

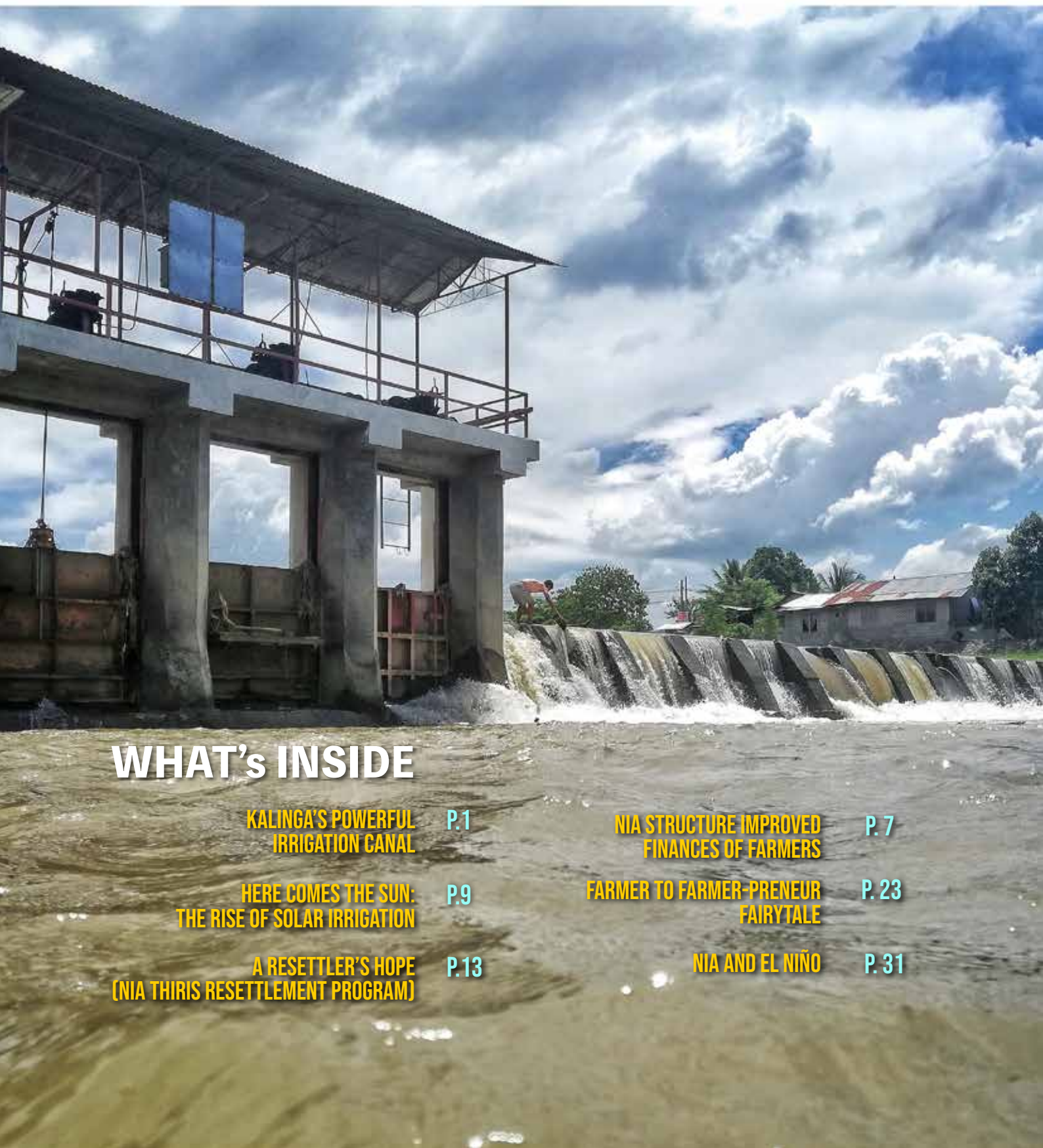


NIA DIGEST

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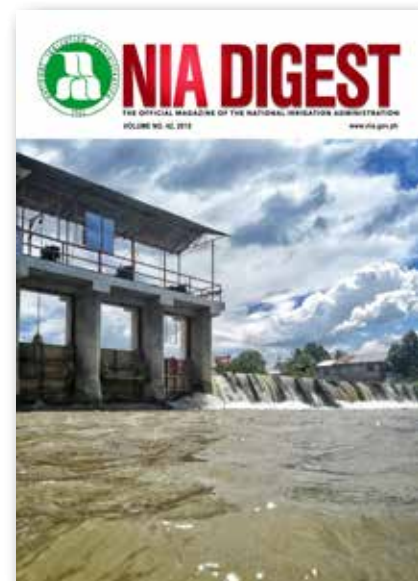


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NIA ushered 2019 with the theme: "Addressing Challenges through Modernization, Meeting Opportunities through Innovation". The cover highlights an abundance of gleaming water for irrigation. Located inside the observation deck are the machines used in lifting the control steel gates when there is a need to release water. This modernization feat of the Agency makes irrigation facilities even more resilient and efficient so that irrigation water may continuously flow through canals straight to the farmlands all over the country.


NIA Digest is the official magazine of the National Irrigation Administration produced by the Office of the Public Affairs and Information Staff. This periodical literature is being published bi-annually to provide information services to the public regarding the substantial events, projects, activities, and programs of the Agency, as well as the current status of irrigation and agricultural development in the country.

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Kalinga's POWERful Irrigation Canal

By: Mylene Malecdan, Public Relations Officer, NIA CAR

Reduces electricity rates. Improves power quality. Aids distribution utility to comply with energy law.

Do you believe these can also be the benefits of a canal facility being used primarily for irrigation? At the Upper Chico River Irrigation System (UCRIS) in Tabuk City, Kalinga, the sure answer is yes.

While being used as an irrigation facility, the Tabuk Supply Canal 1 of UCRIS is being tapped for hydropower generation by the Bulanao Hydro Electric Power Plant (BHEPP), located in Purok 7 of Barangay Bulanao.

The BHEPP is classified as a mini-hydro electric power plant that generates power through running water from the 22-meter drop of UCRIS canal diverted to run a turbine and afterwards re-diverted to the irrigation canal for irrigation use.

Being the first of its kind in the region, BHEPP went into operation on February 28, 2016 initially producing 0.830 megawatt. This is being sold to the Kalinga-Apayao Electric Cooperative (KAELCO) with which the DPJ Engineers and Consultants, developer of BHEP, signed an energy supply contract.



Support to Electric Supply Distributor

"BHEPP helps reduce electricity rates since the price per kilowatt-hour (kwh) does not include any Transmission cost which is around P1.50-2.00/kwh. BHEPP is directly embedded to Kaelco, without going through NGCP's transmission lines. Hence, no transmission cost and this could translate to about P0.30 kwh savings for the consumers", said Engr. Leonardo Egcatan of Kaelco.

As of October 2019, the said hydropower-generating irrigation canal supplies 10.63% of the total demand of the Kaelco. The Kaelco provides energy to all towns of Kalinga including Tabuk City and three of the seven municipalities of Apayao. Egcatan added that the proximity of the facility improves power quality, because the nearer the

distribution utility such as Kaelco to the generator plant, the voltage regulation is better. Similarly, BHEPP helps Kaelco comply with the Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) requirement under the Renewable Energy Law or RA 9513, which requires distribution utilities and electricity suppliers to source or produce a certain share of electricity from eligible renewable resources which include hydropower.

