



PRDP to boost Quezon seaweed production

Fisherfolk for Conservation. Feliciano Riego, a fisherfolk leader of the Tayabas Bay in Quezon is optimistic that their seaweed production, hence their incomes, will increase with the enterprise development assistance from the DA-PRDP. The assistance package to their association comes with capacity building on coastal resource management and biodiversity conservation under a grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Farmers in Quezon expect their province to be a major seaweed production area once the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project's (DA-PRDP) marine conservation-related projects start to roll.

With a grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) under the DA-PRDP, sustainable production of commercially viable marine products was identified in different sites located in six areas in eight provinces nationwide, within the vicinity of marine protected areas.

The PRDP has several other infrastructure and enterprise

development sub-projects; but unlike GEF subprojects, these are funded by the government's loan proceeds from the World Bank, with LGU and proponent group equities.

"We really expect our seaweed production to significantly increase once the seedling materials start to arrive," Feliciano Riego, Jr., a fisherfolk leader from Agdangan town said.

Riego is currently making rounds in his area, teaching other would-be seaweed farmers knowledge and skills from his 16-year experience of seaweed farming, while they wait for the release of about P2.55 million in

funding assistance from GEF.

Agdangan is one of the five municipalities along the Tayabas Bay chosen to host the livelihood projects.

Riego said that with his current production capacity, he cannot expand his half-hectare area. His seaweed farm produces up to four croppings all year round, save for the hottest months of the year, usually from March to May.

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PRDP creates over 4K jobs in CALABARZON, MIMAROPA, Bicol

The Luzon B or South Luzon Project Support Office (PSO) of the Department of Agriculture's Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) has recently reported that at least 4,483 jobs have been created with the implementation of its I-BUILD or infrastructure development sub-projects in CALABARZON, MIMAROPA and Bicol Regions.

From said figure, 1,750 are technical or specialized work, while 2,733 are unskilled work. The Bicol Region has the highest number of individuals employed at about 2,149 while CALABARZON and MIMAROPA Regions employed about 1,529 and 805 individuals, respectively.

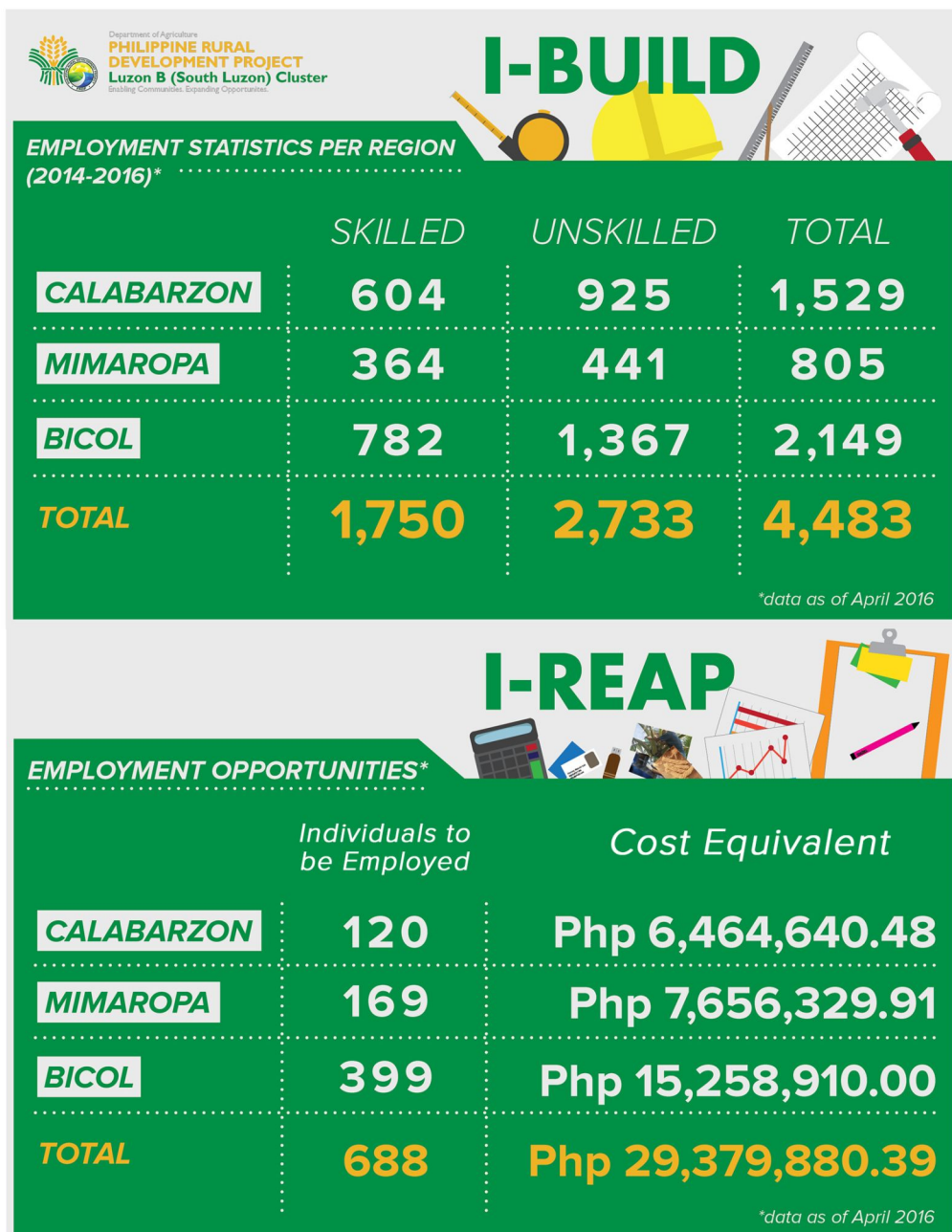
Ranging from the highly skilled engineers, masons, heavy equipment operators, welders, steelmen and carpenters, as well as unskilled workers such as laborers and helpers, the project has been absorbing workforce in the area since 2014.

