

## Assessing the Employment Conditions and Patterns of Help-outs among Selected Agrarian Reform Cooperatives in the Banana Industry

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### Abstract

Employment is one of the key concepts that support every country's economic activity. Its significance and contribution affect key players in all sectors, as it is vital in production, distribution, and consumption of commodities. Among all the industries, agriculture takes the largest share when it comes to labor force participation. The agricultural sector of the Philippines is composed of informally employed workers who face various issues in hiring, contracts, worker pay, workloads, and etc. These informally employed workers include "help-outs" who work in the Agrarian Reform Cooperatives (ARCs) managed by the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs). Due to the nature of work, these workers engage in different working arrangements which determine their farm setting. Thus, this is an exploratory study conducted to assess the working conditions and patterns of help-outs employed in the selected ARCs, namely SFARBEMCO, AMS-MARBEMCO, and AMS-KARBEMCO, in Davao del Norte. A total of 103 help-outs were interviewed. Linear and logit regression were both employed to test significance of relationships. The results show that most of the help-outs in the ARCs are well-off. Significant factors that affect their probability of being well-off include gender, rating of happiness, employment category, cooperative, and relationship to their ARB. However, issues identified in the employment patterns include ambiguous employer-employee relationship, payment of working slots, precarious contracts, unreasonable pay, and lack of social security.