



mindanao
ONLINE C.A.F.E.
Convergence for Agriculture and Fishery Enterprise

Strengthening the Country's food system the AgriCOOPh way

Speaker:
CEO Cresente C. Paez
Philippine Family Farmers Agriculture
Fishery Forestry Cooperatives Federation
(AgriCOOPh)

Presented by:
Department of Agriculture
PHILIPPINE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
Mindanao Cluster

October 28, 2021 | 9:30 - 11:30 AM

e-MERKADO
Tulay sa Pag-Asenso, Katuwang sa Pagbabago

A Market Linkage of the
Department of Agriculture
PHILIPPINE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
Project Support Office - North Luzon

facebook.com/prdpnorthluzon
emerkado.sales@gmail.com

DA-PRDP holds 2nd Mindanao Online C.A.F.E. and 1st N. Luzon e-Merkado

The Department of Agriculture – Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP), through its Project Support Office (PSO) Mindanao and North Luzon Clusters, launched the second run of the Mindanao Online Convergence for Agriculture (C.A.F.E.) and the e-Merkado: Tulay sa Pag-Asenso, Katuwang sa Pagbabago Market Linkage Project, respectively, on October 28, 2021.

Under the I-REAP Component of the DA-PRDP, both projects were aimed to maximize the use of digital technology to connect beneficiaries to buyers, as part of the One DA Agenda of

Secretary William Dar.

The Mindanao Online C.A.F.E. is the knowledge sharing platform established by the PSO Mindanao Cluster, aiming to establish linkages between farmers, traders, and other private institutions in Mindanao and the Philippines.

e-Merkado, on the other hand, is the first market linkage project of the PSO North Luzon Cluster, aiming to connect PGs and cooperatives to a potentially larger market through the use of online streaming and online marketing.

DA-PRDP National Project Coordination Office (NPCO)

Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla congratulated the PSOs for implementing projects that will further assist, educate, and support the enterprises of Proponent Groups (PGs).

“I would like to laud our Mindanao and North Luzon Clusters for their initiatives in pursuing the digitization of our I-REAP platforms, especially for the marketing of our Proponent Groups,” Director Hubilla expressed.

[Read more on p. 2](#)



DA-PRDP holds...(from Page 1)

Converging enterprises online

The second installment of the Mindanao Online C.A.F.E. was aired via the PSO Mindanao Cluster's official social media account, which was attended by around 75 participants from 25 PGs in Mindanao, along with Provincial Local Government Units and DA-PRDP Regional Project Coordination Offices (RPCOs).

During his presentation, guest speaker AgriCOOPh CEO Cresente C. Paez provided his learnings and best practices on empowering cooperatives, under the theme "Strengthening the Country's Food System the AgriCOOPh way".

"If we build the co-op, their internal capacity will be improved. If the internal capacity is improved, the support system is better accessed through financing, infrastructure, and technology support. If the support system is better accessed, the co-op

is able to deliver better services to its members which will eventually lead to increased income for its members," Paez said.

Highlighting PGs through e-Merkado

e-Merkado's official launching through the PSO North Luzon Cluster's official social media account saw the extensive marketing of the products of four (4) PGs, as representatives presented their market pitches for potential linkages or buyers.

Participating PGs during the e-Merkado launch included Kesi'melan coffee products from the HOJAP Multipurpose Cooperative; garlic, or the "White Gold Treasure" from the Bacarra Zanjera Irrigators Multi-Purpose Cooperative; dairy products from the San Agustin Dairy Cooperative; and coffee and turmeric products from the Samahang

Kababaihan ng Capintalan Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

PSO North Luzon Cluster Project Director Crispulo G. Bautista, Jr. expressed that the e-Merkado aims to strengthen the digital capacity of PGs, and provide avenues for market linkages from the farm to the market.

Director Bautista, Jr. added that more activities will commence in the coming months.

"Watch out for our market linkage activities in the coming months, as we meet and greet virtually, and connect our farmer beneficiaries to potential marketing partners," Director Bautista, Jr. said.

To date, interested parties looking to link with participating PGs or interested buyers may fill up the form provided by the PSO North Luzon Cluster at <https://bit.ly/eMerkadoMarketMatchForm>. (Iconn Mel D. Cayabyab, PRDP NPCO InfoACE) ■

World Bank lauds DA-PRDP for adopting GEMS after series of pilot tests nationwide

The World Bank has lauded the DA-PRDP for adopting the Geo-Enabling Initiative for Monitoring Supervision (GEMS), after conducting a series of trainings, pilot tests, and roll-outs across the country.

