



## DA-PRDP's FMR benefits farmers in Brgy. Maruyugon

**Puerto Princesa, Palawan** – Surviving the daily grind was a struggle for the residents of Barangay Maruyugon. Not so long ago, residents, students, teachers, and farmers, had to travel by foot or by horse, braving the bumpy, slippery, and muddy road going to school or transport products to the nearest market. For both young and

old folks trying to make a living, or going somewhere posed a glaring challenge.

“Before we spent so much time like three hours going to the nearest market on a hike or a horseback ride,” shares Salvador M. Valoroso, 67, a farmer and a purok president.

Today, the farmers are proud

of their new road, built through the Department of Agriculture–Philippine Rural Development Project’s (DA-PRDP). The P117.99 million (M) farm-to-market road (FMR) connects Maruyugon to Buenavista.

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The townsfolk of Maraguyon go back into farming after the construction of the FMR which now eases the hauling and transport of their produce from their farms to the market.



Maruyugon Farmers Salvador Valeroso and Anathaniel Franada share their experiences before and after the FMR was constructed.

## DA-PRDP's FMR benefits...(from Page 1)

### Challenges

Being a farmer for most of his life, Valeroso finds traversing the treacherous road for three (3) hours challenging, working on the farm before dawn to transport his crops to the nearest market.

*"Binabaybay namin ang kalsada nang mga tatlong oras, bitbit ang mabibigat na pananim, minsan po ay may sira na kapag karating sa bayan. Hindi na po namin ito maibenta sa magandang presyo (We hiked the road for three hours, carrying heavy crops. Sometimes it gets scratched when it reaches the town. We can no longer sell it at a reasonable price),"* Valeroso recounted.

There are times when some crops would yield little, leaving them in debt. They would then pick up different jobs to tide them over because they have families to support.

Valeroso also narrated that in the past, when someone in the community was seriously ill, they had to carry them for almost three hours to take them to the hospital.

Anathaniel Franada, 43 years old, who owns three (3) hectares of land in the area, left farming and

became a construction worker in a small-scale construction project in town. He builds residential units whenever there are offers. He shared that he cannot cultivate his farm because of their daily ordeal on their road.

He recounted, *"Itinigil ko na po ang pagsasaka noon pa...bale 20 years na po akong construction worker. Hindi po naging madali ang buhay dahil kapag natapos na po ang isang project, maghahanap na naman po kami ng bagong pagkakakitaan (I stopped farming long ago and have been a construction worker for 20 years. Life was not easy as a construction worker because once the project was done, we needed to look for another source of income)."*

But despite the tiring work, the risks, and the meager income, Valeroso and Franada endure and continue their job despite such little reward to make ends meet.

### Dangerous roads no more

The PRDP is a national project under the Department of Agriculture that aims to establish a modern, value chain-oriented, and climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries sector.

Together with the local government units (LGUs) and partners from the private sector, it aims to provide key infrastructure, facilities, technology, and information to raise incomes, productivity, and competitiveness in targeted areas.

The construction of 6.5 kilometer Maruyugon-Buenavista FMR through DA-PRDP helps connect mountain village's vegetable farms to markets, reduces the travel time of farmers in transporting crops, and secures the safety of students, motorists, and hikers alike.

The FMR benefits some 1,305 households and will significantly contribute to safer, more comfortable trips for the people of the barangay. Residents can safely and quickly move around the area, while farmers and traders can bring their products to commercial and economic centers faster and more conveniently.

Through DA-PRDP's FMR, the hauling cost has decreased by 90% from PhP 100 to PhP 10.

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## DA-PRDP's FMR benefits...(from Page 2)

### Hopeful communities

Franada happily shared that he went back to farming because of their new road. Now, he cultivates his once undeveloped land with different crops.

"Aside from the new road, the government also capacitated us to plant different crops on our lands. Now, I have bananas, sweet potatoes, coconuts, jackfruit, and cashew on my land. Since my yields doubled this year, I am one of the major producers of crops sold in the market," Franada added.

Basking on the success of their livelihood is doing well, farmers formed the "Purok Bagong Lipunan Vegetable Growers Association" to help other farmers further develop their livelihood.