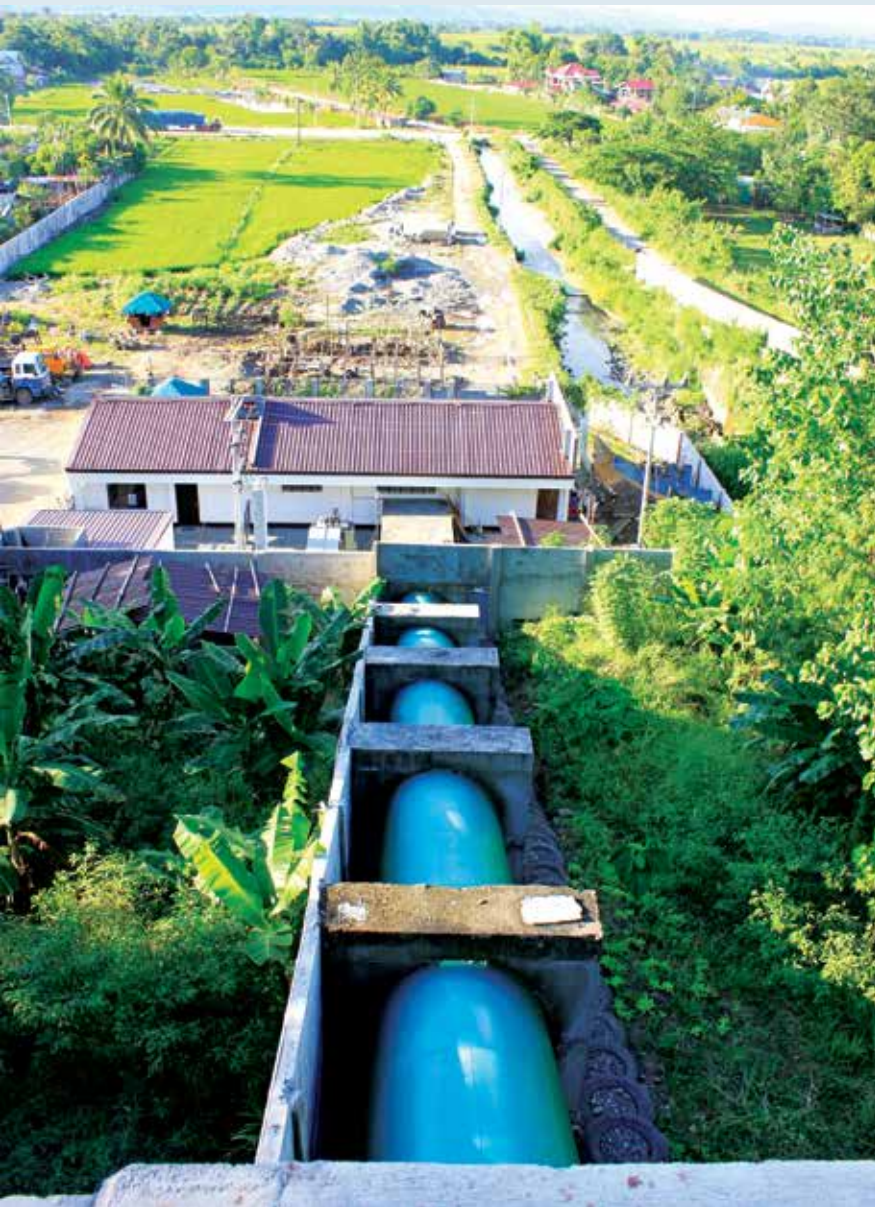
Additional Income for NIA

With the implementation of free irrigation law, the irrigation service fee (ISF) which used to be the main source of income of NIA as a government-owned and controlled corporation (GOCC) was abolished for all farmers with landholdings of eight (8) hectares and below. As such, income of NIA-CAR has been very minimal so that revenue from other sources is welcome.



According to Engr. Noly Sabado, head of the Operations Section of Kalinga IMO, the BHEPP remits P50,000 monthly to NIA through the Kalinga Irrigation Management Office (IMO), excluding months where there is a scheduled irrigation cut-off for repair and maintenance.

In 2018, remittances from the BHEPP totaled to more than P400,000.00, constituting 11% of the total revenue of NIA-CAR for the year. Sabado also said that the BHEPP management has been always willing to provide assistance during maintenance activities of the main canal of UCRIS.



Benefit to the Host Community

The management of BHEPP will soon be remitting particular amount directly to the host local government unit (LGU). Barangay Bulanao as the host community, Tabuk as the host city and LGU Kalinga as the host province) in compliance to policies and laws which mandates generation companies/energy resource developers to set aside one centavo per kilowatt-hour (P0.01/kwh) of the electricity sales as financial benefit to the host LGU.

According to the Treasury Office of Tabuk City, the BHEPP will be remitting its financial benefit to the city, pending the resolution to create an account for remittance of the benefits of the City Council which is a requirement for the creation of an account specifically for the said benefit. 🏠



CONSTRUCTION OF TARLAC BALOG-BALOG DAM

By: Edgar L. Ubaldo - Public Relations Officer A, BBMP II

The Balog-Balog Multipurpose Project Phase II involves the construction of a high dam across the Balsa River in Barangay Maamot, San Jose, Tarlac that will create a 1,978.50 hectare-reservoir with a total storage capacity of 425 million cubic meters of water for irrigation which will benefit about 23,000 farmers in the Province of Tarlac. The Project will also mitigate flooding in the low lying areas of Tarlac and has a potential power generation of 43.5 MW.

Similarly the Project will contribute to the alleviation of rural poverty by directly increasing the productivity and income of about 23,000 farmer-beneficiaries on the 34,410 hectares service area of the Project. Substantial rural employment will be created through civil works and watershed management activities of the Project.

The construction of the high dam has affected at least 970 households from Barangay Maamot, San Jose and Barangay Sta. Juliana, Capas, both in the Province of Tarlac. Most of them have been residing in the area for more than 30 years and are so deeply rooted in their lands that the loss of their land will mean the loss of their identity as distinct people. This has big impact for the Project Affected Families (PAFs),

especially the Indigenous Peoples (IPs) as they will be resettled to a new community living their ancestral domain and usual way of life. These families have to be resettled in order to attain the project objective of increasing the service area, by 24,940 hectares. On the other hand, it will be beneficial to the farmers in the Province of Tarlac by increasing their cropping intensity in the project area from 124% to 200%, thereby increasing crop production and farm income levels.

Most of the affected families in the construction of BBMP Storage Dam are IPs who have ancestral domain claim within the project affected area. As one of the requirements, the Project had undergone the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) Process before the issuance of the Certification Pre-Condition in March 2016 from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). Compensation agreements for these affected families was included in the formulated Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) prior to the said issuance. MOA provisions include resettlement site development, relocation corehouse and lot, payment of all affected properties (residential structures, plant damages and other improvements), disturbance compensation in the amount



of PhP 100,000.00 per household, two-hectare agro forestry-area, electric and water supply, and other amenities.

Based on the feasibility study conducted in 2009, the quality of housing structures in the affected area consisted of light materials that characteristically define the hamlet-type temporary facilities, generally made of bamboos, roughly sawn wood with cogon roofing. This is with exception of Maamot Proper, where some houses are of better built. The houses in the affected upstream sitios were conservatively valued at not more than PhP 15,000.00. Environmental sanitation is generally poor, with most households using the open-pit type toilet. In terms of water supply, 34% is limited to level I (shallow wells), while other better situated sitios, such as Maamot Proper, Dirita, Tangan-Tangan, and Payapa have access to level II systems (artesian or pumps). On land ownership, where IPs are known to inhabit, it is reduced to *de facto* open access use of forest lands for swidden farmers, while in some areas, only 6% claims private ownership covered with TCTs, others enjoy possession from use rights. The most significant number is still those who live on public lands/ancestral lands.

As of December 31, 2019, a total of 239 affected families were transferred to the new resettlement site. Out of the 970 affected families, 947 were already paid of Disturbance Compensation amounting to PhP 100,000.00 each family. A total of 622 families were paid for their residential houses and other improvements, 201 families were paid for their farm lots and plant damages. Payment is presently ongoing pending for their their submission of documentary requirements. 🏠





STORIES OF RIZAL RESIDENTS AND SAMAC IA PRESIDENT

By: Ma. Elizabeth N. Lopez, Public Relations Officer, NIA UPRIIS

Among the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) projects that benefitted from the development and construction of hydropower projects in existing irrigation systems, is the Rizal Hydropower Project located at Barangay Poblacion West, Rizal, Nueva Ecija.

The 1.0-Megawatt hydropower facility, located near the main canal of Pampanga River Irrigation System (PRIS), known to local residents as Rizal Dam started its commercial operation in 2017. It was cited by Administrator Ricardo R. Visaya as one of the successful partnerships in hydropower development projects in collaboration with Renewables Corporation of Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC). He even assured the farmers that it will not affect irrigation component as the water will just pass through the irrigation canal.

The aim to improve the quality of electricity in the town of Rizal is by far being met according to father and son tandem, Mr. Pelagio, 64 and Orly Benemerito, 35, both farmers residing near Rizal Hydropower. The community around has seldom experienced power interruption after being operational. Although the family does not seem to feel the impact of lowered electricity bill



yet, he still expects that the power rate will be lowered for the whole community residents around the project.

Stories recounted by Samahang Magsasaka ng Culiati (SAMAC) Irrigators Association (IA) – President Santiago M. Laguisma, Sr. or “*Pangulong Laguisma*,” show that no conflict arose with power generation and irrigation. In fact, contributing to UPRIS a total rice production of 20,303,351.48 cavans in Dry Crop 2019. A 3,725,570.00 cavan-yield from Division II service areas covering 23,555.18 hectares of rice area – the area where Pangulong Laguisma cultivates his own farmland while benefitting from the irrigation water supply of Rizal Dam.

Rizal Dam benefits about 99,617 farmer-members of the 413 IAs

and servicing around 129,449.02 hectares – including SAMAC IA.

Still farming at the age of 70, Pangulong Laguisma may be considered as a forerunner of this IA. He started cultivating at 14 in his own farm from which he eventually inherited an equal share of 6,000 square meters with his four siblings. Having no father led them together to this noble profession at an early age.

The dam was constructed in the late 40s until the early 50s, which according to Pangulong Laguisma, was also during the time when he was just starting to farm. He was a living witness to the evolution of Rizal Dam which had built a diversion canal between 1960 to 1970. In 1980, the Super Diversion Canal

(SDC) was constructed which the Rizal Dam-based Water Resource Facilities Operator B (WRFO-B) claimed to have had alleviated the lives of the farmers located at the tailend of Cuyapo, near the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway. When augmented with Casecan Multipurpose Irrigation and Power Project (CMIPP), he said that the 50-cavan production in the previously rainfed increased to 200 cavans in a two-season crop.

Through time, both the irrigation and power component in Rizal Dam were being harnessed by the Agency, providing sustainable and efficient irrigation services while contributing to the provision of electricity to remote communities of Nueva Ecija. 🏡



Rizal Dam providing electricity to remote communities of Nueva Ecija

JOEL ADIL: IRRIGATION TOWARDS A GOOD LIFE

By: Salimbay Sangeban, Public Relations Officer, MMIP

Mr. Joel Adil, a turned over Irrigators Association (IA) Vice-President noted that Central Mindanao was a center of war and poverty that severely affects Muslim and Christian lives, particularly in the provinces of Maguindano and North Cotabato.

Back then, poverty was extremely evident. Community members had a hard time finding a good job, sending their children to school, and making a living for their families. Due to this unfortunate situation, some of them were tempted to do things beyond norms in order to fulfill their daily needs.