In its report, the World Bank

congratulated the DA-PRDP as one of its success stories in implementing GEMS, among other projects around the globe.

DA-PRDP NPCO Geomapping and Governance Unit Head Xerxes Remorozo thanked the World Bank

for recognizing the DA-PRDP's efforts of utilizing digital methods for real-time data collection and analysis.



Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP)

Read more on p. 3



World Bank lauds DA-PRDP... (from Page 2)

"We are truly grateful to the World Bank for their guidance towards the launching and application of GEMS here in the country, as we progress towards digitization. We hope to continue the use of GEMS further across our offices," Remorozo expressed.

Through the DA-PRDP, adopting GEMS allowed the project team to migrate traditional pen-and-paper data collection process into a simplified mobile app, such as KoBoToolbox. During the pilot tests, the following methods were introduced: Infrastructure – Operations and Maintenance Audit System (OMAS), the Enterprise Operations – Enterprise Assessment Tool (EAT), and the recently added Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) Compliance Monitoring Checklist.

According to DA-PRDP NPCO Geomapping and Governance Unit Alternate Unit Head Joseph C. Pacon, through the use of KoBoToolbox, the project was able to effectively and efficiently collect and process actual data per subproject: 25 subprojects for OMAS, 19 subprojects for EAT, and 10 subprojects for ESMP.

"The pilot tests and roll-outs were a success, and we hope to capacitate more of our colleagues and partners to actively use these tools as it's very easy to use," Pacon said.

From June to August, the DA-PRDP conducted several trainings on launching GEMS, including the pilot testing and roll-out of the OMAS of completed physical infrastructure subprojects and the EAT.

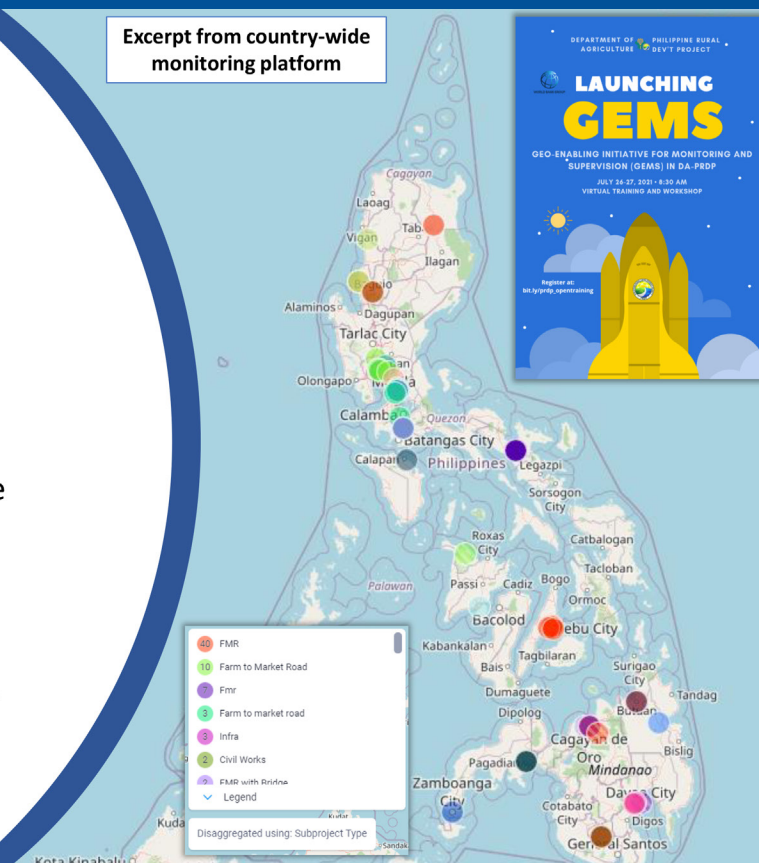
From September to October, together with the PSOs and RPCOs, the application of the GEMS was conducted with the pilot run of the mobile OMAS for Farm-to-Market Roads (FMRs) in Iloilo, Bicol, Cagayan, Misamis Oriental, and Oriental Mindoro. More activities will follow in the upcoming months.