"We expect the PRDP's job generation to continue in 2016 and beyond, and not only in our Luzon B cluster, but in other provinces of the country as well," PRDP deputy project director Arnel de Mesa said.

The PRDP has four project clusters, namely, Luzon A or the North Luzon Cluster, which comprises the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and Cordillera Regions; Luzon B, which comprises the CALABARZON, MIMAROPA and Bicol Regions; Visayas; and Mindanao.

Meanwhile, the I-REAP or enterprise development component to employ at least 688 individuals this year from the CALABARZON, MIMAROPA and Bicol Regions.

De Mesa added that at this stage of PRDP implementation, temporary employment opportunities are only some of the Project's emerging benefits, while the long-term, sustainable and inclusive



(Graphical representation of employment statistics from Ana Francesca L. Chavez, DA-PRDP South Luzon PSO InfoACE Unit)

employment and livelihood opportunities for the beneficiaries would have to be generated by the sub-projects being set-up across the country.

The Project has also provided capacity-building opportunities for stakeholders on planning, management and monitoring, among others.

"They can use the knowledge and skills gained from these activities even in non-PRDP endeavors, giving them more platform to economically—and politically—empower themselves," de Mesa said.

Nationwide, the PRDP has so far

generated employment to at least 22,712 individuals, based on the latest data available as of June this year.

The PRDP, a six-year World Bank-assisted project implemented by the Department of Agriculture in partnership with local government units, is designed to establish an inclusive, market-oriented and climate-resilient agri-fishery sector. (Alladin S. Diega, DA-PRDP NPCO InfoACE Unit, with report from Gumamela C. Bejarin, DA-PRDP South Luzon PSO InfoACE Unit) ■

PRDP to boost... (from page 1)

His half hectare produces the equivalent of 10 tons, but after drying, his produce would be reduced to six to 10 sacks, with each saleable for P4,000.

He normally saves few kilograms of the ready-for-harvest crop for seedlings for the succeeding cropping, barely enough for his needs. His group's proposed project with the PRDP includes a provision for a nursery area to supply their need for seedling.

The GEF only funds livelihood projects that take as main component conservation of marine resources or areas that host globally important marine species. Tayabas Bay, is home to the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and other endangered and vulnerable marine fauna species.

According to Riego, aside from helping

the seaweed farmers, the project will also allow the fish stock in the area to improve; and in the future, some of their members and other fisherfolk in the area could go back to fishing.

Riego explained that before, the entire Tayabas Bay, particularly the stretch along their barangay, was teeming with fish but at the present, fishers who are able to catch mere two kilograms of different species in a day are considered lucky.

The fisherfolk leader added that his experience in farming the commercially valuable seaweeds has forced him to innovate ways to conserve his underwater farm against naturally occurring diseases. He learned to snip seaweeds affected by "ice-ice," a disease that wilts the marine crop, and put the affected plants in floating baskets made of

net, covered with coconut fronds. After few days, the plant would recover. The disease is common during hot season, and is particularly destructive during El Niño.

He started planting seaweeds in 2000, after a son studying at the University of the Philippines Los Baños introduced him to a professor who is into seaweed research. He cultivated the few fronds, and after few months, he was able to cover half-a-hectare area with seaweeds. At that time, he was really pressed to look for other livelihood as the fishing alone no longer sustain his family's daily needs.