When they began to benefit from irrigation water of Malitubog Maridagao Irrigation Project (MMIP) in 2017, their livelihoods improved. They can now afford to send their child to school. They have developed good relationships because they can farm well. They have no problems transporting their products because of farm-to-market roads. Now, other people have their jobs because of NIA. Currently, they are able to produce between 110 and 115 sacks of rice compared to only 40 sacks of rice from rainfed farms before. 🌾



NIA STRUCTURE IMPROVED FINANCES OF FARMERS

By: Desiree C. Cacal, Public Relations Officer, MARIIS

Farmers located at the end-check portions struggle to access easy and sustainable amount of irrigation water to get them through a cropping period. It is a great thing industrious farmer leaders spearhead group efforts of persistent water monitoring and regular canal clearing activities. Acquiring irrigation water requirement for their rice crops is arduous and costly, hence they could use all the help they could get from the Government, specially in the assistance of free water pumps, much better with an irrigation structure.



*Good relationships
among farmers
have ben developed
because they can
now farm well*



This is no different with the life experiences of farmers in Bannuar Irrigators Association (IA) in Buneg, Echague, Isabela. For so long, they held on to their water pumps as an irreplaceable partner to get on farming activities every cropping period as they are located at the end check portion of a Council of Irrigators Association (CIA) covering 10 Irrigators Associations. Mr. George Saet, the turn-out Chairman, recalls how they patiently monitored irrigation water from the main source back then. He said they even have to close other irrigation water turnouts below their structure as to utilize exclusively the water supply for a day or two then share the meager volume of irrigation water among 30-hectare farm lots on the said turn-out.

Fortunately, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) constructed a check structure Long Crested Weir with in the area. The Operation and Maintenance personnel save time and effort in the equitable delivery of irrigation service, while reducing expenses of farmers in terms of cost of water pump operation and hasten land preparation activities. As shared by Mr. Mario Matias, one of the active members in IA exclaimed his relief for reduced expenses in his farming. He said a total of PhP 6,000.00 is being saved from 12 liters of fuel in daily use of water pumps. He

shared how hard it is to budget finances during the two crucial months in farming back then.

At present, Bannuar IA members can now depend on the structure for a sustainable irrigation water delivery. As difficulty in water supply was eased, members can concentrate on increasing their yield. Last 2019, from mainly inbred varieties, members have tried planting hybrid varieties. According to Mr. Matias, from 90 cavans per hectare average of harvest, they now harvest 140 cav /ha. Farmers' harvest in the turn-out area has a 20% significant increase upon utilization of the project. The check structure also helped in the improvement of water delivery in the downstream portion covering an area of 900 hectares.

NIA constantly extends its hands to farmers to provide irrigation services, guidance in farming and agricultural development projects. 🏡

Project: CHECK STRUCTURE WITH LONG CRESTED WEIR

Cost: P 2,737,587.76

Date Completed: June 2, 2018

Location: TO #64, STA 46+210

IA: Bannuar Echague IA

Service Area: 30 hectares

No. of Farmer-Beneficiaries: 24





HERE COMES THE SUN: THE RISE OF SOLAR POWERED IRRIGATION

By: Jhon Vince R. Santoalla Public Relations Officer A,
NIA Region IV-A

"Napakalaki po ng pagbabago. Sinabi ko po doon yung pangarap namin ay natupad na. Nung dumating po yung Solar, pipindutin lang po at maghihintay ka lang ng 2-3 minutes at lalabas na yung tubig. Kung kami po ay gumagastos noon ng Php 15,000 to Php 30,000, ngayon po ay wala na kaming gastos sa patubig." -Mr. Antipolo



The Seasoned Farmer

These were the phrases uttered by Mr. Eliseo Inguito, Jr. of Palay-Palay Maunlad Farmers Association, Inc. and Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng Punta in Jalajala, Rizal.

Mr. Inguito started farming when he was 20 years old. The vibrant, strong, and lively man shared his experiences of pain and sacrifices during early years of

farming. He remembered the restless tilling of dry lands with his friendly carabao without any aid from irrigation.

He had also seen his palay dried up because the rain was not able to pour down for a long time. According to him, his four hectares of agricultural lands were not a place of abundance and productivity.



Kaya nga hindi ako nakapagtapos ng pag-aaral kasi pagsasaka lang yung trabaho ni tatay noon.

Alam mo, sa totoo lang, sapul na sapul ko yan. Ang ginagamit namin, kalabaw, sahod ulan kaya napakahirap magsaka. Mag-start kami magtanim ng June, matatapos kami ng September, napakahirap talaga magsaka noon dahil buma-base ka lamang sa patak ng ulan.

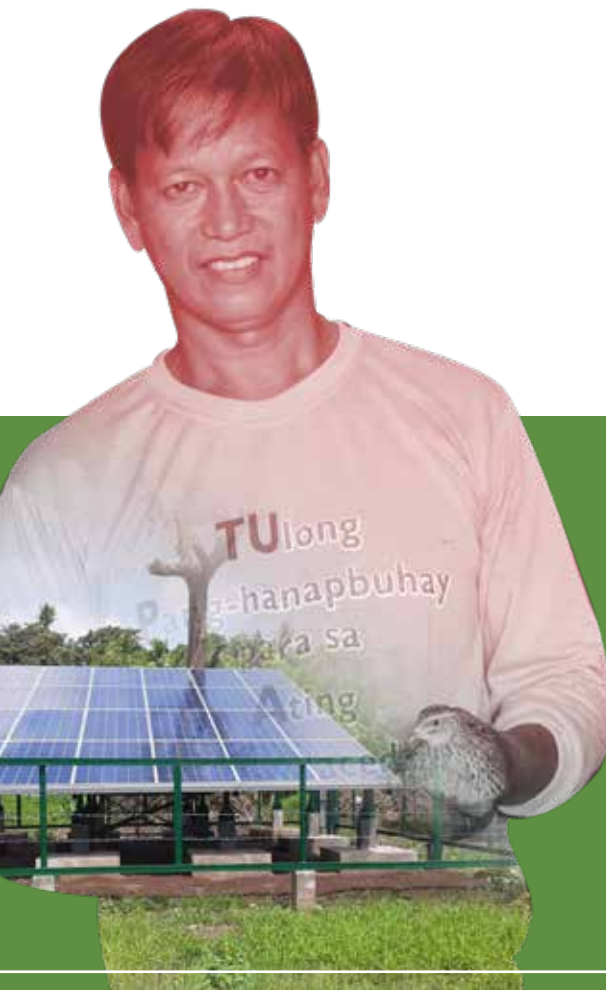


“

Ang krudo po namin kapag panag-araw ay umaabot ng Php 10-15 thousand. Gastos palang sa diesel yun. Pano na 'yung sa binhi at gastos sa other farm inputs? So ibig sabihin sa pagsasaka hindi lang ang katawan mo kailangan, dapat may bulsa ka rin.

Naranasan po namin na kami po minsan ay mabasag ang mukha sumakit ang kilikili, magkasakit at matusok ng mga matitinik na halaman dahil lamang sa pagsasaka.

”



The Maestro

Mr. Roy Antipolo sharing stories on how difficult it was to be a farmer. The 52-year-old former teacher is currently the President of Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng Punta in Jalajala Rizal.

His experiences in farming literally displayed 'blood, sweat, and tears' as he looks back cultivating his half hectare of agricultural lands without any support from irrigation.

The high cost of operating a diesel engine pump irrigation was truly one of their biggest challenges. Mr. Antipolo said that almost Php 30,000 was allotted to irrigate one hectare of agricultural land per cropping season.



Experiencing Breakthrough

"Na pro-program na namin ng maayos ang pagsasaka, tama ang timing ng pagsasabog ng fertilizer, at 'yung pagpapatubig. Sa loob ng isang taon nakaka-dalawang tanim na kami na may siguradong ani." Mr. Inguito

The seasoned farmer currently experiencing the overflowing joy brought by the Punta Communal Irrigation System located in Barangay Punta, Jalajala, Rizal.

The Php 5.2-million irrigation project was funded under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) for CY 2017. The system is benefiting the Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng PUNTA which consists of 21 Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries. Mr. Inguito is now confident that with the continuous flow of water from the solar pump, the assurance of food and savings will also follow.

"Napakalaki po ng pagbabago. Sinabi ko po doon yung pangarap namin ay natupad na. Nung dumating po yung solar, pipindutin lang po at maghihintay ka lang ng 2-3 minutes at lalabas na 'yung tubig. Kung kami po ay gumagastos noon ng Php 15,000 to Php 30,000, ngayon po ay wala na kaming gastos sa patubig", -Mr. Antipolo

The teacher turned farmer was enthusiastically sharing his experience during the first time they operate the Solar Pump Irrigation. The Punta Solar Powered Pump is harnessing both shallow tube wells (STW) and solar energy enabling to extract water from underground water sources to be used by farmers.

It includes water supply of three (3) sets of solar-powered pumps complete with panels and accessories installed in existing tube wells. The system is serving at least 24 hectares of agricultural land in Barangay Punta, Jalajala Rizal.

Mr. Antipolo is hopeful that the solar pump will continue to give them a peace of mind and a guarantee of productive harvests in the years to come.

These are the stories that NIA is aiming at, real stories of effectiveness and success among our agricultural heroes – the farmers. Truly, this new technology will not only be beneficial to the farmers but also to the environment.

In the long run, solar irrigation is set to tone down the cost of rice production paving way for a more productive agriculture and more satisfied farmers. 🌾



IRRIGATION FROM AFAR

By: Daryle Cayao-Camara, Public Relations Assistant, NIA Palawan IMO

The farthestmost tip of south-western Palawan is Balabac, a remote municipality with about 50-kilometer distance from Sabah, Malaysia.

Balabac is known for a natural paradise where the virgin island of beaches are perfectly turquoise to a typical scenery, famously recognized as habitat of wild crocodiles and home of Palawenos and the Molbog tribe, one of the Muslim cultural minorities believed as migrants from north Borneo.