With the recent constraints impeding operational management, the World Bank launched GEMS, with support from the Korea Trust Fund for Economic and Peacebuilding Transitions (KTF), to systematically enhance Monitoring and Evaluation of development activities, as well as real-time risk management in Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) settings. *(Conn Mel D. Cayabyab, PRDP NPCO InfoACE)* ■

The Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) aims to support smallholder farmers and fisherfolk throughout the country to increase rural incomes and enhance farm and fishery productivity.

- Adopting GEMS allowed the project team to migrate their traditional pen-and-paper data collection process into a simplified mobile app.
- So far, the PRDP team have piloted GEMS to monitor completed infrastructure and enterprise subprojects and to assess farming clusters for consolidation.
- Within 3 months the PIU trained over 600 participants through multiplier capacity-building sessions, with more scheduled to roll out the GEMS tools across key offices.

Excerpt from country-wide monitoring platform





Women Catch Dreams at Sea

While the chirps of the crickets resonate and the sun still sleeps with the rest of the world, fishers in Barobo, Surigao del Sur set foot in their 'bangkas', in hopes to catch fish for their table. They depend on their luck at sea to support the needs of their family. And like the sea, their catch has highs and lows leading to uncertain income.

Fueled with hardships and dreams, Vilma T. Guingue, 47, breaks the notion of the work once thought suited only for men. She accompanies her husband to help him catch fish at sea to feed their nine children waiting at home.

In a revolutionized world where gender equality is advocated, women like Vilma have the freedom to serve a key role in the food system; stepping up from her usual routine as a housewife.

Pushing to give a brighter future for their children, Vilma joined the Anunang Gamut Fishermen Association (AGFA) in 2017, where she found her purpose and dreams coming true.

Breaking dawn

Sustaining the Bangus aquaculture from the Mindanao Rural Development Program (MRDP) project in 2011, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Barobo helped AGFA to acquire the Bangus Production and Marketing project from the DA-PRDP.

In 2018, AGFA was granted Php1,164,135.55 worth of materials to raise 30,000 Garungan or Bangus fingerlings as an expansion to their MRDP project.

It never crossed to Vilma that this would cause her to leave

Virgelio in fishing.

"I was always with my husband to catch fish at dawn. I thought my life would revolve around that. Then AGFA came, and seeing their progress, I took the courage to join, it was the best decision," Vilma said.

Embracing all genders in the community, AGFA welcomes everyone. With a total of 46 members as of 2021, they hold a 50:50 ratio of males and females.

With this, it opened an opportunity to Vilma to become a caretaker for the additional pens and fingerlings aside from performing as a secretary, giving her an additional income.

[Read more on p. 5](#)



Women catch...(from Page 4)

“Before, we only depend on our catch and it’s a rare moment to catch abundantly. However, aside from the share we receive from our Bangus harvests, I now earn PhP4,000 every month. It’s a big help to the family. I was able to send two of my children to college. Thankfully, two of them completed their studies already,” Vilma tearfully shared.

Margarita M. Mabong, AGFA’s bookkeeper, also observed a shift in the attitude of Anunang residents. “People here are happier and even got fatter since they can now eat properly and nutritiously. We can cook different Bangus recipes. It was a huge difference before when we had no fish pens,” she happily said.

In sickness, health, and even in work, Delma and Vergilio take care of the Bangus diligently. They feed them from time to time and ensure that the net has no holes so fingerlings could not escape. They also remove the dead fishes to avoid poisoning the live ones.

“It wasn’t hard for me since my husband helps. If before I help him to catch fish at sea, now it’s the other way around,” Vilma said.

Rising up

The DA-PRDP continues to uplift its PGs by providing infrastructure or capital needs and capacity building. Just this year, members and non-AGFA members were immersed in Bangus Bottling and Processing Training, in partnership with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Like Vilma, this DA-PRDP training empowered women in the community to do something relevant while their men are at sea. Vilma also encouraged her daughter to join and learn new skills.

“This boosted our morale as wives. While our husbands are busy at sea, we can do deboning and bottling, then sell these products. It’s extra income for the family, community, and the association,” said Rubelyn T. Cahilis, wife of an AGFA member.

Barobo LGU is also in full support of the association, providing them materials such as pressure cooker, gas stove, kitchen wares, among others for the start-up of their Bangus processing business.

Excessive harvest causes the fisherfolks to sell the Bangus

at a lower price, losing the chance of additional profit. Now, with the acquired knowledge of processing, the excess Bangus can already be sold at a higher price.