"Our fellow farmers here have already invested in vehicles to transport their crops. To ensure that our road is clean and well-maintained, members of the community participate in a regular clean-up drive," Valoroso proudly shared.

The barangay benefited largely from the project. As a

response, they will ensure that the process is sustained while the resources will never be put to waste.

The DA-PRDP funded project, through the collective effort of the government and community, now provides safety and convenience to residents and farmers transporting their products. The road that was once dangerous now serves as the gateway for community development through various agricultural economic opportunities. *(Julie Ace Brandon Barao, NPCO InfoACE)*



## I-PLAN convenes to standardize activities across clusters

**Vigan, Ilocos Sur** – To strengthen further the planning, programming and budget execution for projects lodged under the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP), representatives from the Regional Project Coordinating Offices (RPCOs) and Project Support Offices (PSOs) convened from July 10-14, 2023.

The five-day coordination meeting forms part of the strategies undertaken by the I-PLAN component of DA-PRDP that supports the implementation and mainstreaming of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan (AFMP) framework. I-PLAN provides the operational platform

for integrated technical support service delivery at the national and local levels.

The activity was also participated by representatives from National Project Coordinating Office (NPCO) specifically the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Unit, Geomapping and Governance Unit (GGU), and Information, Advocacy, Communication, and Education (InfoACE) Unit.

In her opening message, DA Undersecretary for Administration and Finance and DA-PRDP NPCO I-PLAN Component Head Agnes Catherine T. Miranda underscored the significance of the meeting in providing status updates on key agreements made during the

15th World Bank Implementation Support Mission last April 2023.

According to her, the activity is important in presenting the overall accomplishments and results framework of the component for the first six months of the year.

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The coordination meeting also served as venue for tracking the progress of the I-PLAN Enhanced Operations Manual (EOM), and set in motion the capacity development activities for the I-VCA.

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## I-PLAN convenes...(from Page 3)

“All of these undertakings shall contribute to the PRDP Scale-Up. Your attendance signifies your commitment in attaining the deliverables of I-PLAN and PRDP as a whole,” she stressed.

Usec. Miranda also underscored the importance of working together towards introducing reforms, innovations and investments across regions and local government units.

“We are in the third phase of its roll-out for the EOM, following last year’s orientation training on the interim approach of integrating climate features in the Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIP) to this year’s launching of investment planning to online coursework on commodity prioritization, rapid market appraisal, and E-VSA, and the mobilization for the I-VCA capacity development activities,” Usec. Miranda said.

Usec. Miranda emphasized that the roll-out is bound to commence on the I-VCA kick-off for the capacity development program. The participants’ attendance to this meeting signifies their commitment to substantially contributing to attaining I-PLAN deliverables and relentless effort to learn and apply innovations in investment planning continuously. These accomplishments and initiatives

shall form part of the preparations for the PRDP Scale-up.

### Systems and innovations

The five-day coordination meeting highlighted the I-PLAN’s collaboration between GGU and MEL Unit. The GGU Unit discussed the Planner’s portal, a system that integrates data to update PCIP data, Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) maps, initiatives of the updating of the PCIP integrating climate resilient as well as investment promotion activities on leveraging resources for funding the PCIP.

The GGU unit also discussed on Individual Performance Evaluation Profile and Accomplishment Reporting System (iPEP-ARS) User’s guide Manual to integrate the I-PLAN template and to help implementers track deliverables and monitor the accomplishments of individual PRDP personnel. Also, the system will provide relevant information, analytics, and insights for performance evaluation.

The MEL unit, on the other hand, discussed the guide for navigating the local government unit (LGU) to properly document different projects, encoding the investment intervention, and generate updated reports on various investments related to priority commodities to

guide and focus successive projects to be able to maximize the benefits to farmers and fisherfolk.

The discussions wrapped up with agreements from the RPCOs and the PSO on GGU’s enhancement of the planner’s portal, such as creating a Log-in to have exclusive access for the PRDP I-PLAN to the VCA library, creating tools for VC Maps in the portal, among others. The MEL unit also highlighted to validate and process the LGU data, developing a dashboard for the Local Chief Executive to monitor, analyze and interpret gathered data and prepare reports for Management Information System Guidelines.

