



DA-PRDP I-PLAN holds training on regional investment planning process to strengthen innovations

Puerto Princesa, Palawan

– The Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Scale-Up's Local and National Level Planning (I-PLAN) Component conducted Phase 1 of the Orientation-Training on the Regional Perspective Planning Process from February 20

to 23, 2024 .

The four-day activity was organized to help the I-PLAN staff of the Project Support Offices (PSOs) and Regional Project Coordination Offices (RPCOs) understand the principles and concepts of investment planning and programming and spatial

planning at the regional level.

The activity aimed to train participants in the formulation of the guidelines of regional planning exercises through data analytics and spatial planning.

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In his welcome message, Atty. Christopher Bañas, Regional Executive Director of DA-MIMAROPA, stressed that the activity is significant in comprehensively analyzing the various factors that affect farmers' production and income.

He highlighted that the initiative is aligned with the new directions of the Department to have efficient and effective facilities, underlined in the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Investment Portfolio (RAFIP).

"RAFIP will give us a comprehensive compilation of each region's needs and investment opportunities that are data-driven, evidence-based, location-specific, and locally consulted. This will help us be more focused and accurate, efficient in strategizing, and have a cohesive and complementing approach to the interventions for the identified priority commodities in the investment plans," Atty. Bañas said.

Catherine Vidar, a specialist in investment programming, shared her insights on harmonized planning, investment programming, and budgeting, while Prof. Moises Dorado, who specializes in

integrated spatial planning analysis, talked about a tool that can help in systematically identifying and prioritizing investments based on natural resources and planned functional roles of specific areas within a region.

During the session, planners were also trained in using Quantum Geographic Information System (QGIS) software, which covered various functions of QGIS, such as data manipulation, visualization, and spatial analysis. These skills will be useful for planners in analyzing and interpreting data and coming up with decision maps.

Also, the technology will help stakeholders make informed decisions based on unique area characteristics, ensuring strategic placement of investments for maximum impact and sustainable development in rural areas.

Undersecretary for Attached Agencies and Corporations and NPCO I-PLAN Component Head Agnes Catherine T. Miranda emphasized the need to capacitate I-PLAN staff in the clusters, noting their vital role in strengthening partnerships with DA key stakeholders, such as the private sectors.

"With the implementation of the PRDP Scale-Up, it is necessary to continuously improve our planning process to deliver devolved but integrated agriculture and fishery services. Hence, a Regional Perspective will be introduced in the planning process to ensure the alignment of local level plans with the national goals and objectives of the sector," she emphasized.

During the session, Usec. Miranda also cited the pressing need for proactive measures in clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the national government. She also underscored the critical importance of fostering capacity development at the local level.

The innovation is expected to develop RAFIP, which will be one of the bases of PRDP for investment and later be an input to the investment programming of the DA Regular, to be presented in the Regional Joint Planning Exercises.

The I-PLAN component is slated to conduct Phases 2 and 3 of the orientation next month. (Julie Ace Brandon R. Barao, NPCO InfoACE) ■



(Top row from left to right) Investment planning specialist Catherine Vidar, Prof. Moises Dorado, and the Geomapping and Governance Unit of the DA-PRDP provide lectures on harmonized planning, investment programming, priority investment, and quantum geographics. (Bottom row) Planners apply their learnings during a series of workshops.



DA-PRDP conducts financial management assessment for CY 2024

Puerto Princesa City, Palawan — To attain the targets of the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Scale-Up under the budget allocated for the Project’s implementation and operating costs across all its offices — the National Project Coordination Office (NCPO), Project Support Offices (PSOs), and Regional Project Coordination Offices (RPCOs) — the DA-PRDP conducted a Financial Management Assessment, Review, and Consolidation of CY 2024 Work and Financial Plan on February 20-23, 2024.

