



DA-PRDP prepares for 16th World Bank Mission and Scale-Up launch

The Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) National Project Coordination Office (NPCO) and Project Support Offices (PSOs) conducted the DA-PRDP NPCO-PSO Management Committee Meeting on October 17-

20, 2023 in Nasugbu, Batangas.

The ManComm Meeting aimed to prepare the DA-PRDP for the upcoming 16th World Bank Implementation Support Mission (WB-ISM) and the launching of the DA-PRDP Scale-Up along with the Mindanao Inclusive Agriculture

Development Project (MIADP) and the Philippine Fisheries and Coastal Resiliency (FishCoRe) Project.

[Read more on p. 2](#)



DA-PRDP prepares for..(from page 1)

The ManComm Meeting was led by Assistant Secretary for Operations and DA-PRDP National Project Director Arnel V. De Mesa who reiterated grassroots as a strategy for the implementation of the DA-PRDP Scale-Up.

“There are so many commodities in the Philippines in demand overseas. Let’s help our farmers to meet these demands. I want us all to start moving around and sit down with private partners and identify what is needed in

specific areas. We can’t wait for them to propose,” Asec. De Mesa said.

The conceptualization of the proposals should come from us initially. It should be a product of the meeting of the minds of all stakeholders within the regions and provinces. Then we look at the requirements for post-harvest, transportation, and logistics requirements needed,” he added.

The NPCO I-BUILD and I-REAP Components presented

the most recent updates regarding subproject implementation under their respective components. They were joined by the I-SUPPORT Component during the activity’s breakout sessions to provide technical assistance and inputs in their progress reports for submission to the World Bank’s review before the WB-ISM which is set to be kicked off in November. (Ana Victoria Margallo, NPCO InfoACE; Photos by Jerald Mira, NPCO InfoACE) ■

DA-PRDP holds 2nd National Knowledge Management Workshop

The Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Unit of the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) held its 2nd National Knowledge Management (KM) 101 Training-Workshop on October 10-13, 2023 in Olongapo City, Zambales to equip the Project’s personnel with necessary skills to foster KM within the project and subsequently in the DA regular system.

The DA-PRDP staff from the Social and Environmental Safeguards, Geomapping and Governance, InfoACE, Economics, and MEL Units from the National Project Coordination Office (NPCO), Project Support Offices

(PSOs), and Regional Project Coordination Offices, as well as DA regular staff from the Special Projects Coordination Management Assistance Division and the Monitoring and Evaluation Division, participated in the four-day training and workshop.

Led by NPCO MEL and Institutional Development Unit, the activity trained the participants on the methods and tools for identifying, collecting, and documenting tacit and explicit knowledge from the implementation of the PRDP.

Also, the workshop served as a venue for the participants to share their good practices and the lessons they learned during Project implementation.

“Yung ginagawa natin sa PRDP ay narapat lang na i-capture natin lahat at i-package natin into Knowledge Management para ma-share natin sa programs natin sa Department of Agriculture,” PSO North Luzon Deputy Project Director Elma Mananes said.

“Since meron tayong KM Training na ito, we hope na halos lahat ng innovations and tools na gingagawa natin sa PRDP ay ma-package natin. Hindi lang para makapagmalakitayo, kundi paramas makatulong tayo sa Departamento kung paano mas mapagaganda ang implementasyon ng programs natin,” she added. (Jan Kyle Carrillo, NPCO InfoACE; Photos by Darrell Sunga, PSO North Luzon InfoACE)





DA-PRDP trains staff on new Environment and Social Framework

The Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) Unit of the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) conducted a joint Training on the New Environment and Social Framework (ESF) for PRDP Scale-Up and CY 2023 SES Unit Coordination Meeting and Assessment in Cebu City on October 3-6, 2023.

The activity aimed to orient the SES Unit staff on the World Bank's new Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) for PRDP Scale-Up and to conduct an assessment on the status of ongoing strategies and assistance to local

government units in integrating SES in the development or packaging of subprojects.

World Bank Senior Environmental Engineer Maya Gabriela Villaluz provided an in-depth discussion of the ESF, explaining the changes in the new framework and its relevance to the PRDP.

"Ngayon isang policy na lang pero sampung standards. And there is no distinction between environment and social," she said.

"The work that we're doing right now is very important because this is one of the critical elements of PRDP. And the PRDP is well known

for ensuring that all of these concerns are integrated into the activities, and we want to maintain that," she added.

