

DA-PRDP kicks off 2022 with Planning and Targeting Workshop

Starting off the new year, the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) conducted its nationwide Planning and Targeting Workshop for CY 2022, which officially started on January 17, 2022.

Held virtually with almost 400 participants from the DA-PRDP National Project Coordination Office (NPCO), Project Support Offices (PSOs), and Regional Project Coordination Offices (RPCOs), the

workshop was aimed to discuss several objectives concerning overall project implementation.

In his welcome message, DA-PRDP National Project Director Undersecretary Ariel Cayanán reminded everyone that despite the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Project must remain resilient in its mandate of aiding beneficiaries.

“Life has been difficult for everyone since the COVID-19 pandemic began, but this will not

be a hindrance for us not to perform our duties as public servants. In a time where our farmer and fisherfolk beneficiaries need our support the most, we have to be stronger than ever, to fulfill our mandate in aiding our beneficiaries by providing them a prosperous and comfortable life,” Usec. Cayanán said.

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DA-PRDP kicks off 2022...(from Page 1)

Usec. Cayanan also instructed the NPCO, PSOs, and RPCOs to ensure the completion of the Original Loan and the First Additional Financing (AF1) this year, expedite the implementation of the Second Additional Financing with E.U. Grant (AF2-E.U.), strategies during the upcoming election period and the change of leadership in some Local Government Units (LGUs), discuss pipeline and cap building for E.U. priority areas, budget availability, and the overall alignment with the “One DA” Reform Agenda set by DA Secretary William Dar.

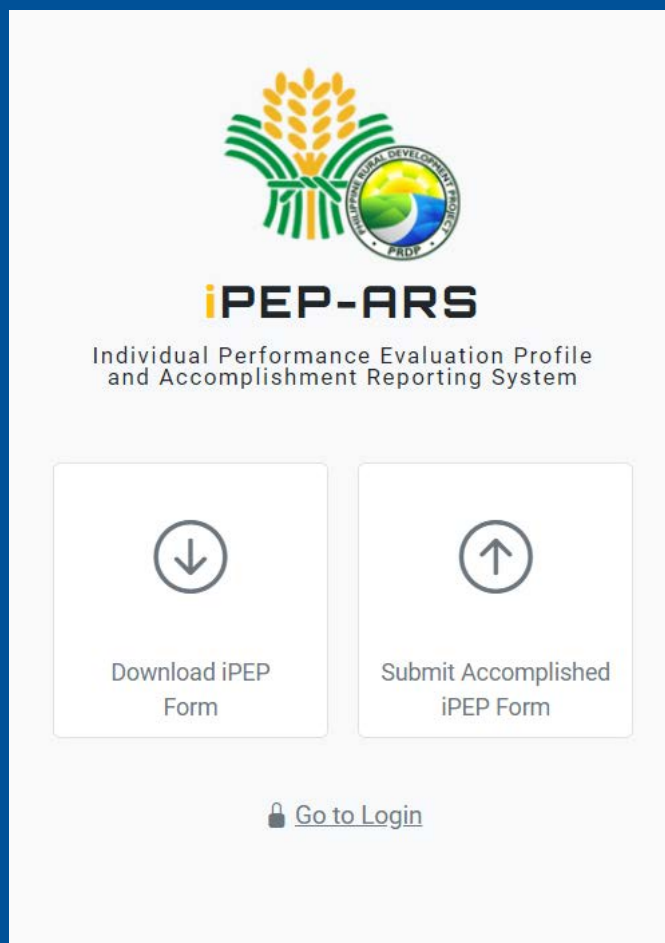
DA-PRDP National Deputy

Project Director Shandy Hubilla then presented implementation updates, findings and recommendations during the 13th World Bank Implementation Support Mission, Project financial performance, and action plans with timelines for 2022, with the implementation of the Second Additional Financing with E.U. Grant.

Later on, through the Geomapping and Governance Unit (GGU), the Individual Performance Evaluation Profile and Accomplishment Reporting System (iPEP-ARS) was also presented, which is a web-based, in-house developed work management

system aimed to streamline the Performance Evaluation Profile (PEP) document management process and systematically track workforce productivity to ensure it meets the management objectives.

