



PRDP National Project Director Usec. Ariel T. Cayanan and PCG Chairperson Ronald Yu hold up the signed MOU between the DA-PRDP, PCG, and ACDI/VOCA – PhilCAFE; witnessed by PRDP National Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla, NPCO I-REAP Alternate Component Head Leny Pecson, and Dr. Emmanuel Garcia from the De La Salle Food and Water Institute.

DA-PRDP, CCP, ACDI/VOCA – PhilCAFE ink MOU to strengthen coffee enterprises' capacity

The Department of Agriculture – Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Coffee Collective of the

Philippines, Inc., also known as the Philippine Coffee Guild (PCG), and the Agricultural Cooperative Development International / Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance – Philippine Coffee Advancement

and Farm Enterprise (ACDI/VOCA – PhilCAFE) on August 20, 2021.

[Read more on p. 2](#) 

DA-PRDP, CCP, ACDI/VOCA - PhilCAFE ink MOU... (from Page 1)

PRDP National Project Director Undersecretary Ariel T. Cayanán led the ceremonial signing, together with PCG Chairperson Ronald Yu and ACDI/VOCA Deputy Project Director George Dalire, and witnessed by PRDP OIC National Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla, NPCO I-REAP Alternate Component Head Leny Pecson, and Dr. Emmanuel Garcia from the De La Salle Food and Water Institute.

Under the MOU, the DA-PRDP, CCP, and the ACDI/VOCA – PhilCAFE will provide technical assistance and strengthen capacities of 38 DA-PRDP supported coffee enterprises, to further improve the quality of products, and provide long-term income of farmers and sustainability.

Provisions included in the MOU are training activities, on-site learning exchanges on coffee production and postharvest technologies, facilitation of market

linkages, industry networking, and access to business development service providers.

During the signing, Usec. Cayanán lauded the PCG and the ACDI/VOCA for pursuing the partnership to educate and assist coffee enterprises despite the current situation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Maraming, maraming salamat po dito sa napaka-noble na undertaking na ito. This is not just a simple agreement, it’s a very noble and a very passionate agreement,” Usec. Cayanán expressed.

Chairperson Yu said that the partnership will further educate and train coffee farmers to increase the quality of products, and in the future, participate in coffee competitions.

“Sa pamamagitan ng ating partnership, magagawa po nating maparating po ang technical assistance sa ating mga Proponent Groups under PRDP, and as the

representative of the private sector ng coffee industry natin dito sa Pilipinas, ang Philippine Coffee Guild or the Coffee Collective of the Philippines ay sinisiguro namin na mararating natin ang mga farmers sa iba’t-ibang region ng Pilipinas, at matutulungan natin sila at ma-educate natin sila upang taasan ang kalidad ng kanilang produkto - hopefully by next year o sa mga darating na taon. Makakasali sila sa coffee competitions at dito natin makikita na may talagang masarap na kape sa Pilipinas na kayang makipaglaban sa ibang bansa,” Chairperson Yu said.

Director Dalire expressed that through the partnership, he hopes for increased prices of coffee producing areas.

With the MOU signed, the DA-PRDP will soon coordinate with ACDI/VOCA and PCG on the next steps in the conduct of training activities. (*Iconn Mel D. Cayabyab, NPCO InfoACE*) ■



ACDI/VOCA Deputy Project Director George Dalire and other members of the ACDI/VOCA and PCG join the MOU signing remotely via online conferencing.



The signing was held at the conference room of Yellow Turtle Coffee in Quezon City. (*Photos by Ana Victoria C. Margallo, NPCO InfoACE*)



NPCO I-REAP Alternate Component Head Leny Pecson and Enterprise and Marketing Development Specialist Roxanne Alcantara host the signing of the MOU.

DA-PRDP PSO South Luzon Cluster conducts VCA assessment on abaca



The DA-PRDP Project Support Office (PSO) South Luzon Cluster, together with the Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO) Bicol, conducted a Value Chain Analysis (VCA) Assessment of abaca in eight (8) abaca-producing municipalities in Virac, Catanduanes from August 2-5 and 16-18, 2021.