Presentation of the I-VCA training and clusters’ target outputs and timetable of upcoming activities for the second semester followed..

The participants visited the Nueva Segovia Consortium of Cooperatives (NSCC) facilities and training center, and the bagnet and chichacorn processing center.

The DA-PRDP targets to build an onion cold storage facility subproject in the said cooperative worth PhP 89.47 million (M) which aims to enhance collective marketing initiatives’ viability, ensure compliance with food safety and quality standards, and minimize post-harvest losses. (Julie Ace Brandon R. Barao, NPCO InfoACE) ■



# DA, JGF renew partnership on agri-fisheries clustering



The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Jollibee Group Foundation (JGF) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on July 17, 2023, to renew their partnership on clustering for smallholder farmers through the Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2) Program and the DA - Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) Scale-Up.

The partnership, established through a MOA signed in 2022, is anchored on the Agro-Enterprise Clustering Approach (AECA), an eight-step guide that teaches farmers how to increase their income through collective group

marketing or clustering.

This renewed collaboration aims to integrate the AECA into the DA-PRDP Scale-Up, as it targets clustered Farmer and Fisherfolk Cooperative and Associations (FCAs) as project beneficiaries. The DA-PRDP Scale-Up is also envisioned to serve as the launching pad to mainstream the AECA into the DA regular system.

DA Senior Undersecretary Domingo F. Panganiban and JGF Director Joanna T. La'O led the MOA signing held at the DA Central Office.

In his message, Senior Usec. Panganiban highlighted the importance of agri-fisheries

clustering and consolidation in attaining inclusive agricultural productivity in the country.

“As you may know, clustering and consolidation is a top priority of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. Under his leadership, the DA is leveling up and pushing for strategies to achieve key milestones toward food sufficiency and security,” he said.

Also present during the MOA signing were DA-PRDP National Project Director Asec. Arnel V. De Mesa, National Deputy Project Director Shandy M. Hubilla, and I-REAP Alternate Component Head Leny Garcia. *(Jan Kyle Carrillo, NPCO InfoACE)* ■



## North Luzon

### Coffee consolidation, processing facility to rise in Bontoc

The Aliwes Irrigators' Association, Inc. is a step closer to the realization of their dreams as they officially broke ground on the construction of their coffee processing center on July 20, 2023, at Mainit, Bontoc, Mountain Province.

The PhP5.48-million (M) facility will support the operation of the group's enterprise subproject on Arabica Coffee Consolidation, Processing, and Marketing under the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP).

A two-ton truck was also turned over to the association to be used for the operation of the group's enterprise subproject along with other coffee equipment, machinery, and a trading capital of PhP288,000. In total, the coffee enterprise has a cost of PhP11.12-M wherein 20% was shelled out by the association.

Luisa Salingbay, the group's president, Mountain Province Congressman Maximo Dalog Jr., Provincial Administrator Franklin Odsey, Bontoc Mayor Jerome Tudlong, and DA-CAR Regional Executive Director Cameron P. Odsey led the laying of the capsule during the groundbreaking ceremony.

"Soon, we will be harvesting the coffee that brings us closer to realizing the goals of our association to provide and sustain the employment of our people and increase their income," Rosalina Malafu, the group's manager, said. *(Elvy T. Estacio, RPCO-CAR InfoACE)*

## South Luzon

### Coffee, cacao growers, nakatanggap ng P14.3-M livelihood project mula sa DA-PRDP

Galak at pasasalamat ang naramdaman ng dalawang samahan ng magkakape at magka-cacao ng Quezon para sa Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) at sa lokal na pamahalaan matapos pormal na tumanggap ng P14.3 milyong proyektong pangkabuhayan.

Ang mga nasabing proyekto ay ang Lopez Tablea Production Project na iginawad sa Cacao Growers Association of Lopez (CGAL), samantalang ang Guinayangan Coffee Processing Project ay tinanggap ng Guinayangan Coffee Growers Association and Farm Entrepreneurs (G-CAFE). Nakatanggap rin ang CGAL ng processing equipment ng cacao tulad ng desheller at chiller. Parehong tumanggap ang mga samahan ng processing facility at van.

