



COVID-19 Adaptation Case Study

Lestari Sustainable Development Consultants

Lestari Sustainable Development Consultants is testing whether the distribution of climate-smart agricultural innovation (i.e., newly developed drought-tolerant coffee varieties) that employs women as agents of change will lead to women's increased agricultural technology access, skills, leadership and climatic adaptive capacity. The innovative solution will be tested over 15 months, with target sites in Tana Toraja and Enrekang districts, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia.

Lestari had to re-evaluate the ethics of international travel during COVID-19. They decided to cancel travel plans for their Canadian experts, and instead increase their local partner's involvement in leading project activities.



COVID-19 Adaptations:

- Project site is considered a COVID-19 green zone so it's safe for project partners to go into the field – has resulted in minimal delays.
- Lestari continuing to refine communications strategy to ensure effective communication between Canadian staff and project partners. Key elements include:
 - Strategic technology use of WhatsApp (for day-to-day communication and general project updates, including photo and video sharing) & Google Meet (for internal management, coordination around more serious project issues i.e., budget discussions);
 - Use of visual rather than written tools for remote activities - Simple visual representations allow for building common understanding despite language and knowledge barriers;
 - Social distancing/safety measures in place - Meetings typically held in open-air spaces under traditional homes, while wearing masks. Allows for safer interactions between project participants.

Limitation/Challenges:

- Challenges managing different time zones (only 2-hour overlap in workday between Canadian and Indonesian staff).
- Potential for confusion with remote communication (i.e., WhatsApp not well-suited to more serious project conversations).
- Anticipating facing greater challenges delivering training and capacity building to farmers who have limited internet access, 12-hour time difference and no knowledge of English.

Outcomes & Ongoing Questions:

- Ongoing monitoring of communication effectiveness and efficiency between Canadian and local staff, continued relationship building.
- Ongoing exploration of effective communication and management software, tools and best practices.

