



Young nursery owner marketing innovation in rice seed

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Alfian Maulana, nursery owner

Alfian Maulana, with his youthful face and ready smile, is an unlikely businessman. At 22, Alfian is a budding nursery entrepreneur from Ngepung village in Nganjuk district, East Java. A graduate of the famous Bogor Agricultural Institute, Alfian wanted more for himself and the smallholder farmers from his village. “Farmers in this area struggle daily due to dry lands and low productivity. I wanted to start a nursery to increase our income”.

Before graduating, Alfian used one hectare of his family’s land and a loan of IDR 20 million from his parents to start his nursery. The first year he went into production, Alfian grew his own seed, which he sold locally. As a student, Alfian did work experience with PT Botani, exposing him to IPB3S, a high-yielding rice variety. Alfian understood IPB3S did not require much water to grow and thought it presented a unique opportunity for the farmers in Nganjuk district. Most farmers in this area have two rice planting seasons, but the second planting season is arid, and crops often fail.



Two years ago, Alfian decided to trial IPB3S on half his land and succeeded in getting seven tonnes for half a hectare. While Alfian points out that he loses about 20 percent in processing, seven tonnes is almost triple what he achieved with other seed varieties.

Based on the success of his own trial, Alfian became a contract nursery for PT Botani. Alfian has increased his productive land to 20 hectares in the last two years and has a production target for this season of 100 tonnes. Alfian contracts 28 farmers to grow for him and admits that convincing farmers to produce for him was hard. The head of the farmer group who plants for Alfian, Singo, acknowledges that changing the farmer's mindset is hard. "Farmers are used to seeing water in their paddy fields. They don't believe you can grow without continuous irrigation", says Singo. "I didn't believe it until I saw the results with my own eyes."

Alfian is hoping that IPB3S will encourage more younger farmers to start farming. "People see farming as traditional. However, if young people like me see a business opportunity, they will come. Innovation drives youth, and IPB3S for me is innovative".



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Singo, the head of the farmer group



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The Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Promoting Rural Incomes through Support for Markets in Agriculture (PRISMA) is a development partnership between the Government of Australia (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, DFAT) and the Government of Indonesia (Bappenas). Our strategic aim is to address food security and poverty by making rural markets more inclusive. We do this by taking a *market systems development* approach, partnering with businesses and government to remove market barriers and introduce product and production innovations.

PRISMA is supported by the Governments of Australia and Indonesia and implemented by Palladium, with Technical Assistance from Swisscontact, Zurich.

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