According to President Eliseo Masangkay of Indalawan Irrigators Association (IA), Balabac is a decade behind from other municipalities of Palawan. Eighty percent (80%) of their food necessities came from Malaysia and the municipality of Bataraza due to its distant sea travel location from other places.

"Mahigit isang dekada nang nahuhuli ang Balabac sa ibang munisipyo ng Palawan dahil sa kalayuan ng lugar, walongpung porsyento ng aming pagkain ay galing pa sa bansang Malaysia at munisipyo ng Bataraza", said Pres. Masangkay on his knowledge.

The residents occasionally practice barter trading from nearby Sabah market and their livelihood subsists in fishing and farming.

"Ang pangunahing kabuhayan ng mga residente ay pagsasaka at pangingisda kahit nagkalat ang mga buwaya sa lugar", he added.

To boost economic growth and address food scarcity in Balabac, the National Irrigation Administration-Palawan Irrigation Management Office (NIA-PIMO) started the construction of a 1.4 kilometers canal extension to the only existing dam in August 2019.

The Indalawan irrigation project reached 61.13% of completion as of December 31, 2019 and is expected to operate on March 28, 2020 under the leadership of IMO Manager Engr. Conrado V. Cardenas, Jr. 150 hectares of rice field were developed that will benefit the municipality of Molbog and localates of Barangay Indalawan.

"Hangad ng Indalawan IA na magbigyan ng sapat na bigas

at pagkain ang mga residente sa Barangay Indalawan o buong Balabac para hindi na aangkat pa ng makakain sa ibang lugar", said President Masangkay.

"Nagpapasalamat ang lahat ng taga Balabac dahil narito ang NIA, tumutulong sa atin, nagbibigay ng biyaya, lalo na sa magsasaka. Kahit malayo, sa dulo ng Palawan, malapit sa Malaysia, hindi pa rin nila tayo nakakalimutan", said SB member OIC Muhammad Ian during the pre-construction meeting of Indalawan project in Balabac.

Irrigation from afar contributes growth and possibilities through congruity of the farmers and NIA 🇵🇭

Farmers are practicing diversified cropping to adopt the scarce water during dry months

Onion production in Occidental Mindoro

By: Edwin V. Arevalo, Sr., Institutional Development Officer, NIA Oriental Mindoro

Like other provinces in the Northern and Central Luzon, planting of other crops aside from palay is suitable to Occidental Mindoro, especially during Dry Season. One of those crops is Onion.

In the town of Magsaysay, where Caguray River Irrigation System is located, most of the farmers are producing onions since irrigation system could not support the water requirement for palay during the dry months. Planting onion requires frequent and light irrigation only. This covers a total farmed-up service area of 1,990 hectares. Considering the demand and profitability of this crop, farmers were encouraged to engage in planting onion.

Onion production has been introduced in Magsaysay by some farmers from Ilocos Region. After finding out that the type of soil and climate in the province is suitable for the said crop, farmers started to engage in planting onions every dry season which begin from November to April or May.

Purnaga Magsaysay Irrigators Association, Inc. is one of the associations patronizing diversified cropping. This IA has a total farmed-up service area of 187 hectares wherein during second cropping season, half of this area is being planted with high-value crops like onion. Even though the IA is located in the upstream part of the irrigation system and has sufficient supply of water, most farmer members still tend to plant onion, garlic and corn to supply other needs aside from palay.

Due to the implementation of Rice Tariffication Law, farmers were driven to promote diversified cropping especially onion production. Even though this is costly and labor-intensive, the profit for one hectare of onion production is equivalent to five hectares or more of palay production. This enables them to have additional income for their families. 🏡



A RESETTLER'S HOPE (NIA THIRIS RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM)

By: Analene J. Escolano, Public Relations Officer A, Region V
Ruth Maria Magdalena P. Hermogeno, Institutional Development Officer

In life, people wish to live each day creating happy and unforgettable memories with their families, friends, and the community they belong.

As the saying goes, *"Home is where the heart is"*, home is the dwelling place of a person's mind and heart. It is where they find comfort and peace. However, nothing is constant. Life can lead every person to an inevitable change; that is to either stop you from doing things you usually do, or let you move forward, through which may give you a reason to build a new home to live in.

Back in 2009, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Tigman-Hinagyanan-Inarihan Rivers Irrigation System (THIRIS), one of the 58 National Irrigation Systems (NISs) nationwide was then subjected for rehabilitation under the Participatory Irrigation Development Project (PIDP). The PIDP THIRIS Project affected 365 families in the municipalities of Calabanga, Bombon, and Magarao, all within the province of Camarines Sur.

These project-affected families (PAFs) identified were informal settlers living along the main canal of an existing irrigation system. For these people, leaving their homes, means leaving their hopes; being relocated is going to be a life-changing situation.

Massive campaigns, closer coordinations, and regular consultation meeting, were initiated by NIA-THIRIS and PIDP Safeguards Staff with the support of the local government units, with a great hope that these informal settlers will finally submit themselves to relocation, and make them believe that there is hope for a better life as they live in a new home at the relocation site.

A Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) was developed as part of the safeguards requirement of World Bank funded project where the PAFs were provided with





compensation and disturbance payments based on their entitlement.

Out of the 365 PAFs, 64 of them received their full compensation. Some of them opted for self-relocation, while others chose to be transferred to their families/relatives and others have only set-back since they owned a farm-lot. However, eight of them have agreed to be relocated.

In 2014, the eight PAFs were already relocated.

Four years have passed, in an interview conducted by World Bank in 2018, one of the recipients of the relocation program was asked on what were the changes brought to them by the resettlement.

Angel Nicole R. Magnaye, daughter of one of the PAFs, shared that their family is so thankful for the assistance given to them by NIA and the World Bank. From the time that they were resettled, she was able to pursue her studies since the relocation site is near a school. Their family was able to have a pleasant sleep at night. Her parents were able to look for alternative source of income to sustain their everyday needs. Windows of opportunities for an add-on source of income to suffice the needs of their family keep opening.

For them, the compensation given by NIA served as a starting capital as they began their small businesses which prosper over time.

At present, the resettlers have already overcome the difficulties they faced during the resettlement stage, and managed to pursue their drive to live their normal lives again.

Indeed, it is a proof that NIA has not run short in providing assistance to families affected by each irrigation project implemented by the Agency. 🏠



Embracing Changes: New Home, New Life

By: **Steve E. Cordero**, Watershed Management Chief, NIA JRMP II

It was slightly drizzling on a Friday morning when we met Ma. Marina Letsoncito in her makeshift store on the side of the street. She was selling bananas, homemade vinegar, few vegetables, and malido, an upland variety of rice. We were greeted with smiles as we approached her and she gushed to offer us seats. She then shared her story.

Manang Marina is a 47 years old Project-Affected Family (PAF) of the Jalaar Project. A circumstance that has changed her life. Their old house was situated in the bufferzone of the Jalaar River Multi-Purpose Project Stage II (JRMP II), the first large-scale irrigation development project in the Province of Iloilo. She said she was emotional to leave a house her family had lived for more than 24 years. Yet, she embraces the changes and opportunities it brings.

She, together with her husband, raised their four children by selling fish and any produce in the mountainous area of Calinog.

"Ang bana ko nagalibod ka isda kung kis-a nagapangay-ad ka sarakyan ukon ma-drive kung waay ubra. Waay man kita tinapusan mu kag indi man kita magkahuya. (My husband sells fish and do repairs of vehicles or drive whenever free. We did not finish our studies but it is not something to be ashamed of.)", Manang Marina answered when asked about her husband. She also expressed that her husband did not undergo formal trainings but is experienced in vehicle repairs.

For additional income, she accepts produce from other people and sell them in her makeshift store. What she takes home is dependent on her daily sales minus the capital of the product supplier.



Manang Marina shared that when they learned about the project and the possibility that their house will be affected, they borrowed money from a lending institution to buy a 200-square meter land in preparation for their relocation. Their old house was situated in a land owned by her grandparents. By the time that they were compensated for their affected properties, they used all of it for the construction of their new house. A home which she proudly showed us as it is the evidence of the changes in their lives and hard work.

Life Changing

The story of Manang Marina is just one of the hundreds of stories revolving around the Jalaur Project. Most of them expressed they were emotional when told that their house or land will be bought by the government to give way for JRMP II but they also showed understanding and hope for the future.

"May sentimental value man tani ang amon balay pero wala kami namalabag kay naintindihan namon na para ini sa komunidad (Our house has a sentimental value but we did not oppose the project because we understand that it is for the community)", said Analita Castor of Toyungan, Calinog.

They are full of hope that their sacrifices of giving up their properties will give way to much better lives for them and the entire Iloilo community. They are also optimistic of the positive changes the project will bring to their respective families.

As PAF, they will be compensated for all of their affected properties. Houses will be paid based on the current market value of materials with an additional of 40% for the labor cost. They will also receive Disturbance Allowance for those with affected residential structures and Vulnerability Allowance for families in the vulnerability group. Moreover, they will be compensated for all the crops, trees and land affected by the project. Parts of their entitlements are the employment opportunity with the contractor and livelihood assistance from National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and its partner agencies.

