PRDP in FOCUS

A monthly newsletter of the Philippine Rural Development Project
National Project Coordination Office (NPCO)
www.daprdp.net

Vol. 1 Issue 1
June 2015

Alcala highlights Rural Dev't during ManComm

Agriculture chief Proceso J. Alcala recognized the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) as vital in uplifting the conditions of farmers and fishers in the countryside.

"Local Government Units must lodge proposals to the PRDP and maximize its benefits because it is a good program," Alcala said, urging the LGUs to participate in the project.

He added that aside from helping farmers and fishers earn better income, the project is designed to help the value chain of agri-fishery commodities prioritized under the project to thrive, and further support the entire economy of the country.

He highlighted this during the Department of Agriculture (DA) Management Committee Meeting on June 23, 2015 in Negros Occidental.

In an earlier interview, Alcala explained that a third of the country's workforce relies on farming.

"If we could help the one-third of our population, we will create a big change in the lives of a huge portion of our population," he said.

He also stressed that the PRDP will utilize geotagging as a transparency tool in validating and monitoring sub-projects proposed and implemented under the project.

"With this geotagging system, we would eliminate fraudulent activities and implementation of ghost projects. We are confident that this initiative leads us into the right direction."

The six-year national project, approved late last year aims to establish a modern, inclusive, value-chain oriented, and climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries sector.

Read more on p.2

Agriculture Secretary Proceso J. Alcala during the groundbreaking ceremony of the Construction and Rehabilitation of Mahayahay-Buenvista-Tiacongan-Bagong Silang farm-to-market road in Kapatagan, Lanao del Norte. He has urged local government officials to continue to participate in the Philippine Rural Development Project. Whenever he is in his out-of-town visits, Alcala always invites LGUs to invest in PRDP, where they will only need to pitch in 10-20% equities for sub-projects proposed under the PRDP.

Geotagging recognized as an effective transparency tool for gov't projs

The World Bank (WB) has recently recognized the Philippines as the leading nation in utilizing geotagging—a vital tool in promoting transparency of government-implemented projects.

With this, the WB has requested the Department of Agriculture (DA) to promote geotagging not only in the country, but also internationally, as the foreign financial institution is set to release guidelines for geotagging application on the procurement and implementation of projects supported by three major foreign fund sources in the country.

Aside from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will soon adapt the tool in implementing their assisted projects in the Philippines.

Pioneered by the DA as a virtual monitoring tool for agri-fishery projects in 2011 under the Mindanao Rural Development Program, geo-tagging is now being adopted by 17 WB-supported projects of national agencies including the Departments of Agrarian Reform, Public Works and Highways, Environment and Natural Resources, and Social Welfare and Development, and the National Irrigation Administration among others.

Read more on p.2

WB Approves P257-M FMR Rehabilitation Project in Visayas

Farmers in Passi City, Iloilo now have a chance for better incomes and improved lives after the World Bank (WB) has issued the No-Objection Letter 2 (NOL2) for the construction of currently the biggest Infrastructure Development project under the Department of Agriculture's Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) in Visayas.

NOL 2 is issued to sub-projects that are approved for implementation. Prior to this, an initial NOL is issued that secures the funding of a particular sub-project.

Read more on p.3

Alcala highlights...(from page 1)

The P27-billion project is financed through World Bank loan, with equities from the DA and Local Government Unit partners.

While in Negros Occidental, Alcala inspected the operation of the agricultural tramline system installed by DA's Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization in Salvador Benedicto.

He assured all farmer-participants that the government will continue to provide assistance and support to the country's agriculture sector. As such, he directed all concerned DA officials to immediately conduct training on efficient and productive farming systems, as well as provide support on farm mechanization and infrastructure development programs of the department to ensure that farmers will reach the optimal effect of government assistance.

Geotagging recognized...(from page 1)

The geotagging tool is being utilized under the DA's Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP), also a WB-assisted project to validate and monitor proposed and implemented sub-projects. Other DA agencies such as the Agricultural Training Institute and the National Meat Inspection Service are undergoing training from the PRDP to allow them success similar to MRDP/PRDP projects.

PRDP Deputy Project Director Arnel De Mesa said that the WB and the Commission on Audit have asked the DA to help craft and develop standard procedures in auditing and monitoring government projects to include geotagging as a tool in the system.

"The national government will soon release a standardized process scheme in monitoring and evaluating government projects," De Mesa said during the Geomapping and Governance Unit (GGU) Coordination Meeting on June 24, 2015 in Davao City.

"With this, we see how geotagging is affecting the policy of the national government with regard to sub-project validation, monitoring and evaluation, and approval of projects," he added.

GGU Head Samuel Belamide, the team that handles the PRDP geotagging said that the tool covers the entire project cycle from validation to implementation, completion and even the assessment of the project impact.