The evaluation conducted was aimed to provide proof of attaining the abaca value chain's desired outcomes, using the VCA translated into Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIP).

Additionally, it aimed to determine how the VCA was used as a planning tool and how it impacted the planning, budgeting, and implementation of agri-fishery interventions of the DA, Local Government Units (LGUs), and other enablers. Likewise, it assesses the sustainability of the abaca value chain's positive results.

Results of the VCA Assessment will be submitted to the DA and PRDP management, as well as the Provincial LGU of Catanduanes, and concerned agencies in September 2021, to serve as basis for improvement of the abaca value chain.

The VC Assessment team consists of representatives from the PSO South Luzon Cluster and the RPCO V that facilitated simultaneous Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and Household Surveys to abaca farmers, and financial and non-financial enablers in Virac, Viga, Panganiban, Bato, San Miguel, Caramoran, San Andres, and Baras. Preparation of synthesis and daily activities were also conducted by PSO South Luzon Cluster virtually, with the Information, Advocacy, Communications and Education (InfoACE) Unit in charge of spot interviews of key players for each segment of the value chain.

Timbaan Abaca Farmers' Association President Noly S. Sales said that the conducted VCA Assessment gave them hope that assistance is coming for abaca farmers in the province.

"Medyo nabuhayan kami at least igwa ako ning maipapaabot duman sa sakuyang mga miyembro na igwa ning posibilidad na maabot na benepisyo para sa samuya," Sales said.

Provincial Agriculturist Nelia Teves stressed the importance of the VCA Assessment for future use.

"Mahalaga (ang VCA Assessment) because kung ano man ang magiging resulta noon, mati-trace natin ang gap and ma-address natin ang issue regarding the VCA - 'yung mga inputs doon na nakuha or outputs na nakuha doon sa VCA Assessment could be a planning tool for us in the future," Teves added.

Moreover, Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator Engineer Elsie B. Reyes related that the VCA Assessment will be very helpful for the future updating of provincial plans and in prioritizing budget allocation for Programs, Projects, or Activities (PPAs).

VCA is one of DA-PRDP's planning tools used in outlining enterprise (I-REAP) and infrastructure development (I-BUILD) subprojects. It is a study of the value added to provincial priority agri-commodities at all stages from input supply, agricultural production, assembly, processing, and marketing. (Annielyn L. Baleza, DA RAFIS V/PRDP-Bicol InfoACE) ■

North Luzon

New Farm-to-Market Road inaugurated in Besao

Farmers and residents in Besao, Mountain Province are now assured of a better access road, following the completion of the new and improved 8.938-kilometer Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) that was inaugurated and turned over on July 29, 2021.

During the turnover ceremony, Liga ng Barangay President Corsio Ganima expressed his gratitude to the improvement and completion of the FMR.

"I cannot express my gratitude enough for the completion of this project. If I'm not mistaken, 90% of the community's basic needs pass through this road and improving it also means a 90% contribution to the improvement of their lives," Ganima said.

The said FMR, with a cost of PhP98.54 million (M), is the first segment of the improvement of the Besao – Nacawang (Segment 1) and the Tadian – Mabalite (Segment 2) FMR subproject implemented under the DA-PRDP and the provincial local government of Mountain Province. To date, the FMR serves around 18,357 individuals from the different barangays of Besao and Tadian, including the Municipality of Quirino, Ilocos Sur.

The program was led by DA-CAR OIC Regional Executive Director Cameron P. Odsey and the turnover was received by Mountain Province Governor Bonifacio C. Lacwasan Jr.

Besides a provincial road, DA-CAR OIC Regional Executive Director Cameron P. Odsey added that the road is a very strategic artery that connects Mountain Province to the province of Benguet and Ilocos Sur, and stressed that maintaining the road is a shared responsibility especially from its primary users. (*Elvy T. Estacio, RPCO CAR InfoACE*)

South Luzon

Aga Farmers MPC's Coffee Processing Facility nears completion

Following the site inspection conducted by the technical staff of the DA-PRDP RPCO CALABARZON, the coffee processing facility of the Aga Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative (AFMPC) is now at a 96% completion rate, registered as of August 18, 2021.