Representatives from different components and units also presented their updates relative to SES followed by the presentation of the SES Unit Heads from the four Project Support Offices on issues and concerns in their respective clusters.

The activity concluded with a workshop on the SES progress report for the 16th World Bank Implementation Support Mission in November. *(Jan Kyle Carrillo, NPCO InfoACE)* ■

Rice is life: Continuing the legacy of Ifugao's heirloom rice



A legacy we need to protect and sustain—this is how Ana D. Habbiling, an 85-year-old farmer in Banaue, Ifugao, described heirloom rice as a cultural heritage.

“We have been planting the traditional palay ever since we were young. Our parents would always tell us that this rice variety was the only livelihood of our ancestors, and without it, we would not be who and where we are now,” Habbiling expressed.

Heirloom rice was created through centuries of cultivation and passed down through generations, hence its name. For Habbiling, growing heirloom rice goes beyond being a means of livelihood, but a

legacy left by her parents for them to sustain.

To preserve its legacy, Habbiling and the members of the Rice Terraces Farmers' Cooperative (RTFC) proposed an enterprise subproject under the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP). In 2017, RTFC's enterprise subproject on “Processing and Marketing of Export Quality Ifugao Heirloom Rice” was approved and four years later, it was finally turned over to them.

Sustaining gains through enterprise development

Tinawon, which literally

translates to “once a year” in Ifugao, is long-season variety cultivated just once a year. It is grown using traditional farming practices without the aid of chemicals, which adds to its value and quality as an export commodity. As it exhibits exceptional nutritional value, an exquisite aroma, a distinct taste, and a unique texture, the demand is high for this variety both locally and internationally.

[Read more on p. 5](#)



Rice is life..(from page 4)

The exportation of heirloom rice started in 2005. This spurred the establishment of RTFC. They became a registered cooperative through the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) a year later and became a certified organic rice producer through the Organic Certification of the Philippines (OCCP) in 2011.

Led and managed by Jimmy Lingayo, the RTFC serves as a ready market for the harvest and production of heirloom rice in Ifugao.

When they started their cooperative, Lingayo recalled that they only had 15 farmer-members until it gradually grew to more than 300 as they sustained the exportation of heirloom rice for more than a decade.

With the enterprise support from the DA-PRDP they received in 2017, Lingayo and the RTFC members now have a three-story processing center that can accommodate tons of heirloom rice produce, enough capital to buy heirloom rice palay from their members and pay them upfront,

a truck to haul their members' produce, and several processing equipment.

Currently, the RTFC markets around 1.2 to 1.5 tons of processed heirloom rice per month since starting implementation in 2021. They now have a total membership of 600 farmer-members.

"We are gating at a higher price, we are buying their palay at PhP90 to PhP100/kilogram, process it, and sell it for PhP130; and in return for supporting our co-op's business, we give them dividends and invite them to participate in trainings," Lingayo said.

Aside from the buying and selling of heirloom rice, the co-op also provides services such as rice hulling and milling, microfinance loans, and food processing.

Located along the national highway in Amganad, Banaue, Ifugao, the processing center also serves as a one-stop-shop or Pasalubong Center where several local products produced by the members of RTFC and other farmer cooperatives and associations in

Ifugao are displayed, aside from the co-op's heirloom rice products.

To sustain their enterprise, the RTFC management continues to tap other agencies and institutions for training to improve heirloom rice productivity and encourage their members and other heirloom rice growers to plant the highly marketable champion varieties.

While the demand for these varieties is high both in local and international markets, reports show that heirloom rice production seems to have dropped due to several factors. Despite this, the RTFC's management continues to encourage rice growers to maintain their organic way of rice production and plant champion varieties. They also encourage them to promote their products and source out other funding agencies for the rehabilitation of heirloom rice production areas.

Lingayo hopes that visitors would value and support Ifugao's home-grown goods in addition to the beautiful scenery the province has to offer. *(Elvy T. Estacio, RPCO CAR InfoACE)* ■



North Luzon

RPAB approves 7 proposed subprojects for PRDP Scale-Up in Ilocos Region

Seven proposed subprojects for funding under the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) Scale-Up were approved by the Regional Project Advisory Board 1 (RPAB 1) during a meeting on October 24.

Amounting to a total of PhP967 million (M), the approval of the subprojects marks a new milestone for the PRDP in Region 1 in terms of having the most funds granted.