"The guidelines set by the WB for the foreign-assisted projects are based on the experience of the PRDP and we are glad that we will be applying this tool to other government projects," he added.

Belamide and his team are responsible for the training of other government agencies in geotagging as well as the PRDP's local government partners and winning contractors for various sub-projects.

Geotagged photos of physical accomplishments for projects and deliveries of goods are required for contractors' progress billings and requests for payment.

Geotagging is an ICT application that associates digital resource such as photos and videos with geographic and location information with high degree of precision. Geotagged photos are then automatically mapped into Google Earth, showing the exact location of a particular project.

PRDP National Project Coordination Office Geomapping and Governance Unit Head Samuel Belamide explains the various uses of geotagging in PRDP implementation including validation and procurement.

DA-PRDP coco water product-testing shows good feedback

"It tastes good and sweet. If I need energy, I'll choose this," said triathlete Hayley Goldberg after she had a taste of the soon-to-be launched coco water product developed and packaged by Camarines Sur farmers with support from the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP).

This was one of the positive comments by athletes who joined the recent Challenge CamSur on June 14, 2015 in Camarines Sur. Goldberg is the top finisher for the 45-49 age bracket category.

The DA-PRDP in Region V conducted the product testing and market survey of the coco water in the said event to gather initial feedbacks prior to the release of the product in the market.

The Project partnered with the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA) and the Camarines Sur Provincial Government for the conduct of "Operation of Village Level Coconut Water Processing Center."

According to CBSUA project leader Julieta M. Casaul, the product testing was conducted to evaluate the perception and feedback of the general consumers about the characteristics and market acceptability of coco water as part of their market and profitability study on the product.

A booth for the product testing and market survey was installed by the DA Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division at the Camsur Watersports Complex (CWC) where the sports event was held.

About 150 respondents, majority of whom are athletes were interviewed using market research tools including the Usage, Attitude and Image (UAI) study, product prototype test and price sensitivity analysis.

Consumers' feedback on the product's taste, appearance, size and health benefits were solicited to determine their preference. In addition, price and potential demand and brand preference test were surveyed.

PRDP Luzon B Director Shandy Hubilla (2nd from left), with PhilMech Chief Science Research Specialist and Division Chief Dr. Ofero A. Capariño (right) listens as Challenge CamSur Event Director Anna Stroh and Challenge Cam Sur South East Asian Elite champion (male category) Augusto Benedicto share their feedback about the DA-PRDP's coco water during the Challenge CamSur triathlon event in Pili, Camarines Sur on June 14, 2015.

A recent nutrient analysis conducted by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) in Region V shows that coco water is rich in electrolytes like potassium and sodium that enable body cells to generate energy, keep the body hydrated, and restore its balance. Intake of electrolytes is recommended to prepare for rigorous activities like running or hiking to prevent muscle cramps, step up performance, and boost endurance.

"Isang market ng coco water ang athletes and the Challenge CamSur is an opportune time to get their feedback about the product," CBSUA Project Leader Hanilyn A. Hidalgo said.

Camarines Sur Male South East Asian Elite champion Augusto Benedicto said that the coco water is better than other energy drinks, while Event Director Anna Stroh said that coco water tastes more like fresh buko juice.

About 475 triathletes participated in the Challenge CamSur triathlon event which consists of a 1.9-kilometer swim, 90-kilometer bike, and 21-kilometer run race course.

The "Operation of Village Level Coconut Water Processing Center" sub-project is part of the Enterprise Development (I-REAP) Component of the PRDP, which aims to establish strong linkage among coconut farmers in the region and at the same time capacitate them to value-add their products and engage in businesses.

WB Approves...(from page 1)

Infrastructure projects amounting to above US$5 million (approx P225.8 million) are subject to WB review.

The WB has issued the NOL 2 on June 8, allowing the commencement of the rehabilitation of the 28-kilometer Imbang Grande-Tagubong-Gemumua-Agahon-Agtabo Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) in Iloilo amounting to P257.8 million (M).

The rehabilitation of the FMR is a counterpart initiative between the DA-PRDP and the Local Government unit (LGU), of which PRDP will finance 90% of the total project cost while the LGU will provide the remaining 10% funding.

In a letter addressed to PRDP Project Director and DA Undersecretary Emerson Palad, WB Task Team Leader for PRDP Carolina Geron has requested the DA to ensure the tight monitoring of the project implementation.

"Ensure that all construction and quality control equipment must be geotagged and key personnel must be mobilized within one month from the issuance of Notice to Proceed," Geron said.

She also said that the contractor must submit to the Iloilo Provincial Local Government the geotagged photos of the sub-project showing progress prior to the construction and the subsequent months until project completion.