“The budget for 2024 will be very challenging. We must finish the monthly allocation for personnel services, operations, and subprojects. I hope you will not forget your official duties in this activity and workshop. After your output presentation, hopefully, we can consolidate this for submission to the authorities for the proper implementation of the project,” Dir.

Milo Delos Reyes, Deputy Project Director of PSO South Luzon, said.

The DA-PRDP Scale-Up will be supported by a USD\$600 million loan from the World Bank (WB) which translates to PhP33 billion (B). Counterpart funds from the national government amounting to PhP5.57-B, and local government units and/or farmer/fisherfolk cooperatives and associations (FCAs) at PhP6.44-B are also allocated for the project.

Ninety-two percent of the total project cost will be used for rural infrastructure and enterprise investments. The CY 2024 budget will come from the Scale-Up funding and the continuing Second Additional Financing (AF2) granted last 2021 by the WB. The AF2 was supplemented by the European Union’s (EU) co-financing grant of EUR 18.3 million through a stand-alone, country-specific, co-financing trust fund for the DA-PRDP.

The Finance Unit of the four clusters from North Luzon, South

Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao presented their consolidated work and financial plans (WFPs) for CY 2024. NPCO Finance Unit, led by their Alternate Head Edgardo Aure and Finance Analyst Arnold Jaurigue, guided in the budgeting and allocation of funds for all clusters with respect to the management decisions of the WB, EU, Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and the Department of Finance (DOF).

“We assure you that all the challenges we are facing now will be resolved with the sole implementation of the Scale-Up funding in 2025. The alignment of our financial plans will ensure that the budget of the AF2 and EU continuing funds will be utilized to their fullest extent in terms of providing subprojects and necessary technical specifications aligned with the DBM and DOF,” Jaurigue said. *(Ana Victoria C. Margallo, NPCO InfoACE; Photos by Jayvee Millendez, PSO South Luzon InfoACE)* ■

DA-PRDP shares vast experience on World Bank's environmental and social framework



Taguig City – Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project's (DA-PRDP) OIC-National Deputy Project Director Angelita D. Martir emphasized that collaboration, consultation, and transparency were key to the Project's successful implementation of the World Bank's (WB) Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) during the ESF Forum for Contractors and Consultants last February 13, 2024 at the WB office.

"All these learnings we have on the ESF are part of a long process. Until now we are still learning," Dir. Martir said.

The DA-PRDP, represented by the Social and Environmental Safeguards Unit, was invited to share its experience in adopting

and implementing the WB's ESF with other national government agencies with Bank-assisted projects, such as the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) that are in the early stages of their project implementation.

One of the contractors of the DA-PRDP's subprojects, the NTL Builders and Developer, also shared their experience and learnings in implementing the ESF for two of their infrastructure subprojects in Santiago City, Isabela, namely, the Rehabilitation of Calaocan-Batal Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) and the Rehabilitation of Baluarte-Sinili FMR.

Engr. Danny Diola showcased the contractor's compliance with the documentary requirements, tools, safety and design standards,

management plans, and laws and regulations enshrined in the ESF.

"The ESF was key to the success of our projects. It's a really great tool when it comes to project implementation," Engr. Diola said. Both FMR subprojects constructed by NTL Builders and Developer had an average positive slippage rate of 42.75%, which indicates that the subprojects were completed ahead of schedule.

The forum also served as a venue for reflection and information exchange among the consultants, contractors, government partners, and the Bank on ESF practices. The ESF is designed to avoid, minimize, reduce, or mitigate the adverse environmental and social risks and impacts of subprojects (*Jan Kyle R. Carrillo, NPCO InfoACE*) ■



DA-PRDP constructs FMRs/bridges, brings hope to Masinloc communities

The Masinloc town in Zambales is abundant in agricultural resources. It is famous for having the world’s largest deposit of chrome minerals and has vast areas that support the livestock industry.

Moreover, the town is blessed with natural, cultural, historical, and man-made tourism treasures.

Despite the potential for economic and agricultural growth in the neighboring barangays of Bani, Taltal, and Baloganon, the poorly maintained roads have negatively impacted the lives and livelihoods of its residents.