Laying down

Alongside the Bangus processing, AGFA aims to expand its aquaculture into sea tourism, with the support of Barobo LGU.

For Vilma, government interventions beamed with rays of opportunities for a woman like her. She also expressed that giving them skill training pushes more women to find their voice in the community and start a business.

“I am deeply grateful for all the interventions given to this community, especially for including and making us women important,” Vilma expressed.

While women are no strangers to the hustles of being a housekeeper, with the unity of AGFA and government interventions, they unceasingly catch dreams in the endless sea of opportunities. (Zenny Awing, DA-PRDP RPCO 13 InfoACE) ■



North Luzon

DA-PRDP RPCO CAR augments livelihood of farmers in Beleng-belis

Now on their second cycle of production, farmers in Beleng-belis, Kapangan, Benguet are gradually making headway with their Php1 million-worth hog fattening and marketing micro enterprise subproject under the DA-PRDP and the Provincial Local Government of Benguet.

Through the DA-PRDP RPCO CAR, the Beleng-Belis Farmers Association (BBFA) received 100 piglets, along with 26 sacks of starter foods and 168 sacks of grower feed which were all delivered on a staggered basis.

Among the 84 members of the BBFA, 20 members benefited under the first tranche. The members received 4-15 piglets each depending on their capabilities to provide for the additional counterpart.

According to Belino, the current price of piglets increased due to the decrease in the supply of pig in the province. With this, the original list of beneficiaries changed, since some of them cannot provide the additional counterpart that the association requires.

"Piglets cost less than P3,000.00 when we prepared our business plan in 2017. With the increased price, we required an additional cash counterpart from our members aside from the pig pens," she added.

Due to the restrictions in the transport of pigs, pork and by-products as a preventive measure for African Swine Fever (ASF) virus infection, the livestock were delivered to the association on a staggered basis.

Despite the restrictions, Benguet Provincial Agriculture Office Senior Agriculturist Jocelyn Galunza said that together with the Provincial Veterinary Office, they were able to source out livestock within the municipality of Kapangan, and from nearby ASF-free municipalities like Kibungan.

While most of the recipients are on their second cycle, some are already on their third. To sustain their livelihood, most of the recipients are planning to raise one pig as a sow for piglet production.

As for their income, an amount ranging from Php3,000.00 to Php4,000.00/head is reportedly gained by a member excluding expenses.

In the future, the association intends to buy a lot through the association's savings and to construct a slaughter house for their pigs for safety purposes and engage in meat processing for added value. *(Elvy T. Estacio, RPCO CAR InfoACE)*

South Luzon

Five years after: DA-PRDP FMRs continue to support OrMin farmers

Completed FMRs under the DA-PRDP in Oriental Mindoro continue to benefit farmers and residents in the municipalities of Baco and Victoria, as reflected in the results of the Operations and Maintenance Audit System (OMAS) conducted in the province from October 19-20, 2021.

The Rehabilitation/Upgrading of Dulangan I – Dulangan II FMR subproject was completed on November 10, 2016. With a length of 5.31 kilometers and a total subproject cost of Php52.2 million (M) the FMR has provided a safe and convenient access road for 2,115 households in its Road Influence Area (RIA).

Likewise, the Concreting of Bagong Silang – Macatoc FMR improved the delivery of essential goods for its 1,570 household beneficiaries since its completion on September 29, 2016. The FMR runs the length of 2.79 kilometers, with a total project cost of Php24.1-M.

Also included in the subprojects audited were the Oriental Mindoro Calamansi Trading Center in Calapan, and the Oriental Mindoro Calamansi Processing and Marketing in the Municipality of Pinamalayan. The audited subprojects were conducted by the DA-PRDP RPCO MIMAROPA, DA MIMAROPA Regional Operations and Maintenance Audit Team (ROMAT), and Oriental Mindoro's Provincial Project Management and Implementation Unit (PPMIU).

OMAS is conducted semi-annually for ten years, starting from the sixth month after the project is turned over to the recipient. Recommendations from the audit shall serve as a guide for the LGU to maintain the subproject properly. In addition, results of the audit shall determine the extent of additional funding and support for future subprojects. *(Danica A. Brutus, MIMAROPA RPCO InfoACE)*

Visayas

DA-PRDP Visayas turns over Php267-M-worth subprojects in Negros Occidental

A multitude of opportunities heading towards agricultural transformation and development is bound to be benefited by the people of Negros Occidental as the DA-PRDP PSO Visayas Cluster held the ceremonial turnover, blessing, and groundbreaking of five (5) subprojects to the key stakeholders in the respective municipalities of the province from October 20-21, 2021.