Once the remaining works are completed, another inspection will be conducted which will allow the cooperative to transfer their processing equipment and occupy an adjacent room as their office.

AFMPC Manager Gemma Barlaan shared her joy in the eventual completion of the facility, as this will support their enterprise that has been battered by several challenges in the previous year.

"Sobra akong natutuwa na malapit na naming mailapat sa bagong building ang aming processing area at office. Luluwag na itong kasalukuyan naming building, at pwede na naming gawing selling area. Lubos kasi kaming naapektuhan ng pagputok ng bulkang Taal, ng mga bagyong Rolly at Ulysses, tapos ito pang COVID-19," Barlaan said.

Barlaan also added that online selling has been a huge help for the cooperative to enter new markets.

Apart from the inspection, an enterprise assessment activity was also conducted simultaneously.

Aside from the PRDP technical staff, also present during the site inspection were representatives from the AFMPC, the contractor – KNE Builders, and the Batangas Provincial Engineering office. (*Elijah Jeudi Ocial & Lawrence Albert Bariring, RPCO CALABARZON InfoACE*)

Visayas

Seaweeds storage construction in Getafe at 95% physical progress

Members of the Alumar Farmers and Fishermen Association (AFFAS), Bohol Seaweeds Farmers Agriculture Cooperative (BSFAC), Getafe Fisherfolk Marketing Cooperative (GEFMACO), Mabini Fisherfolk

Marketing Cooperative (MAFMACO) eagerly wait for the completion of the seaweeds storage facility in Getafe, Bohol as the subproject registers a 95% physical progress rate as of August 15, 2021.

The subproject will directly benefit some 200 seaweed farmers and can further accommodate non-members in the years to come.

Once completed, majority of seaweed farmers in Bohol can fully utilize the facility, as it will eventually end the struggle of time-consuming and costly transport activities while ensuring that top tier seaweeds are delivered to various seaweed processors.

According to AFFAS President Artemio Ompalid, the storage facility will be a huge help in storing their seaweeds.

"Seeing it in its almost completed phase raises my excitement and joy. Murag gibayaw mi sa kalami! Naa na jud mi kabutangan sa among produkto na matawag namo nga amo-a. It feels like I am on cloud nine because we now have a safe place to store our seaweeds that we can call our own," Ompalid said.

While waiting for the enterprise's working capital from the DA-PRDP, the AFFAS and three of its cluster members have harvested a total of 34 tons of seaweeds from April to May 2021, after receiving 123,000 kilograms of seedlings from the DA-PRDP in February 2021.

Once AFFAS receives the working capital, enterprise operations will automatically begin on a province-wide seaweed consolidation scale. (*Bexmae Jumao-as, RPCO 7 InfoACE*)

Mindanao

DA-PRDP Roads unlock farm opportunities in Agusan Del Sur

Farmers and consumers can now meet halfway to sell and buy fresh produce, after the turnover of the 13.3-kilometer Concrete Bucac-Marcelina-Mahapag-San Vicente Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) on August 5, 2021.

The PhP210-M project funded by the DA-PRDP targets to support the rubber industry and farm products in Bayugan City and its neighboring municipalities.

The FMR reduces the travel time of transporting cup lumps to the Crumb Rubber Processing Facility from 20 to 10 minutes. It also lessens post-harvest losses and transportation costs, thereby increasing farmers' income.

Considered as the second longest FMR funded by the DA-PRDP, with a 10% counterpart from the Provincial Government, this Package 2 project covers Barangays Marcelina and Katipunan in Bayugan City; and Mahapag and Anislagan in San Luis, Agusan del Sur.

Aside from transporting goods, access to services and facilities is just one ride away from the residents in the recipient barangays, with travel time to hospitals and acquiring essential needs now more convenient than before.

DA-Caraga Regional Executive Director Abel James I. Monteagudo led the turnover of the project to the province, received by Agusan del Sur Governor Santiago B. Cane. It was attended by the barangay, municipal, and provincial officials of Bayugan City and Agusan del Sur. (*Zenny G. Awing, RPCO 13 InfoACE*)

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