Ruben Fernandez, a 57-year-old farmer in the community, shared how his family has been struggling

for years due to the long and unsafe roads of their town. He explained that the poor road has made hauling goods a challenge for the Masinloc residents, resulting in high transportation costs. Aside from the difficulty of selling their agri-produce, access to healthcare was also hard.

“Dahil sa sitwasyon ng aming kalsada nang ilang taon, hirap kaming mag-deliver ng aming produktong palay at pati yung mga namumuhunan ay hindi na rin makadaan. Kaya nahihirapan kaming ibenta yung mga produkto namin (Due to the situation of our road for several years, it was difficult for us to deliver our rice product and even the investors could not

pass so we have a hard time selling our products),” Ruben narrated.

Sixty-seven-year-old hog raiser Delia, Ruben’s sister-in-law, shares the same ordeal.

“Napakalaking suliranin po ng pagdala ng aming produkto sa bayan. Kadalasan ay dalawang beses lang kami sa isang linggo nakakapagpadala ng aming produkto dahil sa sitwasyon po ng aming kalsada at dahil sa mataas po ang presyo ng hauling. (Delivering our products to the town is challenging due to road conditions and high hauling costs, limiting us to only two deliveries per week),” Delia shared.

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DA-PRDP constructs..(from page 5)

This year, the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Scale Up gears toward the construction of a 26.19-kilometer Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) and 97 linear meter (lm) Reinforced Concrete Deck Girder (RCDG) bridges, with a target grant allocation of Php741.779 million in the town.

For many years, Delia and Ruben have been patiently longing for a concrete road. Upon learning about the DA-PRDP subproject, they knew their dreams would soon become a reality.

To evaluate a proposed subproject, a Subproject Appraisal and Review (SPAR) was recently conducted, which included analyzing environmental parameters, field investigations, stakeholder consultations, and reviewing other road project reports. A Joint Technical Review (JTR) and Compliance Monitoring followed to assess proposals and ensure adherence to standard safeguards.

The Project places great

importance on stakeholder participation and consultation to assist local government units (LGUs) in obtaining public acceptance for the Project. The LGU conducts public consultations to help communities better understand why the rehabilitation of the FMR is crucial for economic development.

“The DA-PRDP aims to ensure the active involvement and participation of key stakeholders, including the local government unit (LGU) and the community. Although the project will undergo several processes, I am confident that the end result will lead to better outcomes. Upon successful completion of the project, all stakeholders will have a sense of ownership and appreciation because they were all part of the development process,” said Angelita D. Martir, DA-PRDP OIC-National Deputy Project Director.

She added that under the principle of participation, stakeholders are empowered to meaningfully participate in all stages of the implementation. The LGU also has local counterpart

contributions.

The countless infrastructures built under the DA-PRDP are only byproducts of the Project’s main objectives to provide means to help achieve inclusive and sustainable growth.

“We are grateful that the DA-PRDP and LGU are here to guide us. They ensure that the community understands the development plans in our community. They conduct consultations with the community before the implementation commenced,” Ruben said.

The Project, which started implementation this year, aims to improve the transportation of agricultural products to market outlets and reduce vehicle costs. It also targets to boost the tourism and agriculture of the town after road rehabilitation.

Farmers like Ruben and Delia are both looking forward to this new milestone and hope that this Project will have a lasting legacy for the towns to flourish beyond their bounds. *(Julie Ace Brandon R. Barao, NPCO InfoACE)* ■



North Luzon

New road project in Ifugao gets nod from DA-PRDP Scale-Up

The Kiangnan Municipal Local Government can now proceed with the bidding of the Improvement of Lamka-Mappit Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) subproject after officially receiving the green light from the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Scale-up.

Proposed in support of the local coffee and banana industries, the subproject will provide convenient and safe access for the farmers and residents along the FMR as they transport their products. The subproject will also aid in the revival of deserted coffee and banana production areas.

