



PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR VCA-LED DA PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

DA INTENDED OUTCOME



PRDP processes set for integration into DA operations

As the Department of Agriculture (DA) regards the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) as a well-established platform with a national scope and a buy-in from both provincial and municipal governments, the integration and mainstreaming of PRDP processes in all DA regional offices, attached agencies, corporations, and programs

was announced during the DA Operations Management Group meeting last August 11, 2022.

The DA recognizes the PRDP's alignment with the sector's key strategies for modernization and industrialization towards a transformative agriculture and fishery sector. Anchoring on the primary directive of the current administration to prioritize

agriculture and food security through rebuilding the value chain to cope with global challenges, the PRDP serves as a model project to institutionalize reforms in the DA regular programs and projects.

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With these, AgPLAN - Agri-Fishery Planning at the Local and National Levels, AgBUILD - Agriculture Building Up of Infrastructure and Logistics for Development and AgREAP-Agribusiness and Rural Enterprises for Agri-fishery Productivity were created.

The AgPLAN will institutionalize the value chain analysis (VCAs) and Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs) as references for planning and budgeting starting CY 2024. The AgBUILD will adopt relevant PRDP technical and documentary requirements in the implementation of rural infrastructure investments, while the AgREAP will likewise adopt PRDP standards in the implementation of enterprise subprojects.

The Project takes off from the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan (AFMP) in identifying priority agri-fishery commodities that will be subjected to

the VCAs. As of July 2022, the PRDP has formulated 137 VCAs covering 78 commodities and product forms, which have been the basis of the LGUs in the preparation of their respective Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs).

The LGUs' PCIP uptake has translated into PhP39.57 billion (B) worth of rural infrastructure and PhP2.9B worth of enterprise investments funded under the Project and has further leveraged additional funding amounting to PhP68B from other institutions supporting agricultural commodity development.

The Bureau of Agricultural and Fishery Engineering (BAFE), with the development of the FMR Network Plan, and the DA - Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance (DA-AMAS) will lead the adoption of these technical requirements and standards and ensure that these are embedded in the relevant manuals and

guidelines related to infrastructure implementation.

The DA Field Operations Service (DA-FOS), on the other hand, shall provide the overall technical and operational support to ensure the smooth and seamless adoption and integration of these processes including all other requirements and activities associated with the compliance with the above-mentioned documents.

With the integration of PRDP's processes in the DA, National Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla further highlighted the standards and innovations trail blazed by the Project. "We've always been saying this, and of course, not just saying but doing and espousing: the PRDP way of doing things. From traditional to science-based or a more technical approach in prioritizing subprojects," Hubilla emphasized. *(Kristine Victoria L. Bistoyong, NPCO InfoACE)* ■



Division and program heads gather on August 11, 2022 for the Operations management Meeting. *(Photos from the Agriculture and Fisheries Information Division.)*



PRDP National Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla presents the suggested VCA-led framework of the PRDP to be mainstreamed to the DA.

DA-PRDP NPCO conducts first ManCom meeting with new National Project Director

Newly appointed Assistant Secretary for Operations Engr. Arnel V. de Mesa leads the Management Committee of the DA-PRDP NPCO. (Photos by Ana Victoria Margallo, NPCO InfoACE)



The Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) National Project Coordination Office (NPCO) held its first Management Committee (ManCom) meeting with the newly appointed Assistant Secretary for Operations and DA-PRDP National Project Director Engr. Arnel V. de Mesa on August 22, 2022, at the DA Conference Room.

De Mesa is no stranger to the PRDP as he has served as the Project's National Deputy Project Director from 2013-2017, RPCO CALABARZON's Project

Director from 2017-2018, and PSO South Luzon's Project Director from 2018-2020. He has also been instrumental as the Deputy Director of the Mindanao Rural Development Program which later expanded into the PRDP.

The ManCom meeting was held to discuss the Work and Financial Plans for CY 2022 and 2023, including the obligation and disbursement status as of July 30, 2022. Other pertinent administrative matters in the NPCO were also tackled during the meeting.