The subprojects under I-BUILD and I-REAP Components amounting

to Php267-M were funded by the DA-PRDP, with counterparts from the LGUs and the recipients, are now all set to bring encompassing benefits to the project beneficiaries, particularly to the agri-fishery sector in Negros.

The set of projects turned over under I-BUILD include the Construction of Sagay Feeder Port/Fish Landing in Old Sagay, Sagay City, with a total project cost of Php153-M; the Construction of 75 linear meters Himoga-an Bridge in Barangay Bug-ang, Toboso amounting to Php39.6-M; and the Construction of Barangay 1A and Barangay Punta Salong FMR in Manapla worth Php45.8-M.

Projects under the I-REAP Component include the Negros Native Chicken Breeding, Production and Marketing Enterprise in Barangay Daga, Cadiz City with a total project cost of Php10.49-M, and the turnover of the Caridad Swine Breeder Stocks in Hacienda Caridad Uno, Barangay Luna, Cadiz City, and the blessing and groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of swine breeding facilities.

Additionally, the lead PG, the La Castellana I Personnel Multipurpose Cooperative, received a total of Php3.39-M checks intended for the procurement of 100 breeder gilts and three (3) boars and feeds, as part of the second tranche fund for its Swine Integrated Enterprise.

The challenge of transporting agricultural goods has been one of the major problems of the farmers in the suburbs, which they have long endured, as well as the frequent weather changes, and further aggravated by the pandemic, the reason why rural infrastructure is among the topmost development priorities of the province.

Officials that spearheaded the activities include DA Western Visayas Regional Executive Director Remelyn R. Recoter, DA-PRDP PSO Visayas Deputy Project Director (DPD) Engineer Jose Albert Barrogo, DA-PRDP Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO) 6 DPD Engineer Moises D. Mana-ay, Provincial Project Management and Implementing Unit Head, Dr. Narissa Lemoncito, Office of the Provincial Agriculturist OIC Dr. Dina Gensola, Provincial Engineer Ernie Mapa, and other local key officials of the respective municipalities involved spearheaded the succeeding activities. *(April Grace Padilla, RPCO 6 InfoACE)*

Mindanao

DA chief turns over Organic Production Center to Davao del Norte

DA Secretary William D. Dar turned over an Organic Production Center with common service facility amounting to Php9.5M to the Local Government Unit of Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte on October 22, 2021.

The project under DA-PRDP is an improvement of the existing 2.6-hectare Municipal Organic Production and Techno-Demo Center.

The common service facilities include two units of cacao solar driers, a rice solar drier, warehouse, fermentation facility, vermi storage and a vermi shed with three composting beds.

These facilities will support and augment the increasing production of rice, corn, and cacao in the area.

Around 6,500 farmers will benefit from the production center, such as the increase in the market value of rice (13%), corn (29%) and cacao (9%) due to the availability of warehouse. There will also be an increase in the value of commodities due to the availability of solar driers by 22% (rice), 17% (corn) and of cacao beans by 38% due to proper fermentation process, and many others.

The significant increase of farmers adopting natural farming practices is not only for rice, but also for vegetables, banana and other high value commercial crops. Demand for organic fertilizers is also expected to increase.

The completion of the improvement of the common service facilities in the municipality provides easy access of farmers to better post-harvest facilities as it envisions to produce sufficient and good quality farm produced. *(Janelle T. Flores, RPCO 11 InfoACE)*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief : Cheryl C. Suarez

Associate Editors : Adora D. Rodriguez and Iconn Mel D. Cayabyab

Writers : NPCO, PSO, and RPCO InfoACE Units

Photographers : NPCO, PSO, and RPCO InfoACE Units

Lay-out Artist : Ana Victoria C. Margallo

Adviser : Shandy M. Hubilla, CESO IV, EnP.



PRDP in FOCUS 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: prdpnpcoinfoace@gmail.com or visit us at the PRDP Office, Department of Agriculture Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.



Philippine Rural Development Project



DA_PRDP



da_prdp



prdp.da.gov.ph