The 6.6-kilometer FMR will link barangays Baguinge and Duit in the municipality of Kiangnan and barangay Panubtuban in the municipality of Asipulo. It has a total project cost of Php169.58 million and is expected to benefit 1,318 households or 6,455 individuals within its area of influence.

On November 6, 2023, Kiangnan Mayor Raldis Bulayungan received an eligibility certification for having successfully complied with all the requirements for their proposal on the improvement of the said FMR. The certification was awarded during the ceremonial launching of the DA-PRDP Scale-up which was held in Quezon City.

With the issuance of No Objection Letter 1, preliminary activities are set to be conducted to orient LGU Kiangnan on the World Bank Harmonized Procurement Guidelines as well as the preparation of the Implementation Management Agreement (IMA). The IMA comprises implementation arrangements and specific guidelines for PRDP-funded subprojects within a given period, including the schedule of fund releases and liquidation reports.

The Improvement of Lamka-Mappit FMR is the first infrastructure subproject that was approved for DA-PRDP Scale-up funding in the Cordillera. (*Elvy T. Estacio, RPCO CAR InfoACE*)

South Luzon

Construction of first PRDP-funded AA slaughterhouse in Catanduanes begins

The island province of Catanduanes will soon have its first abattoir under the Philippine Rural Development Project following the groundbreaking of the AA Slaughterhouse Facility in Virac on February 1, 2024.

The slaughterhouse will have a capacity of 1,723 swine heads and 224 large ruminant heads per month.

According to Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO) Bicol Deputy Project Director Adelina Losa, this facility is a milestone for the province of Catanduanes as the project will ensure both food security and food safety on the island. She added that the slaughterhouse funded by the DA-PRDP is typhoon-resilient and comes with a generator set to guarantee continuous operation despite inclement weather. Catanduanes is considered a disaster-prone area.

Virac Mayor Samuel Laynes thanked the DA-PRDP for funding the Php43.99 million-worth infrastructure development (I-BUILD) subproject.

“Maraming salamat sa inyo. We assure you na ito ang isa sa pinakamagandang slaughterhouse sa buong Bicol. We will ensure na this project will be class A ang pagkagawa and sisiguraduhin natin na it will fit the plan and specification of the building. Pag nagawa ito, this will be an economic enterprise,” he said.

The I-BUILD subproject is targeted for completion in December 2024. (*Annielyn L. Baleza, RPCO V InfoACE/DA RAFIS V*)

Mindanao

Tawi-Tawi Seaweed farmers receive fish landing and warehouse with solar dryer from DA-PRDP

The seaweed farmers from Barangay Dampong and Tampakan in the Municipality of South Ubian can now reap the benefits of their Fish Landing and Warehouse with Solar Dryer facilities as the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR) - Philippine Rural Development Project successfully turned over the facilities on February 13, 2024.

Deputy Project Director Ammal D. Solaiman, JD, led the ceremonial turnover along with the representatives from the Project Support Office Mindanao, MAFAR Tawi-Tawi Provincial Office, and key officials from the local government unit of South Ubian.

In her message, DPD Solaiman underscored the impact of the project on the community and encouraged the LGU officials to further enhance the strong collaborations.

“Let’s work together to provide for the needs of our farmers, which will help uplift their livelihoods,” she said.

Funded by the World Bank and European Union, the projects include a Fish Landing worth P5.94 million (M) benefiting farmers from Barangay Dampong and a Warehouse with a Solar Dryer worth P5.95-M. The facilities are expected to benefit farmers from barangay Tampakan and Dampong.

The improved fish landing facility provides seaweed farmers with efficient and safe handling of their produce. At the same time, the Warehouse with Solar Dryer offers a means for seaweed farmers to properly dry and store their harvest, reducing post-harvest losses and ensuring higher quality products. (*Joy Montecalvo, PSO Mindanao InfoACE*)

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