In the Upland barangays, there are a total of 613 families affected with 15 who opted for self-relocation and 32 for group relocation in the identified resettlement site in Sitio Agburi, Cahigon, Calinog. 🏠

SALIENT FEATURES

Dam Type	Concrete Dam
Catchment Area	60.80 sq.km.
Dam Height	10.00 meters
Dam Crest Length	47.00 meters
Dam Crest Width	7.60 meters
Dam Crest Elevation	98.00 meters
FWL (El.m)	101.84
HWL (El.m)	98.00
LWL (El.m)	98.00
Discharge	$Q = 2.33 \text{ cms}$



TRANSFORMING LIVES AS PROSPERITY REIGNS IN CANGMAGONG-ONG, GABAYAN, LAZI, SIKUIJOR

By: Benhur G. Lumacang, Public Relations Officer,
NIA Region VII

Realizing projects into fruition is one of the dreams and aspirations of the current administration to materialize. With the ongoing projects and programs, it is the very first time that the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) made an official announcement that for the golden age of infrastructure to come about, the industry needs about 2.5 million labor force until 2020 to 2021. But with great efforts and cooperation of every government agency, reaching out to every ends of the country has never been expeditious and authoritative.

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) spearheaded by Administrator Ricardo R Visaya, ascertains that every farmer, every beneficiary of every province, will be delighted and appeased of the governmental achievements since he was appointed as the Administrator.

The residents in the Province of Siquijor has rice and coconut farming as well as fishing, as their main sources of income while poultry raising and "habal-habal" driving are their alternatives. Although there is already an existent issue that the aged farmers are having a difficulty in finding someone to succeed their farm works, due to millennials who are fixated in pursuing their dreamed careers rather than making a living in the lands that raised them. Though, this is not wrong in any way, it still risks our agricultural production and, in a bigger picture, could influence the market.

In a small town of Siquijor, named Lazi, which was taken from the mother of the Spanish Governor-General Manuel Pavia y Lacy, is one of the most affected provinces of this prodigious modernization. It is on its way in developing their very first solar powered irrigation system. Since Lazi is under the Agrarian Reform Component, Cangmagong-ong Communal Irrigation Project, it is the third project funded by Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program-Irrigation Component (CARP-IC) in the said municipality.

With 280 liters per second discharge of water coming from the Cangmagong - ong springs, it has blessed the households and passersby near the site since this is where they get the water they drink, where they wash their garments, and take a bath. But do not mistake it as something unhygienic, since the residents are disciplined enough and have been counselled on how they should operate, to preserve the Cangmagong-ong Springs to the fullest.

Abner Tipanero, the Irrigators Association President of Lazi, Gabayan Rice Farmers IAC, shared a few



of his 18 years (since 2001) of being a farmer and a leader of their association. He is the past president of Small Water Impounding System Association for three years (2013–2016) which then became the Irrigators Association the following year. The IA consists of 59 members, has been very solid since the beginning because its constituents have always been very cooperative. Like all other farmers, he experienced innumerable hardships and sacrifices for years just to feed his family and send his kids to school. It was not until NIA Region 7 heard their petition and took the initiative and immediate action in providing them the irrigation they have always dreamed of.

He said the canals were managed by the Department of Agriculture (DA) - Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) before NIA Region 7 took over the project. He has three children, in which the eldest two are already happily married and the youngest has just graduated BS Nautical Science.

It was all the fruit of his hard work and perseverance. As a farmer, he was able to fulfill the duties of what a father and husband should. He said that farming now has never been as productive and bountiful as before because of the Farmers' Forums and all seminars he attended.

He learned a lot from hybrid and inbred kinds of rice, how to deal with different kinds of rice pests and diseases, what agency to approach when various issues arise, what benefits can they get, and many more. He also added that unhusked rice would sell for Php 18.00 for a kilogram while the milled rice guarantees for Php 45.00 every kilo. Mr. Tipanero said that he does not own the field but only harvests from it with 1:6 ratio.



The rest of the six sacks will be distributed to the landowner, to millers, and the ones who took care of the crops. Though this may be the situation, he said that he never had this much harvest before. The Cangmagong-ong Communal Irrigation Project – Phase 1 and 2 has a service area of 22 hectares. In order to fully utilize the water and lessen wastage, NIA Region 7 developed a solar powered reservoir that pumps water upwards directly into the tanks, named the Cangmagong-ong II (Solar Power) CIP. The reservoir, where the solar power will be situated, construction is still in progress and expected to be completed on December 31, 2019. Mr. Tipanero cannot express it in words how grateful he is on how active the government is, that even though he almost gave up and lost hope on how they were seemingly ignored and how their voices were unheard before, now they can see and trust that NIA always goes the extra mile for them.

One of the residents who will be benefitting of the ongoing Cangmagong-ong II (Solar Power) CIP is the Gabayan Farmers IA (not yet official) President, Benjamin Cañete. Though he has finished his studies in BS Nautical Science last 1983 and entered as an apprentice in Cebu, he never pursued because of what happened during the Typhoon Mike, locally known as Typhoon Ruping last 1990, wherein 256 ships in the shipyard as well as shipments went missing. He never went near the sea again. Instead he started tilling the land and planted dragon fruit trees.

Mr. Cañete was also a Barangay Councilor for three consecutive terms (2007–2016) in Gabayan. While this is his first time in becoming an IA President and

he started tilling the land five years ago and having background in leading people, this job is not new to his skillset.

These people are some of the examples that we can learn from, that they may have lived tougher lives than the others but still, they always see the greater good. They are confident and optimistic that someday, somehow this is not the end of the line for them. They will always keep on chasing their dreams and their Childrens' dreams, that no matter how dire the situation is, there will always be a way out as long as they keep on believing. 📖



Benjamin Cañete

NIA-IX Irrigation Federation stricken f

By: Rosielyn Bayawa Vil

Makilala, North Cotabato – The Zamboanga Peninsula, a relatively small region cannot be deterred in its heart to give—what it lacked in size, it made up for in spirit. When news broke about the 6.5 magnitude earthquake that shook Central Mindanao last October 31, 2019, farmers assisted by institutional workers of Salug River and Dipolo River Irrigation Systems (SARIS and DIPRIS) called an emergency meeting to respond to the recent devastation caused by the earthquake.

Turning their regular Social Technological and Educational Program (STEEP) for the Board of Trustees (BOTs) and Officers of TAMOMA Federation of SARIS and DIPRIS into an opportunity to help, the group agreed to do an outreach activity in Makilala, North Cotabato, Region XII, one of the most affected municipalities during the quake. STEEP is a program for Irrigators' Associations (IAs) conducted to help the IA adapt effective strategies, learn new innovations, and share best practices from visits of outstanding IAs of other regions/provinces. However, this time, the federation opted to extend help to their fellow farmers in Region XII. Hence, the activity was dubbed as 'STEEP with a Cause,' following the theme, "*Sa panahon sa Panginahanglan, Mag-uuma sa Zamboanga del Sur andam Modasig ug Motabang.*" (In times of need, farmers of Zamboanga del Sur are ready to inspire and to help.)

Irrigators' Associations help Earthquake-affected Farmers in Region 12

Manueva, SARIS IDS Head



Aiming to raise more funds for the said gift-giving activity, two more federations of the Zamboanga del Sur Irrigation Management Office (ZDS IMO) were invited to join in the said activity, namely, the MAMIDUTAGI Communal Irrigation System (CIS) Federation and the Labangan-Pagadian Federation of Labangan River Irrigation System (LABRIS). Together with the ZDS IMO institutional workers, the group headed off to Makilala, North Cotabato on a very early morning of December 3, 2019 carrying a truck load of relief goods and some cash for the earthquake survivors.

The following donations were collected for the said activity: (1) Two thousand pesos for each 22 IAs of TAMOMA Federation of SALUG RIS in Molave, ZDS headed by Federation President Silvestre Pumicpic which totaled to Forty Four Thousand pesos (Php44,000.00), (2) Five thousand each for the IAs of DIPRIS, Dumingag, ZDS headed by Federation President Ronald Pepito which totaled to Three Thousand pesos (Php3,000.00), (3) 47 bags of rice at 25 kilograms per bag from Pagadian-Labangan Federation headed by Federation President Alonto Marcaban, and (4) 41 bags of rice at 25 kilograms per bag from NIA staff.

The long and tiring Tukuran-Cotabato route which spans about 280 kilometers was relieved with warm greetings of welcome and smiling faces from NIA Region XII officials and staff as the group arrived. The group was then ushered to Makilala Incident Management Team (MIMT) where snacks were distributed to the group of volunteers and later assisted the NIA-IX group to the selected sites for the giving of relief goods. The hospitable reception from NIA personnel to MIMT group of volunteers is indeed a testament of Filipino resilience as it seems untraceable in their faces that they themselves are victims of the quake.

The next stop came with an unexpected sight as the Makilala Central School was donned with tents of several families who were going about their day, no children in uniform only rubbles from the recent quake. Yet quite unexpected as well were the look on their faces as they saw the group approaching them, NIA-IX IAs and institutional workers carrying gallons of water and bags of rice, 'help is here' it seems to say and the atmosphere of sincere gratitude and solidarity enveloped the entire evacuation site. The night was slowly taking over when the group arrived in BUDASAN IA, a Rice Achiever awardee, where a simple exchange of goodtidings ensued and a welcome of biko (rice cake) prepared by the IA and a sumptuous dinner specially prepared by the NIA Cotabato IMO ended the long day.

Still true to its STEEP goal, the second day started with a visit to M'LANG River Irrigation System and to M'LANG MALASILA IA, an outstanding IA, where a fruitful discussion of systems management, maintenance dues collection strategies, and relevant innovations were shared among IA participants. The group then proceeded to Barangay Bansalan, Darapua, which is approximately 11.3 kilometers away from Makilala municipality proper. It was a tear-jerker realization when the community informed the group that NIA-IX was the first one to come and aid them with bags of rice, water, and some cash which were divided among families present in the area. The remaining amount of cash was donated to their community to be utilized for the coming Christmas celebration. The last stretch of the two-day gift-giving itinerary was spent with the kids in Batasan Elementary School, Makilala, North Cotabato. School supplies were distributed to some 256 pupils whose classes were being conducted in tents as their makeshift classrooms outside the school campus.