Palad explained that geotagging, which is one of the project monitoring tools highlighted by the PRDP, has played a vital role from the project proposals to actual implementation.

"We can be assured the project is really being implemented and that contractor and the LGU are following the quality standards we have set under the PRDP."

"The Infrastructure Development (I-BUILD) component of the PRDP aims to develop a strategic network of climate-resilient rural infrastructures and facilities that will support the commodity value chain in project areas," added Palad.

The FMR will support mainly the production and marketing of swine, rice, sugarcane and corn of farmers in 51 barangays as a result of the road rehabilitation, but Palad added that the entire agriculture industry in the area can benefit in the project, as well as the 4,000 dwellers around the road area.

"FMRs will not only help spur the development of the agriculture industry but can spur other economic activities as well and improve the overall economy in the rural areas," Palad said.

Presently, 124 sub-projects worth P5.9 billion under the I-BUILD component have been approved for PRDP funding.

Road portion and production area of the 28-kilometer Imbang Grande-Tagubong-Gemumua-Agahon-Agtabo Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) in Iloilo.

NEWS BRIEFS

LUZON A

P821M worth of FMRs proposed for CAR

The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) has proposed eight sub-projects to be funded under the Intensified Building Up of Infrastructure and Logistics for Development (I-BUILD) Component of the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP).
These sub-projects are all improvements of existing farm-to-market roads (FMRs) amounting to over P821.76 million (M). One sub-project, the Improvement of Banneng-Gombowoy FMR worth P118.9 M in Kalinga was recently approved for funding by the PRDP National Project Coordination Office.

LUZON B

PRDP signals FMR construction in Puerto Princesa City

Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) office in Region IV-B has led the ground-breaking of an 8-kilometer (km) farm-to-market road (FMR) worth P77.67 million in Puerto Princesa City recently. The FMR is expected to benefit more than 2,000 people or 528 households around the area through reduction of travel time by 45 minutes.

VISAYAS

2 FMRs in Neg Occ signaled for construction

DA Undersecretary and PRDP Project Director Emerson Palad and Negros Occidental Governor Alfredo Marañon, Jr. led the ground-breaking ceremony for the rehabilitation of Sitio Magtu-od and Sitio Vergara FMR, in Toboso and Barangay Caduhaan in Cadiz City recently. The two FMRs extending 4.2 kilometers (km) and 12.46 km in Toboso and Cadiz City, respectively and worth over P181.99 million are the first sub-projects approved under the DA-implemented rural development project in Visayas expected to directly benefit 2,992 households in the two areas.

MINDANAO

RPCO 12 releases P20M for cassava enterprise proj in SoCot

PRDP in Region XII has turned over on June 22 checks worth P20 million pesos to jumpstart the implementation of the Cassava Granules Production and Marketing Project in the province.
The said amount comprises the first and second tranches of the P39-million enterprise development project, the first PRDP livelihood project approved in the country. Included in the project cost is the construction of nursery for planting materials, acquisition of equipment such as tractors and trucks, postharvest and processing facilities such as granulators, mechanical chipper, solar dryer and warehouse.

inFOCUS THIS MONTH

Sec Procy, Father of the PRDP

Inspired by the transformations brought by the Mindanao Rural Development Program in rural communities in the Southern regions, Department of Agriculture Secretary Proceso J. Alcala proposed for a more extensive rural development project in 2011 that would include all provinces and municipalities in the country—the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP). Stemmed from the successes and innovations of its predecessor, the PRDP aims to bring holistic developments in the countryside through strategic, science-based, and climate-resilient investments that support agri-fishery activities.
Planning and initial activities on the PRDP commenced as early as 2012, and was approved by the World Bank in August 2014.
Every time Alcala visits provinces and municipalities, he never fails to promote and highlight the PRDP to local chief executives, urging them to participate in the Project to gain advancements in the field of agriculture and fishery. With this, Local Government Units have enthusiastically and continuously lodged proposals under the PRDP.

ENABLING COMMUNITIES EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief: Cheryl C. Suarez
Associate Editor: Adora D. Rodriguez
Writers: Adora D. Rodriguez, Catherine N. Nanta, PSOs and RPCOs InfoACE
Photographer: Kathrino V. Resurreccion
Lay-out Artist: Ana Victoria C. Margallo
Adviser: Arnel V. De Mesa
Circulation: Dave Christian M. Delos Santos
NPCO Administrative Unit

PRDPinFOCUS is a monthly publication of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project National Project Coordination Office. We encourage reproduction of articles and photos with proper acknowledgment.
For queries, comments or suggestions email us at: **prdpnpcoinfo@gmail.com** or visit us at the PRDP Office, Department of Agriculture Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Philippine Rural Development Project
DA_PRDP
www.daprdp.net