It was reiterated in the

meeting that all subprojects under the Original Loan and the First Additional Financing must be completed by the year-end of 2022. A total of PhP4 billion is targeted to be obligated and disbursed by the end of the year.

Also present in the meeting were National Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla, NPCO I-PLAN Component Head Asec. Agnes Catherine T. Miranda, I-BUILD Component Head Engr. Ariodear C. Rico, and all NPCO component and unit heads and their alternates. (Ana Victoria Margallo, Kristine Victoria Bistoyong, NPCO InfoACE) ■



Abaca association dreams big for farmers in Siocon



In the Municipality of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, a group of abaca farmers envisions that the local abaca industry will prosper to help improve the lives of farmers.

The Siocon Abaca Service Provider Association Incorporated (SASPAI) believes in the potential of abaca farming, to be developed in vast agricultural areas that remain idle or unutilized.

In 2014, SASPAI was founded with the objective of addressing the problem of most abaca farmers in marketing and processing.

A window of opportunity opened when they were invited to a stakeholders' meeting and learned about the various support services offered by the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP).

They expressed their interest and underwent the rigorous process of compliance with documentary requirements to apply for their "Abaca Production, Processing and Marketing" enterprise subproject.

SASPAI Auditor Antonio Timbal, one of the founding members, said that

they plan to designate 200 hectares for abaca production as they see the big potential of the abaca fiber industry in Siocon.

"With PRDP's support, we have initially set 36 hectares for abaca production. So far, we have already covered 22 hectares and we will be working with the remaining 14 hectares since all our planting materials are ready," said Timbol.

"We also provide our farmer members with cash assistance that they can use in the land and planting preparation," he added.

The cooperative received Php7.8 million worth of enterprise support from DA-PRDP for the construction of a solar dryer with stockroom and transport shed, one hauling truck, five decorticating machines, vermicast facility, abaca seedlings good for 36 hectares, and other input materials for the processing.

According to SASPAI President Ike Cardenes, the support they received will greatly help them in increasing the volume of their production, and with the hauling truck, they can now deliver to big companies.

"In terms of volume, we can now increase our production with the additional decorticating machines. If there is an increase in production, there will surely be an increase in income for our farmer members and for our association," Cardenes said.

Many abaca farmers in Siocon have now shown interest in going back to their farms to plant more abaca and intercropping it with their existing coconut trees. Through SASPAI and with a facility to process harvested abaca, farmers now have a sure market for their produce.

"We expect that by next month, we can go full blast in our trading since we now have the hauling truck for our deliveries. Thank you so much to DA-PRDP because with your help we finally achieved our dream of having our own processing center to help other farmers here in Siocon," Timbol said.

SASPAI has bigger plans for the association and for the farmers in Siocon where they plan to engage bigger markets outside the province once they reach their target volume of production. (Joy M. Montecalvo, PSO Mindanao InfoACE) ■

North Luzon

I-BUILD holds workshop to mainstream tools to DA

With the aim to mainstream the practices, innovations, and tools developed and employed in the operations of the DA-PRDP, the I-BUILD Component held a workshop on the “Mainstreaming of PRDP Tools and Innovations into the DA Mechanization and Infrastructure Projects” from August 10 to 12, 2022.

The activity was participated in by representatives from various DA offices and agencies, including the Bureau of Agricultural and Fisheries Engineering (BAFE), Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), regional field offices (III, IV-B, V, VI, IX, X, and XI), the four PSOs, and the NPCO.

In her welcome remarks, PSO North Luzon Deputy Project Director Elma Mananes shared how PRDP helped in the construction of different interventions in the regular programs with its practices and innovations developed through the years.

“PRDP has a lot of good practices and innovations that could help in the implementation of projects in the regions, and I hope this will be the start that regular offices come to appreciate and adopt these in their programs,” Mananes added.