It was a two-day memorable and heartwarming trip for the NIA-IX farmers and NIA personnel. They left to bring a message of hope and comfort yet they returned enriched with the experience of true joy in giving, the spirit of solidarity, and a more profound meaning of Christmas. Indeed, happiness experts are right when they say that to be able to be genuinely happy, you have to connect to something larger than yourself. The efforts of the TAMOMA IA to extend themselves





outside the rigors of their federation do not only answer the social responsibility aspect of the federation but also to a need that is inherent to every human and that is to find meaning and purpose in life. As put by the TAMOMA Federation leaders, *"This is the best way to encourage our farmer-members to pay their obligations"*, yet inadvertently so it also taps the human spirit to connect to a purpose that is outside and bigger than yourself suffice it to say that it is a win-win strategy for the IA.

The Salug River and Dipolo River Irrigation Systems (SARIS and DIPRIS) are two of the four national irrigation systems of NIA Region IX. They are located in the humble municipality of Molave, Zamboanga del Sur where most of the region's outstanding Irrigators Associations are. They have been conducting several civic-minded activities such as Adopt-a-Family program where grocery items are given to the poorest of the poor within their service area, Scholarship Grants to qualified children of farmer-members, Feeding Programs for children within their service area, and One Sack of Rice program for calamity victims (like typhoon Vinta) to name a few.



The group would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to the NIA Region XII headed by Regional Manager Diosdado A. Rosales for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality during the entire conduct of the activity. Also, the guidance and support of NIA Region IX Management, Regional Managers Mario H. Sande and Rory F. Avance as well as to the ZDS IMO Manager Joel C. Atay, daghang salamat. 🙏





FARMER TO FARMER- PRENEUR FAIRYTALE

By: Regene Glenn F. Perez, Information
Officer Designate, NIA SCIMO

***“Malaki talaga ang
naitulong ng NIA....”***

***“Nung may irrigasyon na,
madali na ang asenso...”***

***“Matuto ka magtanim at
matuto ka din mag market.”***

“Mang Jo” or Jose F. Lorenzo of Bunao CIS located at Sitio Pag-asa, Barangay Crossing Rubber, Tupi, South Cotabato is a household name in the area of agricultural business and entrepreneurship. He is the father of vegetable-selling in their area and a pioneer in the community of selling high-value crops to varied provinces and earns its status of a very reliable and master of its kind – A FARMER-ENTREPRENEUR.

But this didn’t happen overnight. Before the existence of Bunao CIS and irrigation in the area, Mang Jo is just a kid mentored by his uncle in the industry of selling vegetables. His uncle opened his eyes to the world of selling and retailing and handling business at his young age. Mang Jo since then had this fire in him to follow the footsteps of his uncle and to even surpass his goals and what he could become in the future. As years went by, Mang Jo equipped himself with the necessary skills and acquired knowledge to strengthen his abilities and techniques in handling crops. this is why he learned how to PLANT and started a backyard garden.

BEFORE NIA

In 1975, the area of Mang Jo was considered as a potential area for developing crops. Hence, the Japan

Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), now JICA, built its early irrigation facilities that would deliver irrigation water from Palian River to the potential farmers in the area. The diversion dam built by the JOCV was operational until it was washed-out due to the volume of flood back in 2008. All along with his dreams, Mang Jo thought that it was the end and he was so devastated when the calamity happened because it destroyed their means of living and also his dreams in the area. But Mang Jo didn’t stop there, he ignited again his passion within him. He went on to organize a series of bayanihan to rehabilitate farm ditches and earth canals. He even started to organize a group of 12 farmers in carrying out the responsibilities of the bayanihan schedules. This paved his way to the National Irrigation Administration bringing his hope that this will give the opportunity of changing his life and the life of his co-farmers.

The Birth of BUNAO CIS

2012 Bunao Communal Irrigation Project was implemented in the area and it established a very unique communal irrigation system that irrigates high-value crops of cauliflower, bell pepper, capsicum, vegetables such as cabbage, eggplant and other

crops of corn and papaya. The unique and diverse landscape of crops of Bunao CIS was orchestrated by Mang Jo who was the IA President of the association that time. The IA was the major producer of vegetables to the major malls in the province of South Cotabato and even producer of vegetables in Manila. Bunao CIS transformed into a land of good production of vegetables from an area of devastated land and from plain farmers to farmer – entrepreneurs. Mang Jo had developed a community to its glory by simply pushing, teaching, learning and sharing it to his members what he knows. His life was deeply changed by the irrigation system in the area because it brought a total impact on their lives in their farming systems and activities. Due to this success in the area, the areas were visited by local farmers, government institutions and other individuals to learn from him in his technologies acquired through the years. Under his time of being the IA President, Mang Jo was decorated with various awards from different agencies including his two-time nomination and won the National Gawad Saka Most Outstanding Farmer in 2001 and 2010.

“Malaki talaga ang naitulong ng NIA..” As he stated, he remembered that before the irrigation system, he and his 12 farmers were the pioneers to organize the association. He reminisced their time when they selected schedules for bayanihan and water delivery was not enough during that time.

“Nung may irrigasyon na madali na ang asenso... may mga post-harvest facilities na kami, nakabili ng lupa para sa IA Office...” He added that when the group of farmers became an Irrigators’ Association, linkages and coordination with other agencies were very easy because they were recognized as a registered association.

Mang Jo’s Vision

Currently, the IA especially the farm area of Mang Jo is planning to develop a demo farm for organic practices. They are now trying it to some vegetables like cauliflower and capsicum. His goal this time is to transfer his knowledge to his fellow farmers to be like him and also to provide a livelihood to the non-owners of farm lots. He wants to provide an opportunity through sustainable agriculture. There is one thing that Mang Jo wanted to share with his fellow farmer who envisions themselves to be a Farmer-Entrepreneur...

“Matuto ka magtanim at matuto ka din mag-market.”

Today, Mang Jo is one of the Board of Trustees of Bunao CIS. He is happy and contented for what the IA had become and his fellow farmers. It is time to pass to another generation of farmer leaders that will bring the Bunao CIS and its farmers to its greater glory in the coming years. 🏡



Talayan River Irrigation System: A Legacy to the Maguindanaons

By: Ysnairin M. Sula, Information Officer C, NIA Maguindanao IMO

Agriculture plays a big and vital role in the development of the Philippine economy and for the attainment of inclusive growth. One of the important components of our agricultural system is irrigation as it raises land productivity by providing sufficient water to crops to increase yield and ensure the stability of production. The irrigation systems constructed through the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) have been decades supporting our farmers, and this support is one of the reasons why agriculture boost in the Province of Maguindanao particularly in the municipalities of Guindulungan and Talayan.

TALRIS: From Battle Field to Rice Field

Before the presence of the irrigation system, the municipalities of Talayan and Guindulungan were two of the towns of Maguindanao that were deprived of socio-economic progress due to peace and order condition. Though known as the home of different armed men and extremists, behind this image lies a rich and vast land ideal for agricultural activities. The presence of Talayan River, land for farming and the farmers itself were the reasons why Talayan River Irrigation System (TALRIS) exists in the Province of Maguindanao.

One of the National Irrigation Systems (NISs) in the Province of Maguindanao under the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is Talayan River Irrigation System. Its main office is located at Barangay Satan, Shariff Aguak municipality, and its main dam is situated at Barangay Sampao, Guindulungan, Maguindanao.

It was in the year 1981 when the construction phase of Talayan River Irrigation System begun under the local funds of the Communal Irrigation Project. The project was under the direct supervision of Maguindanao Provincial Irrigation Office (MPIO), but due to limited resources and unstable peace and order condition, the project was suspended indefinitely. The system was

“Because of irrigation, we have good farming, we learned the right ways of farming, we did learn because of the different training we participated. We learned various techniques not only in managing our farms but also managing our respective associations which was taught to us by NIA”.

Mr. Manan A. Pangalao, IA President of Magawida Irrigators Association



turned over to NIA Region 12 and was given to Alip RIS for the supervision of its operation and maintenance in 1991. After 8 years, the Talayan RIS was again under MPIO for the supervision of its operation and maintenance. However, in 2007, the management of NIA Region 12 transferred the supervision of the system to Kabulnan River Irrigation System, at present, it is under the supervision of Principal Engineer Suharto A. Singgon. Currently, the system has a Firm-up Service Area (FUSA) of 715 hectares having an irrigated area of 680.84 hectares for Dry Season and 712.84 for Wet Season with 100% cropping intensity, and 89 cavans average yield. It serves a total farmer-beneficiaries of 539 under the four Irrigators Associations (IAs) namely Guindulangan IA, Inc. under the leadership of IA President Butuan S. Nol, Maguyaga IA, Inc. under the leadership of IA President of Buhari K. Abdullah, Kapamagayon, IA Inc. under the leadership of IA President Soriya M. Malang, and Magawida IA, Inc. under the leadership of IA President Manan S. Pangalao.

Managing the system is not an easy task because of the peace and order condition, and other social issues in the two areas, but determination and a good partnership between NIA, IAs and the Local Government Units (LGUs), the system stood proud amidst the challenges.

TALRIS: Impact on the Lives of the Farmers

Skills and knowledge. The Institutional Development Program of Talayan RIS has been a huge help in organizing the Irrigators Association of the system. Through various capability training, seminars, and orientations conducted such as Water Savings Technology (WST), Financial Management System (FMS), Values Transformation Training (VTT) and Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC), the farmer-beneficiaries gained and strengthened their skills and knowledge on the right cropping operation, adoption of new techniques of water operation and correct management of their respective associations.