After the opening day of the Planning and Targeting Workshop, breakout sessions were conducted per Component, including select Units, to discuss ways of moving forward. Additionally, PSO Clusters held their respective Plenary Sessions for the Presentation of Targets for 2022. (*Iconn Mel D. Cayabyab, PRDP NPCO InfoACE*) ■



DA-PRDP establishes iPEP-ARS to ensure workforce productivity

To ensure proper document management process and efficiently track productivity in the workforce, the DA-PRDP formally introduced the Individual Performance Evaluation Profile and Accomplishment Reporting System (iPEP-ARS) during the Planning and Targeting Workshop on January 17, 2022.

The iPEP-ARS is a web-based and in-house developed work management system that aims to

streamline the PEP document management process and systematically track workforce productivity to ensure it meets the management objectives.

Starting out as a directive by DA-PRDP Management, the GGU has led the conceptualization, design, and presentation of the iPEP-ARS, which will be used by the NPCO, PSOs, and RPCOs.

Read more on p. 3



DA-PRDP establishes iPEP-ARS... (from Page 2)

According to GGU Unit Head Xerxes Remorozo, the iPEP-ARS is envisioned to produce results that will ultimately help the DA-PRDP manpower in achieving its goals.

“This innovation has the potential to be one of the legacies of the Project. With the power of information and communications technology (ICT), the iPEP-ARS will automate and fast track the assessment of accomplishments, making it more objective. It will also help in synergizing efforts of the project from the bottom up,” Remorozo said.

Remorozo added that the tool can be mainstreamed and adapted to the operations of the DA.

“No less than the top management of the DA-PRDP, under the leadership of Usec. Ariel Cayan and the guidance of Director Shandy Hubilla, have been pushing for this online tool. Consistent with the “One DA” framework on Technology, Innovation and Digital Agriculture, we plan also to mainstream this in regular DA operations in the future,” Remorozo added.

According to GGU Alternate Unit Head Joseph Pacon, the objective of the work management system is to digitize and automate processes in PEP preparation, target and timeline setting of deliverables, submission, monitoring and

evaluation of outputs and/or performance. The system will also provide functionality to link accomplishment reporting based on the approved PEP with automated scoring and generation of reports.

The GGU expects that as of February, 100% accounts have been registered, together with approved/final PEPs uploaded in the system, as well as a comprehensive guide on the Accomplishment Reporting and the utilization of ARS functions/module for the filing of Accomplishment Reports. (*Iconn Mel D. Cayabyab, PRDP NPCO InfoACE*) ■



Xerxes Remorozo, DA-PRDP NPCO Geomapping and Governance Unit Head



Joseph Pacon, DA-PRDP NPCO Geomapping and Governance Alternate Unit Head



Leo Mark Baldoz, DA-PRDP NPCO Geomapping and Governance Specialist, programmer of the iPEP-ARS



The DA-PRDP RPCO V conducts the iPEP-ARS Coaching Workshop

DA-PRDP supports MPA expansion in Agdangan, Quezon



Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are natural areas governed by pre-defined management objectives, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). MPAs are delineated zones, where certain activities and uses have corresponding restrictions in order to conserve and protect the biodiversity, marine species, and resources therein.

At times, conflict and resistance may arise as an outcome of the establishment of an MPA. This is because the establishment marks a geo-territorial squeeze in accessible fishing grounds, requiring a cultural, behavioral, and economic shift in the traditional fishing activities of the country's fishing population. However, gains

and benefits derived in the long-term protection of critical habitats and fish stock far exceed the immediate trade-off.

Increased education and awareness on the importance of MPAs in restoring local fisheries has become an important consequence of the MPA rehabilitation project in the Municipality of Agdangan, Quezon Province through the DA-PRDP's Natural Resource Management (NRM) project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). In 2020, the ordinance declared an additional 110 hectares of protected waters, named Bahurang Lawis MPA, which was approved by the Municipality's local law-making body.

According to Municipal Agriculturist Mr. Joemar

Salagubang, the support offered by the DA-PRDP went on to increase awareness on the value of the MPA.