"Nagpapasalamat kami sa DA-PRDP at sa pamahalaan ng Quezon dahil ang pangarap naming magkaroon ng sariling lugar para iproseso ang kapeng Guinayangan ay nagkatotoo na. Mas mapapaganda pa namin ang kalidad ng aming produkto di tulad noon na sa iba't ibang lugar pa ipinoproseso ang aming kape," ani Raquel de Luna, pangulo ng G-CAFE.

"Kapalit ng mga suportang aming natanggap ay ang aming pagsisikap na pagandahin pa at pagyamanin ang aming pagproseso ng cacao dito sa Lopez. Mas paghuhusayin pa namin upang ganap na makilala at tangkilikin itong aming produktong tsokolate," bahagi naman ni Bernardo Cantuba, pangulo ng CGAL.

Layunin ng mga proyektong ito na palakasin ang industriya ng kape at cacao sa pamamagitan ng pagproseso na magpapataas ng halaga ng mga produkto, pagbibigay ng siguradong merkado sa mga magsasaka at ng karagdagang kabuhayan sa mga mamamayan. *(Myrelle Joy Bejasa, RPCO CALABARZON InfoACE)*

## Visayas

### Climate-resilient tech to alleviate potable water shortage in Concepcion, Iloilo

The residents of Danao-danao Island in Concepcion, Iloilo will finally get access to safe and stable potable water as the Danao-danao Island Solar-Powered Potable Water System (PWS) has formally kicked off construction during the Ceremonial Groundbreaking on July 6, 2023.

Comprising the structure is a 40.32-square-meter water

treatment building holding the 16-cubic-meter tank and a potable water refilling station powered by a solar-power package of 36 panels. Its capacity extends to 16,200 watts coupled with a 10 kilowatts inverter and two (2) modules of lithium battery bank which will help generate a significant 11,000 liters per day.

The contract also includes a diesel-activated generator set ensuring the continued function of the facility during power interruptions. This PWS will benefit 854 residents of Sitio Danao-danao by the first quarter of 2024.

Barangay Polopiña Kagawad Concepcion Hebra affirmed that the project would be life-changing for her constituents who had been deprived of a clean and stable water supply.

"Before, we had to paddle our way to the neighboring island to get our water. But if the project would be completed, we will be grateful as this is a great blessing to the residents of Sitio Danao-danao not having to go through the hassles any further," Hebra said.

This green project upholds the thrust of the Philippine Rural Development Project to support the fisherfolk in the rural areas of our country. *(Eunice Gregorio, RPCO 6 InfoACE)*

## Mindanao

### DA-PRDP breaks ground on EU-funded FMR in Agusan del Sur

The Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO) 13 broke ground on the Bucac - Marcelina Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) on July 13, 2023, at Bayugan City, Agusan del Sur.

The groundbreaking ceremony signals the start of construction of the 4.7-kilometer FMR to traverse Barangays Bucac, Marcelina, and San Isidro in Bayugan City. Funded by the World Bank (WB), the European Union (EU), the Government of the Philippines, and the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur, the P59 million project will benefit 2,016 households, including 1,436 farmers.

The construction of the FMR will also increase access to agricultural production in the province, particularly to the rubber industry in Caraga. Once completed, the FMR will connect to a crumb rubber processing facility in Prosperidad owned by the Farmers Self-Reliant Multi-Purpose Cooperative (FASRMCO). This facility was also funded by the DA and the WB under the Mindanao Rural Development Program Adaptable Program Loan 2 - Community Fund for Agricultural Development (MRDP APL2 - CFAD).

DA Caraga Regional Executive Director Engr. Ricardo M. Oñate Jr. emphasized that wider markets will open up for farmers once they have greater access to the community. He also stressed the crucial role community members play in project implementation, specifically in monitoring and maintaining the subproject.

A community pre-construction conference that aims to clarify DA-PRDP processes and community roles in project implementation was held immediately after the groundbreaking ceremony.

The FMR, funded under the Second Additional Financing and European Co-Financing Grant (AF2-EU), is targeted to finish construction by March 19, 2024. *(Nichole Talatala, RPCO Caraga InfoACE)*

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