"Sabap sa irigasyon migkapy sa kabangangawid nami, migkataw kami kanu mga mapya a ukit-ukit nu kabangangawid, madakel e natawan nami sabap kanu mga trainings a naamungan nami. Madakel e nakwa nami a guna-guna dekana bu sya kanu kapagkap't sa mga lupa nami, ka apeg kanu kapegkap't kanu asusasyon nami a inipamandu sa lekami nu NIA."
 ("Because of irrigation, we have good farming, we learned the right ways of farming, we did learn because of the different training we participated. We learned various techniques not only in managing our farms but also managing our respective associations which was taught to us by NIA"), according to Mr. Manan A. Pangalao, IA President of Magawida Irrigators Association.

Linkage.

Like any other Irrigators Associations (IAs) whose aim is to be a cohesive, self-reliant and viable association, the four Irrigators' Associations of Talayan RIS are making their ways to build linkages to other government agencies to support their respective associations. Because of their perseverance in attending various agricultural trainings and seminars of other agencies such as the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) of the Department of Agriculture, and Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), each of the IA President became recipient of various farm inputs and types of machinery which is at present help support the operation and maintenance of each IAs.

"Sabap kanu kinapatendeg sa irigasyon sya sa munisipyo na Guindulungan, madakel i naamungan nami a mga programa na gobyerno labi den sa kanu nyaba a kababangawid nami. Sabap sa kinapamandu nu mga agency sya sa Agriculture na naging Local Farmer Technician ako. Saki den samayto su pakapamandu kanu mga tagapeda ko kanu mga natawan ko a mapya a ukit kanu kababangawid".
 ("Since the construction of irrigation in the municipality of Guindulungan, we were able to participate in different programs of the government especially in our farming activities. Through the cohesive discussion of these agencies in Agriculture, I became a Local Farmer Technician. I am now teaching and training my fellows in the right ways of farming"), according to Mr. Butuan S. Nol, IA President of Guindulungan Irrigators Association.

Women Empowerment.

The inclusion and empowerment of women have been one of the unique features of the system since they have the first woman IA President out of four national systems in NIA-Maguindanao. Ms. Soriya M. Malang, IA President of Kapamagayon IA has been an IA President for 8 years. The compassion on her members, the innovation she did for her association, and her willingness to achieve their IA goals are some of the characteristics she possesses in leading her 96 IA members.





Unity.

Farmers in these areas belong to different groups. They differ in ideologies and beliefs. But because of the system, they unite to attain a good yield and reach a satisfactory performance on their operation and maintenance. Just like their IA names “*Magawida*”, *Kapamagayon*” and “*Maguyaga*” a Maguindanaon terms which all means consulting, in agreement, and supporting each and everyone, the Talayan River Irrigation System is an example of a project that brings long-term positive impact to the lives of the people in the communities of Talayan and Guindulungan, respectively.

TALRIS: Impact on the community

For 28 years of serving the Talayan and Guindulungan municipalities, the Irrigators’ Associations of TALRIS are proud to say that it is through the irrigation system that their lives had changed. The farmers were able to raise their children through farming, they have decent houses to live in, acquired vehicles for easy transportation, and had additional income through small businesses. Furthermore, because of the construction of service road in the area, easy transportation of the basic commodities in the community is easily

transported it became the farm-to-market road of the residents, and in general there was a huge increase of income generation in the municipalities of Talayan and Guindulungan.

TALRIS: More Potential areas, More Income

The system is presently undertaking extension and rehabilitation of its irrigation facilities to generate irrigated areas of 130 hectares that will benefit the farmers in two municipalities. As per design, it is believed that there are still thousands of potential areas that can be irrigated by the system to provide additional income in the community and its neighboring towns.

Talayan River Irrigation System’s (TALRIS) existence is a manifestation that irrigation is vital in the development of agriculture most especially in rice farming. Irrigation is a forever legacy that can be used by the Maguindanaon’s future generation. As the saying goes from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, “Investment in agriculture are the best weapons against hunger and poverty, and they have made life better for billions of people”, and this is what just happened to the lives of the people of Guindulungan and Talayan in the Province of Maguindanao. 🇵🇭



The Golden Triumph of Golden Grain FIA of Bajao, Inc

By: Jek Panerio, Data Encoder, Surigao Del Sur IMO, CARAGA



Every great thing has humble beginnings. Like any other successful organizations, the Golden FIA emerges as a simple cooperative composed of a small group of persons who had a sky-high vision of achieving paramount success in the field of irrigation and agricultural management.

Golden FIA's success is evident as it is considered as the most functional and multi-awarded Irrigators Association in the entire province of Surigao Del Sur. The unity and cooperation of the officers and its members made them to aspire for excellence.

The organization began their journey with only 15 active members with limited resources to utilize. Struggles and hurdles have surfaced during the beginning years of their organization, but commitment and passion had driven them to pursue their cause. For them, step by step process is the best tool to maintain an organization that is mainly concerned to the needs of the farmers. They became SEC registered on January 19, 2010 and they considered this as their biggest leap of their journey as it ignited them to aim for the Best Irrigators Association in the entire province of Surigao del Sur.

The organization has been continuously participating through various activities and trainings conducted by the National Irrigation Administration and other agencies such as leadership training, financial literacy seminar and provincial management conference to enrich their knowledge and skills in agricultural and irrigation management. In this way, they acquire



irrigation in their area.

Achievements after achievements were obtained by the organization as they received numerous awards from the different awarding bodies and sectors. They were awarded as 2017 Rice Achievers Award from the Department of Agriculture, most outstanding IA for CY 2017 (NIS Level), CY 2017 Rice Achiever Award (Regional level) from the National Irrigation Administration, they also received a plaque of recognition for the most outstanding IA for CY 2017 and recently a plaque of recognition was also awarded to them for having the highest rating of CY 2018 IA Functionality Survey.

All the achievements of the association are made possible through the firm leadership of its IA President, Mr. Carmelito Langres, a former Heavy Equipment Operator who rendered his service to the National Irrigation Administration- Surigao Del Sur for almost 31 years. Mr. Langres is remembered as a skillful, hard working, and very committed employee. Engr. Dexter Sablaon (Acting Division Manager) even commended his excellence and was given tribute during the Salamat Mabuhay program for his exceptional service that really contributed to the objectives of the National Irrigation Administration. Now, Mr Langres is a full pledged IA president of the Golden Grain Farmers Irrigators Association of Bajao, Inc.

Golden FIA is indeed exceptional among the other IAs in the province since it has been consistently implement its development plan in line with its vision of being a feasible community partner. The leadership continues to find ways to develop their growing organization as they strengthen ties with the National Irrigation Administration and other agencies. 🏡

enough knowledge to properly manage their organization and it helps them to conquer the problems of each member.

Through the members' consistent efforts to achieve sustainable development, they have established a support system link to the government and public agencies. The IA is also into "partnership system" as they practice coordinating with other agencies to avail technical, financial and other essential services for agricultural development. They believed that it is unity that uplifts them in their endeavours and helps them in developing their organizational goal.

Constant communication among members and officials through assemblies and meetings is one of the keys to their success. It is evident in their monthly obligation as they are very committed to pay for their sustenance dues for the maintenance and finances of the organization. Each member is also encouraged to participate in every seminar so they could apply futuristic and innovative farming and irrigation techniques to combat the rigid climate change.

Through their hard work they had acquired various agricultural equipments which are available for utilization for all the bonafide members of the Golden FIA. In addition, they are expecting new machineries in the first quarter of 2020. They were also granted irrigation projects from NIA to improve the delivery of



NIA and El Niño

By: Jayson B. Cabrera, Public Relations Assistant, PAIS-CO

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is the government agency mandated to develop all possible sources of water for irrigation. It plans, constructs, operates, and maintains irrigation systems across the country for the benefit of the farmers and all Filipinos as well in terms of food security. But what if El Niño, a weather pattern associated with reduced rainfall comes? Is NIA prepared enough to survive this “crisis”?


The first step in preparing for El Niño is through an El Niño Watch. When El Niño becomes full-blown, the EN Watch terminates the protocol being followed by the PAGASA is through the issuance of an EN Watch and is replaced by an EN Advisory. If the probability of EN phenomenon is just 5-10%, it may be considered as a regular dry season. What we had experienced last year was a dry season although our country met the average number of typhoon per year. However, these typhoons did not bring too much rain. Thus, the Normal High Water Level (NHWL) in Angat Dam of 212 meters above sea level by the end of December 2019 was not met. It was only 198 meters (short by 14 meters). Fortunately, rains poured during December that the elevation increased up to 203 meters by the start of January 2020.

If El Niño is announced to be happening in the country, then its probability has to be determined first - 100 percent, moderate, mild, or super mild. Before the full-blown EN, its precursors come first which are the dry spell, dry condition, and drought. The weather bureau PAGASA defines dry spell as 3 consecutive months of 21-60 percent rainfall reduction, while drought is either a dry spell that extends to 5 months, or at least 60 percent rainfall reduction for 3 consecutive months. Having known these things, how then does NIA intervene physically and procedurally so that El Niño's impact may be lessened?

As a procedural intervention, NIA adjusts the cropping calendar in such a way that the driest month falls on the harvest season. Another procedural intervention is the rotational method of irrigation where the release of water to farmlands is scheduled in terms of priority to maximize the utilization of water resources. Also, to cope with the limited water supply, short gestating variety crops are being planted by the farmers such as palay which can be harvested after 60-90 days only and drought resistant crops (crop diversification). A method of controlled and intermittent irrigation which is alternate wetting and drying (AWD) is being practiced - cultivating irrigated lowland rice with much less water than the usual system of maintaining continuous standing water in the crop field.