"Nagkaron ng interes nang ma-declare ang Bahurang Silag nung pumasok ang DA-PRDP dahil doon nagkaroon ng mga meeting, at doon naipakita sa mga mangingisda ang kahalagahan ng MPA"

The Bahurang Lawis MPA is a traditional fishing ground for Agdangan fisherfolk. The massive rock formations that outline the underwater landscape serve as a breeding ground and home to various species of fish, cephalopods and crustaceans.

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DA-PRDP supports...(from Page 4)

Initial efforts were first met with skepticism and resistance, but through the active leadership of the local Fisheries Aquatic Resources Management Council (FARMC) and the continuous dialogue with fisherfolk groups paved the way for the MPA's eventual adoption.

"Dahil doon sa mga usapin, talakayan, namulat ang kaisipan ng mga mangingisda maging ng mga opisyal ng barangay na nakakasakop kung saan naroon ang MPA," Salagubang added.

The establishment of Bahurang Lawis marks the expansion and scaling of conservation activities in Agdangan, from the initial 76 hectares protected by the Bahurang Silag MPA. In December 2021, the DA-PRDP NRM of the National Project Coordination Office (NPCO) and Project Support Office (PSO) South Luzon assisted the Local Government Unit (LGU) in the benchmarking and survey of the Bahurang Lawis MPA. The assessment was able to set the

baseline underwater biophysical make-up and fish stock inside the MPA's core zone. The Live Coral Cover (LCC) of Bahurang Lawis was noted to be in fair condition, based on the analysis of the data gathered. The DA-PRDP trained LGU-based SCUBA divers that are tasked to follow through the monitoring and evaluation activities in the succeeding years, after project life.

Habitat enhancement and site development of the MPAs in Agdangan have also received support from the DA-PRDP. The stock enhancement of *Tridacna gigas* (Giant Clam) in both MPAs was established in 2020, through the project. There are currently 69 giant clams and several counts of other species of genus *Tridacna* being grown and seeded in the municipality. The presence of this endangered species, duly protected by the law against illegal harvesting, helps improve the water quality and fish recruitment in the nearby waters.

The economic impacts of the Taklobo have been felt as well by the coastal residents.

"May mga ilang kababayan kami na nakikinabang doon dahil sa pagdami ng turista at magbibili ng isda doon sa fish landing. Nakisangkot na rin ang mga resort dahil dumami ang kanilang mga guests dahil nakikita sa Facebook na may Taklobo nursery. Kung hindi nga lang nagkaroon ng pandemic at restrictions, siguro napakarami na ang pumasok sa lokal na pamahalaan", Salagubang expressed.

The municipality has already allocated yearly funds for the regular conduct of law enforcement activities and site maintenance towards the institutionalized and long-term protection of the two MPAs.

"Ang mission talaga ng munisipyo ay mas lumago pa ang mga corals at mas dumami yung nakikitang species ng isda doon", Salagubang said. *(Carm Novilla, GEF, DA-PRDP NPCO)*



The DA-PRDP GEF team in Agdangan, Quezon

North Luzon

Cattle breeding to improve food production in Tarlac

Now on their second cycle of production, farmers in Belong-belis, Kapangan The initiative of the DA-PRDP has led to the creation of a multiplier farm to boost cattle production and manufacture premium quality beef in Barangay San Sotero, Sta. Ignacia, Tarlac.

The new multiplier farm, which was completed in December of 2021, was aimed to significantly address food production, increase first-rate qualities in livestock, and escalate the income of thriving cattle raisers in the locality.

With proper feeding practices and livestock management, the facility, with a size of 630 square meters, is seen to produce a superior breed of cattle.

According to I-BUILD Rural Infrastructure Engineer Mary Joyce Quiros, the multiplier farm includes a perimeter fence, communal house, maintenance building with one (1) unit of shallow well, one square meter pump house, and an overhead tank with a 1500-liter capacity.

With this, cattle production will continue to increase to meet current demand in various markets in the municipality and nearby areas.

The whole project includes production, Proponent Group (PG) equity, and civil works amounting to PhP11.9 million to be utilized by the San Sotero Primary Multi-Purpose Cooperative in rearing some 50 head of bloodline heifers and two pure-bred Brahman bulls.