The DA-PRDP is a six-year project designed to establish a modern, inclusive, market-oriented and climate-resilient agri-fishery sector. (Alladin S. Diega, DA-PRDP NPCO InfoACE Unit) ■



Geotagging Data: Clinching Opportunities Beyond the PRDP

"We have seen the big benefits of having geotagging data in development planning. Its use is not limited to agriculture; it can also be used for economic and social services. We include geotagging data in proposals and feasibility studies that we submit to other agencies. We see that this could speed up how our proposals are understood by funders."

Ronelio S. Larrosa
Project Development Officer
Roxas, Palawan

NEWS BRIEFS

LUZON A (North Luzon) Ilocos Region PPMIUs update tomato, mungbean PCIPs

Following a stakeholders' consultation on the value chain analyses for tomato and mungbean, the Provincial Project Management and Implementation Units (PPMIUs) of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union and Pangasinan have updated their respective Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs) during a recent workshop.

Under the PRDP, the PPMIUs are tasked to prepare and update PCIPs, a three-year rolling plan, which list key constraints, opportunities and interventions, such as enterprise and infrastructure sub-projects, to support prioritized commodities.

Under the PRDP, the Ilocos Region has prioritized 10 commodities, namely, mango, onion, goat, peanut, tomato, mungbean, bangus, dragon fruit and coffee. (RPCO 1 InfoACE Unit)

LUZON B (South Luzon) Better management in Sorsogon, Masbate MPAs sought

Implementation of management plans for marine protected areas (MPAs) along the Donsol-Ticao-Burias Pass in Sorsogon and Masbate provinces needs reinforcement, as revealed in the findings of recent assessment by the PRDP.

The PRDP's Natural Resource Management Unit has urged stakeholders to formulate policies and update existing MPA ordinances. The

Unit also provided a sample outline of a Marine Sanctuary Management Plan and shared the best practices of MPA management bodies in Bohol where barangay officials lead strict implementation of policies.

Using the Management Effectiveness Assessment Tool (MEAT) and Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), the PRDP determined that MPA sites in Bicol belong to levels 1 (established) and 2 (strengthened), which are considered as "preliminaries" in a four-tiered level of management effectiveness. MEAT and METT are management tools used to measure, monitor and track MPA effectiveness and progress in terms of enforcement, implementation and maintenance.

With a grant from the GEF, the Project has encouraged LGUs and people's organizations to submit microenterprise sub-project proposals worth P5 million per site to support the strengthening of conservation and protection efforts for coastal and marine resources in said target sites. (Annielyn L. Baleza, RPCO 5 InfoACE Unit)

VISAYAS PRDP's assistance to Guimaras seaweed production well timed

A decade after an oil tanker spilled some half million liters of oil in its waters, Guimaras now has a wider area for seaweed production—and a funding assistance from the PRDP for the industry has come in good timing.

Recently, World Bank representatives visited a proposed seaweed plantation under the PRDP in Nueva Valencia town. The P2.8 million-worth subproject is expected to cover a ten-hectare area near Toyo Reef, an MPA, and will directly benefit at least 130 farmers.

Josephine Pio, a seaweed farmer living near the Toyo Reef Marine Reserve, said that only 47 farmers were able to plant the marine crop at present, explaining that others have refrained from planting primarily because of lack of planting materials or seedlings and because of the build up of algae which competes for nutrients available to seaweeds.

Once implemented, the sub-project will address these, among other issues, that seaweed farmers encounter. (Alladin S. Diego, DA-PRDP NPCO InfoACE Unit)

MINDANAO Davao cacao production, market- ing to improve with PRDP assis- tance

Davao cacao farmers see increase in their production and marketing capability with the recently approved enterprise development assistance from the PRDP.

The P26-million cacao production and dry-fermented beans marketing sub-project located in Barangay Subasta in Calinan District, was recently visited by Mara Warwick, the World Bank's new country director and the first woman to hold such position.

During the farmers' interaction, Lorita Tadios, an agrarian reform beneficiary, shared with Warwick that her cacao produce has been a source of additional income for her family.

"We have been planting cacao ever since I could remember. It is easy to grow as intercrop with other crops like fruits trees and coconut. Cacao gives us additional income and with this project, we are hoping to make it bigger in the market," Tadios said. (Sherwin B. Manual, PSO Mindanao InfoACE Unit)

inFOCUS THIS MONTH



Barangay
Implementing
Team (BIT)



People's
Organization (PO)



Academe
(faculty and students)

**Citizens' Monitoring:
Promoting Social
Responsibility, Ensuring
Project Integrity**

The Citizens' Monitoring is a participatory mechanism that serves as a platform in gathering and processing feedback on subproject implementation in two scopes: **quality**, and **social and environmental safeguards**.

Gathered and reported by a barangay-based Community Monitoring Team (CMT), the findings are used as bases to provide professional corrective measures as necessary, maintaining integrity of sub-projects.

Under the **quality** scope, adherence to standards on design, materials, manpower, equipment and construction practice, among other elements of implementation, are closely observed.

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