In Pangasinan, proposed subprojects include the construction of three provincial multi-purpose drying pavements costing PhP126-M, the rehabilitation and road opening in San Vicente-Viga FMR with bridge worth PhP29-M, and the construction of a provincial bangus breeding hatchery at PhP239-M.

Other approved subprojects are the construction of the San Jose Multi-purpose Warehouse in Ilocos Norte estimated at PhP11-M and the rehabilitation of Ramot-Puguil FMR in La Union at PhP298.9-M.

These subprojects will be endorsed to the National Project Coordination Office for the issuance of No Objection Letter 1. Once released, procurement activities for the subprojects will commence.

The meeting was presided over by Engr. Dennis Tactac, DA-RFO I's RTD for Operations and PRDP Regional Project Coordination Office I Deputy Project Director. (*Joan Dapidap, RPCO 1 InfoACE*)

South Luzon

Bicol RPAB approves P412.7-M worth PRDP subprojects

The Bicol RPAB approved and endorsed four proposed infrastructure subprojects worth PhP412.73 million for funding under the PRDP during the RPAB meeting held on October 27, 2023 in Legaspi City, Albay.

Three subprojects, namely, the construction of Maysua to Balinad FMR in Polangui, Albay; rehabilitation of Iriga City AA Abattoir in Camarines Sur; and Vinzons slaughterhouse in Camarines Norte are being proposed under the PRDP Scale-Up. Meanwhile, the establishment of Pili Abattoir in Camarines Sur is under the PRDP's second additional financing.

PRDP Regional Project Coordination Office 5 (RPCO 5) Deputy Project Director Adelina A. Losa presided over the RPAB meeting which was attended by RPAB members from the Department of Public Works and Highways, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Environment and Natural Resources; Department of Trade and Industry; and Regional Agriculture and Fishery Council Chairperson Bernadette delos Santos.

The RPAB, which is headed by DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla, is composed of Regional Directors of the different government agencies that guide the RPCO in reviewing and approving subprojects for funding.

Since the PRDP started in 2014, a total of 80 subprojects have been funded in Bicol – 43 subprojects were completed under the Original Loan which ended in 2022; four (4) subprojects were completed under the First Additional Financing (2018-2022); and two subprojects were already completed under the Second Additional Financing (AF2) approved in 2022, which extended the PRDP implementation until 2025. Under the AF2, 26 subprojects are ongoing and two are under procurement.

The PRDP Scale-Up will further extend the project up to 2029. (*Lovella P. Guarin, RPCO Bicol InfoACE*)

Visayas

RPAB green lights 3 infra subprojects in Region 6

The RPAB approved three I-BUILD subprojects from the provinces of Negros Occidental, Antique, and Capiz during the RPAB Meeting on October 12, 2023, at the Western Visayas Integrated Agriculture Research Center.

RPCO 6 Deputy Project Director Engr. Moises D. Manay, alongside representatives from the Department of Agrarian Reform, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Interior and Local Government, and Department of Public Works and Highways, jointly reviewed the proposed subprojects to ensure their adherence to the legal requirements of respective government agencies.

Subjected to a series of deliberations concerning the subproject proposals, the Rehabilitation of Brgy. Talacagay to Brgy. Bacuyangan to Brgy. Damutan FMR with Bridge in Hinobaan, Negros Occidental; the Improvement of San Jose Feeder Port in San Jose, Antique; and the Establishment of Roxas City Abattoir in Roxas City, Capiz will be pursued for issuance of No Objection Letter upon compliance of the remaining requisites to kickstart the project implementation. (*Eunice Gregorio, RPCO 6 InfoACE*)

Mindanao

RPAB 13 approves 2 infra subprojects under PRDP Scale-Up

Caraga's RPAB approved two infrastructure subprojects to be funded under the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) Scale-Up in a deliberation held last October 20, 2023, at Butuan City, Agusan del Norte.

The RPAB is responsible for the review and approval of all PRDP subprojects at the regional level.

The two subprojects, proposed by the Municipal Project Management and Implementation Units (MPMIUs) of Placer in Surigao del Norte and Tago in Surigao del Sur, were reviewed by eight RPAB members chaired by the Department of Agriculture – Caraga and including representatives from the Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council (RAFC), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

The Establishment of 30 tons ice plant and ice storage facility in Placer and the Concreting of the Kinabigtasan – Lindoy Farm-to-Market Road with concrete bridge in Tago are the first I-BUILD subprojects funded under the PRDP Scale-Up to undergo RPAB deliberation. (*Nichole Talatala, RPCO Caraga InfoACE*)

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