Looking forward, cooperative will work on ensuring sustainable and highest possible genetic progress of breeds to increase the benefits of its members. (Ma. Reina Len Luna, RPCO 3 InfoACE)

South Luzon

Two DA-PRDP interventions to be completed by 2022 in Romblon

For the province of Romblon, two (2) interventions from the DA-PRDP are set to be in service for its residents by the first half of the year, as reflected during site inspections conducted from January 25-26, 2022.

The site inspections, attended by DA MIMAROPA Regional Executive Director (RED) Antonio Gerundio, OIC Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulatory Engineer Ma. Christine Inting, and Romblon Governor Jose Riano, were focused on the 5.8-kilometer Construction/Upgrading of Barangay Pato-o Proper – Sitio Aurora, Odiongan, Romblon Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) Package I and II with 141 linear meter bridge, and the Romblon Seaweeds Production and Processing.

The FMR, with a total amount of PhP168,112,839.51, aims to address the poor road networks in the coconut producing areas of the province, which will eventually benefit the 4,700 households within its Road Influence Area.

In a site inspection conducted on January 25, RED Gerundio and Governor Riano took the time to have an informal dialogue with some of the residents in the area. The project affected people were asked about their condition now that the subproject is more than halfway done, and is expected to be completed by June 2022.

On the other hand, the I-REAP subproject is set to be completed by the first quarter of the year. With a total subproject cost of PhP14,146,699.38, this intervention includes a seaweeds processing center infrastructure, a motorized fiberglass boat, a truck, a floating bamboo dryer, and other tools and pieces of equipment necessary for seaweed processing.

In a separate interview, Santa Maria Mayor Lorilie Fabon expressed her gratitude for the provision of the processing facility to her constituents.

"Itong proyekto po na seaweeds na ibinigay sa aming bayan ay napakalaking tulong po ito kung saan ay mapapakinabangan ng ating mga mamamayan, at the same time marami po ang mae-

employ lalo na ngayon na kina-kailangan ng ating mga kababayan sa Santa Maria. Sana hindi lamang po itong proyekto na seaweeds and maibigay sa aming bayan kundi madami pa po para sa kapakanan ng aming bayan," Mayor Fabon stated.

Also present during the site inspection were representatives from the Provincial Project Management and Implementation Unit, DA-PRDP RPCO MIMAROPA, and the subproject contractor. (Danica A. Brutus, MIMAROPA RPCO InfoACE)

Mindanao

RPAB endorses rubber enterprise subproject in North Cotabato

A multi-million proposed subproject that will boost rubber production in Region XII was approved by the Regional Project Advisory Board (RPAB) of the DA-PRDP.

The Expansion of Rubber Production, Processing and Marketing Subproject, proposed by the North Cotabato Rubber Development Cooperation (NOCORDECO), was recently given a nod by the RPAB in Koronadal City.

With this, the proponent group (PG), will proceed to the next step which is the compliance of other requirements to the Project Support Office Mindanao for the issuance of the No Objection Letter (NOL).

The subproject, which has an approved amount of PhP50 million, will benefit 900 rubber farmers in the municipalities of M'lang, Matalam, Antipas, Magpet, Arakan, President Roxas, and Tulunan.

Maximo M. Casulocan Jr., chairman of NOCORDECO, said that the approval is a precious prize to their effort and tireless preparation of the business plan and other requirements.

"We are glad that with all the sacrifices we are now a few inches closer to the full implementation of our project," he added.

The chairman said that the average of 350 kilos of rubber cup lump produced by their members per hectare is not sufficient to the needs of their market. With the subproject, more farmers will be engaged in the income producing activities of the cooperative.

Moreover, he added that from 30 hectares of production area utilized by the co-op for their rubber crump production, the subproject will allow them to include 400 hectares of rubber plantation.

The RPAB meeting was spearheaded by RPAB Chairman and Project Director Dennis Arpia and was participated by other RPAB members in the person of RAFC Chair Eduardo Castin and representatives from other national agencies such as Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, Agrarian Reform, Public Works and Highways, Trade and Industry, Interior and Local Government, Mindanao Development Authority, and National Commission on Indigenous People.

RPAB members reminded the Provincial/Municipal Project Management Implementing Unit and the PG that all the suggestions must be incorporated in their proposal together with the requirements that need to be complied for the project before the submission for the issuance of the NOL. (Carl Ulysses Aguillon, RPCO 12 InfoACE)

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