

PARTNERSHIP WITH DPR KOREA'S MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Locations	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Dates	01/04/2013 - 30/09/2016

Summary

Agricultural production in DPR Korea is low, resulting in food shortages and the need for international aid. Ensuring food security is a priority for the government. We have helped the newly-established Department of Plant Protection to sustainably improve agricultural production by optimizing its ability to develop and implement plant protection strategies. We have enhanced their operational capacity, improved access to knowledge and facilitated interactions with international counterparts.

The problem

As agricultural production in DPR Korea is low, food shortages are a common occurrence and international aid is often required. So, ensuring food security is a priority for the government. Consequently sustainable crop production is receiving attention and support from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) which recently established a national Department of Plant Protection (MoA-DoPP).

Pest outbreaks are a major challenge to crop production. Dealing with them effectively and sustainably requires an integrated approach. However, IPM options are often unavailable, leaving pests either uncontrolled or controlled using broad spectrum pesticides.

So, in order to optimize crop yields and safeguard human, animal and environmental health, farmers need to implement appropriate management strategies for existing pests and manage newly-introduced pests.

Up until now there has been no central Department of Plant Protection in DPR Korea, with pest management and agricultural production falling to a number of different departments, none of which had the necessary authority to influence and improve the nation's plant protection and agricultural production.

What we are doing

The recent establishment of the MoA-DoPP is a significant step-forward for DPR Korea, further enabling it to prevent or minimize crop losses and thus boost agricultural production. The project is supporting the newly established MoA-DoPP's efforts to address food security challenges by enhancing its institutional and technical capacity, including its ability to collaborate on a national and international level. In particular focusing on its role as a national plant protection organization (NPPO).

Due to a combination of issues the MoA-DoPP is not yet functioning effectively. Its new officers lack experience, access to information resources, contact with other institutions in DPR Korea and internationally and need support to influence and implement basic plant protection approaches, including pest surveillance, pest risk analysis and ensure appropriate use of pesticides.

The initial focus was on reviewing the organizational structure and operational capacity. This was followed by enhancing the technical knowledge and capacity to enable the MoA-DoPP to improve phytosanitary and pesticide management procedures.

Promoting exchange and collaboration on an international basis was also consistently addressed throughout the project. International contact allowed the department to learn from the experiences of other countries. The capacity to network on a national basis also enabled the MoA-DoPP to support local authorities, extension personnel and cooperative farms.

Results so far

The project facilitated visits to other international plant protection departments. This expanded the MoA-DoPP`s professional contacts, allowing them to explore different models and gather information (eg. legislation, policies and best agricultural practices surrounding pest management).

A major focus was the review of the institutional set-up within MoA-DoPP. A series of stakeholder interviews were carried out nationally, reviewing current needs and expectations as regards plant protection. This information, with that gathered during the study tours, and a SWOT analysis of MoA-DoPP, was used to review and update the mandate, objectives and terms of reference of MoA-DoPP.

Improvements were made to the operational capacity and internal communication infrastructure within MoA and MoA-DoPP. The new

infrastructure enhances the MoA-DoPP's ability to network on a national basis, enabling it to support target groups such as: local authorities, extension personnel and cooperative farms.

In addition, access to information is being improved by identifying and collating information materials. Staff were also given access international databases and compendia. A pest identification book was developed and 700 copies distributed. 'Pest Management Decision Guides' have also been developed for farmers to help them decide when and how to control key pests. 1,250 copies were printed and distributed to co-farms.

To improve the safe use of pesticides, the current pesticide management system was reviewed in relation to international conventions and we jointly developed a certification and training scheme and a handbook for Pesticide Spray Operators. 4,000 copies of the handbook were printed and distributed to co-farms.

We also reviewed the NPPO's national and international roles and responsibilities regarding sanitary and phytosanitary requirements and provided training workshops on the IPPC, International Standards for Phytosanitary Management (ISPMs) and on Pest Risk Analysis (PRA).To further strengthen the knowledge in this area, MoA-DoPP representatives formed part of the countries' delegation to the IPPC- Commission on Phytosanitary Measures held in Rome, Italy.

Our aim was to strengthen the capacity of the MoA-DoPP to improve plant protection. This in turn will enable the nation's 3,000 cooperative farms to improve agricultural production, for the ultimate benefit of the farmers, farming communities and other consumers across DPR Korea.

Donors	Directorate General for Development Cooperation
Partners	Ministry of Agriculture, DPR Korea
CABI Project Manager	Keith Holmes






https://www.cabi.org/what-we-do/cabi-projects/