in the Philippines include the active involvement of agricultural cooperatives in the delivery of low cost and quality medicines to mostly poor community residents of very remote areas. This is implemented between selected cooperatives in Kapangan, Benguet and Paracelis and Natonin, Mt. Province and Dr. Kijo Deura of Saku Central Hospital in Nagano, Japan and in partnership with the Local Government Unit – Rural Health Unit (LGU-RHU) of the concerned municipality. The state's declaration that cooperatives are recognized as practical vehicles for promoting self-reliance and harnessing people power towards the attainment of economic development and social justice, in addition to the their inherent operational structure, capabilities and manifestation of commitment to help alleviate the great need for accessible, low cost quality medicines, were determining factors in tapping these cooperatives as partners in this endeavor. Thus, pharmacies and Botika Binhis (BBs) that sells low cost quality medicines as additional cooperative service to its members, non-members and the community as a whole, were established starting in 2004 as a result of the partnership and technical cooperation program.

A study was conducted in the 3 concerned municipalities in the latter part of 2006 to early 2007 to gather more information on these pharmacies and Botika Binhis including pharmacies, Botika Binhis and Botikas ng Barangay (BnB) established by other government and non-government organizations. Table 1 shows the summary of the survey. The data gathered may be used to help improve the pharmacy/Botika Binhi operations and their linkages with the community health facilities. The results of the survey will be reported at the conference.

(Table 1)

Area surveyed	No of Botika surveyed	BB ngo	B n B	Coop B	Ot hers	No of Ho useh olds	No of Users (mean /mo)	HC+ <4km (%)	District Hosp+ <4km (%)	No of Medicin e saled <30 (%)	Licen- sed + (%)	Rate super- vised (%)
<b>Kapangan</b>	20	10	8	0	2	312	16	35	45	95	20	15
<b>Paracelis</b>	20	0	7	12	1	271	24	25	15	85	40	5
<b>Natonin</b>	15	0	12	3	0	125	28	33	27	100	60	60

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