NPCO Road and Bridge Specialist Engr. Frederick Agasen presented the proposed tools and processes for mainstreaming in DA's operation for infrastructure development based on the I-BUILD operations manual.

The workshop focused on the categories of Project Development Cycle, Farm-to-Market Road (FMR), Irrigation, Other Infrastructures, Feasibility Study, and Operations and Maintenance Audit. (*Ericson Guiao, PSO North Luzon InfoACE*)

South Luzon

PRDP Marinduque co-ops undergo skills training for coco geonet production

Representatives from the Tanikala ng Pagkakaisa Multi-Purpose Cooperative (TPMPC), Butansapa Multi-Purpose Cooperative, and Nangka Multi-Purpose Cooperative attended the Coco Coir Twining/Twisting and Coco Geonet Production Training held in Boac, Marinduque on August 2-4, 2022. These organizations are the respective proponent groups of the DA-PRDP coco coir enterprise subprojects in the Marinduque.

This training was facilitated by members of the Bayanihan Linis Tanim Multi-Purpose Cooperative, another cooperative in the province that has been producing geonet for seven years. The final output of the training, which is the coco geonet, is primarily used as a form of slope protection to prevent soil erosion while still providing opportunities for vegetation.

Coco coir is one of the identified commodities in the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) of the Province of Marinduque. The DA-PRDP has three completed coco coir subprojects in the said province amounting to PhP7.2 million and benefiting more than 200 coconut farmers in Marinduque. (*Danica A. Brutas, RPCO 4B InfoACE Unit*)

Visayas

PRDP GEF introduces new methods for seaweeds, provides inputs for Typhoon-Odette affected areas

The DA-PRDP GEF Unit held a four-day Stakeholder's Collaboration Meeting for PRDP-GEF Marine-Culture Production Sites cum Technology Demonstration on Double-loop and Deep-sea Seaweed Culture Methods on August 2-5, 2022 at the DC Vicana Nature Park in Trinidad, Bohol.

Prof. Iris Ann Borlongan from the University of the Philippines Visayas – College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences shared new technologies, planting methods, and strategies to address emerging concerns in the seaweed industry.

These new planting techniques, the deep-water farming using hanging longlines and double-loop tying, are expected to mitigate the stress that the seaweeds undergo at high temperature. During the technology demonstration, inputs for the recovery and rehabilitation of Typhoon Odette-affected seaweed areas were provided to the proponent groups.

The activity also served as a venue for the development of a directory of technical persons and seaweed producers involved in seaweed culture in the provinces of Bohol and Guimaras. The directory will facilitate efficient communication between the stakeholders that may share market information, new technologies, planting methods, and strategies in the seaweed industry.

The training was attended by the Municipal Local Government Units - Coastal Resource Management Officer/Fishery Technician, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources-Provincial Fishery Office, and representatives of various People's Organizations. (*September Noon Macahilo, PSO Visayas InfoACE*)

Mindanao

Empowering the Citizen's Monitoring Team

Realizing their duties and responsibilities as members of the Citizen's Monitoring Team (CMT), beneficiaries of the DA-PRDP road project felt empowered after undergoing training conducted by the Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO) XI led by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.

The project is a PhP102.7 million FMR connecting Barangays Ibo, Pitu and Bulacan in the Municipality of Malalag, province of Davao del Sur.

The CMT training engages the citizens to monitor and evaluate subprojects under PRDP. It also encourages them to have a sense of ownership of the project implemented within their community.

As members of the CMT, the barangay officials committed to helping in the monitoring and ensuring proper operations and maintenance even before the start of the 5.9-kilometer road rehabilitation groundworks.

The road influence area of the subproject has a total of 2,700 hectares, with 2,766 households and 11,040 total population of beneficiaries.

The project aims to provide a weather access road for the development and enhancement of the whole value chain of the commodity, from input provision, farming, and processing to marketing. (*Janelle Flores/RPCO 11 InfoACE*)

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