As a physical intervention, NIA installs shallow tube wells (STWs) to augment water supply for the crops. In most places, due to the scarcity of water for the crops, NIA takes advantage of this phenomenon by implementing restoration works in irrigation systems. This is done in full blast wherein farmers are hired as laborers. In this way, they may still support their families even though water supply is lacking or rainfall is insufficient for the crops to grow – transforming the challenging effects of climate into opportunities.

In worst case scenarios, cloud seeding in places where it is applicable is being done. It requires that the clouds over the reservoir are “seedable” – those which are cumulonimbus. Since it is very much costly, NIA usually does it only over priority (big) dams such as Magat and Pantabangan.

Concluding this interview with Engr. Dizon, it is with confidence to say that the answer on the question, “*Is NIA prepared enough in facing the possibility of an El Niño occurrence?*” is a big “YES!” 



DECADES OF CIVIL SERVICE (Response from the Retirees)



FORTY THREE YEARS AGO when a fresh, burgeoning and energetic engineer entered this Agency and worked as draftsman. It was then the beginning of our nation "to return to normalcy" from the proclamation of martial law to the so called New Society or "*Bagong Lipunan*", and the rest was history.

For forty three years, I am a living witness of NIA. It was the period that Irrigation Age as envisioned in RA 3601 must be attained, hence issuance of Presidential Decree No. 1702 was amended providing "increased cost of irrigation systems require an increase in capitalization" to Php10 B of NIA to attain its goals of meeting food security. Added to this, income from all sources was declared as additional source to NIA's operating capital thereby increasing it. It was also the completion of UPRIS, start and completion of MARIS and the birth of Participatory Approach Program or PAP which made NIA noted for in the international field of irrigation engineering and being commended as the finest irrigation agency in the whole Asia.

Working in NIA was not always a bed of roses or flowing with milk and honey or paradise. So many challenges had come, so many encounters experienced. Philippine crisis of 1984 trapped the most severe political and economic crisis due to so many factors such as economic variability – inflation to 50%, economic crisis resulting from Aquino assassination, limitations on Philippines' borrowing and many more. Simultaneous to this, NIA's domestic problem cropped

up when its corporate fund was nearing depletion to as low as 10 million thereby affecting its operation. Changed came when Marcos regime was toppled in 1986.

Irrigation projects poured in but at this point, political color started to overshadow the scene. Local funds and foreign assisted projects piped in the bucket list. These were all temporary. Five years later, Republic Act 7160 of 1991, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code was enacted into law, transferring control and responsibility of delivering basic services to the hands of local government units (LGU)". The effect of which were non-funding of feasibility studies to project implementation to the point of delivering our salaries and wages thru ATM or "after three months" meron po kaming biruan na di basta delayed kung sa nagbubuntis, malapit ng manganak. It even resulted to retrenchment of some employees following the Agency's "motto of slim and effective organization". Most of these personnel have been trained and skilled enough but with the destiny they had in NIA, they were forced to find greener pasture. Was this also the reason why the rice crisis in 1994 – 1996 occurred due to lack of fund for the irrigation projects?

Another stumbling block in NIA was the campaign promise of ERAP on NO ISF which was never evidenced by any document and affected our ISF collection. The situation was relaxed when AO No. 17 of 1998, better known as Adoption of Socialized Irrigation Fees, CIS Amortization Rates and other Urgent Interim Measures was approved to cushion El Nino. With its effect causing drought, farmers were to pay 50% of ISF. These never stopped us. There have been many challenges but through it all, we tried to remain grateful and stayed with our dearest NIA.

The 20th Century added value to our agriculture sector through increased in budget appropriation to irrigation. Our essence of existence was levelled up to the extent of gaining benefits like recouping VIG and other incentives due to us. At this point in time, life in NIA was becoming promising. More funds, more new projects, existing systems were repaired, rehabilitated and improved.

With the implementation of EO No. 718 which authorized the phased implementation of the NIA Rationalization Plan and availment of the separation incentive package under the EO No. 366, some of our dear buddies benefited from this plan. Our Agency's objectives were realigned to the new organizational plantilla and to the mission NIA should carry out. We have been used experiencing the gap between service area and irrigated area. But filling the gap of lack of manpower as the effect of RatPlan, is a difficult situation in project implementation. We rehired some who were retrenched and hired and trained new employees which was common coping up by the Agency. This is our strategy which is practiced even at present.



Four of our offices, NIA C.O. , UPRIS Head Office, NIA Region IV-A, and Quezon IMO, are now ISO 9001:2008 certified and we are now working towards ISO 9001:2015 for a nationwide certification. We know the rest of the beginners will make it as well for this certification. This is one way we can show to our dear NIA how much we treasure her because it is in her we belong.

Last year, through the assistance of NEDA, the National Irrigation Master Plan or NIMP formulation was started. The NIMP will be our way on NIA's strengthening and enhancing, how NIA's future will be crafted or acclimatized with the future needs. We may not be able to witness it as we will be leaving soon. But in the contributions we have done for NIA, we are assured, NIA IS IN GOOD HANDS with our colleagues we will be leaving behind.

FORTY THREE YEARS AFTER, we are leaving. Shakespeare once said, "Parting is such a sweet sorrow", but I know in my heart, my soul is connected to NIA – my life for more than four decades. THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS US ALL. 🙏

By **Engr. Gloriosa L. Hernandez**
Engineering and Operations Division Manager
Region 4A

BE A BLESSING IN THE WORKPLACE TODAY!

Recipe for a Happier Work Life



Sigurado akong maraming working moms ang nag-iisip at nagpapalano kung ano ang masarap na lutuin, orderin o ihanda na pagsasalu-saluhan ng pamilya. May ibabahagi din akong recipe sa inyo ngayon. Pero hindi para sa pagkain kundi isang simpleng recipe for a happier work life.

Anu-ano nga ba ang mga rekado ng masayang trabaho?

Ingredient #1: Camaraderie. Camaraderie is defined as, "mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together." Mahalaga sa maayos na working relationship ang tiwala. You should have people whom you trust in the workplace at dapat din na pinagkakatiwalaan ka nila. Ang matamis na samahan ng mga magkakatrabaho ay nagpapasarak at nagpapasaya ng buhay sa opisina. Mahirap at mabigat man ang trabaho, kung kasundo at kaibigan mo ang iyong mga kasama, kaya pa ring gumawa ng may ngiti sa iyong puso at mukha.

Ingredient #2:

Communication. Isa sa palatandaan na maayos ang ugnayan ng mga magkakatrabaho ay ang bukas na linya ng komunikasyon. Nakarating ba sa tamang oras at paraan ang tamang impormasyon sa mga taong kailangang makaalam nito? Do people feel safe and empowered to give their feedback, comments and suggestions to their peers and superiors? Ang sabi ni Paul J. Meyer, author at founder ng Success Motivation Institute, "Communication – the human connection – is the key to personal and career success."

Ingredient #3: Conflict resolution. Hindi mawawala ang conflict sa trabaho. May mga panahong magkikiskisan ang ating mga ugali, opinyon at pananaw. Because each member of your organization is unique and different from each other, conflict is really bound to arise. Kaya dapat, marunong tayong magmanage at mag-ayos ng conflict sa trabaho. The humility to accept that you are not always right is a huge big step

towards resolving conflicts at work. Ang mapagpakumbabang puso na marunong humingi ng tawad at magpatawad ay kailangang sangkap sa masaya at maayos na trabaho.

Isang kilong camaraderie, samahan mo ng isang tasang communication at budburan ng isang kutsarang conflict resolution – that's our recipe for a happier work life. Sa Galatians 5:22-23 ay inisa-isa din ang rekado ng maayos na pamumuhay ang sabi dito, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Sana ay makatulong sa iyong trabaho ang recipe na ito.

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FREE IRRIGATION SERVICE FEE (RA 10969)

RA 10969 OR FREE IRRIGATION SERVICE ACT (FISA) IS A LAW WHICH AIMS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOWERING THE COST OF PRODUCTION OF FARMERS. IT WAS SIGNED BY PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE LAST FEBRUARY 2, 2018 AND BECAME EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 24, 2018.

Exempted from their payment of Irrigation Service Fee (ISF) are farmers of National Irrigation Systems (NISs) with land holdings of 8 hectares and below. Their land need not be contiguous. In addition to being exempted from ISF payment, all their back accounts and corresponding penalties are also condoned and written off from the books of NIA.

Also, all loans of IAs to NIA including amortization payments of Irrigators Associations (IAs) of Communal Irrigation Systems (CISs), their past due accounts and corresponding interests and penalties are also condoned and written off from the books of NIA.

Farmers with more than 8 hectares of land; corporate farms and plantations which are drawing water for agricultural crop production; fishponds, and other persons natural or juridical, drawing water for non-agricultural purposes from NIS and CIS, or using the irrigation system as drainage facilities shall continue with their ISF obligations

TREATMENT OF PAST DUE ACCOUNTS FILED IN COURTS BEFORE FEBRUARY 24, 2018

Past due accounts, including the interests and penalties from exempted farmers which were already filed in courts by NIA before the effectivity of FISA are considered condoned, or cancelled and written off from the books of NIA. Pending cases of collection involving non-exempt farmers and other water users shall be continuously pursued by the Agency.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O & M) OF IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

1. NIS

NIA shall continue to develop, operate and maintain NIS but may delegate O & M of secondary and tertiary canals and

farm ditches to capable Irrigators Association/s (IAs) or Irrigation Service Cooperative/s (ISCs) based on the Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) program of the Agency.

Under the IMT Program, IAs/ISCs will be given subsidy as may be applicable:

- a. Operations subsidy – P150/hectare per season based on the validated irrigated and planted area
- b. Maintenance Subsidy - P1,750/ canal section* per maintenance period (every 45 days or 6x in a year)

**1 canal section = 3.5 km for earth canal
= 7.0 kms for concrete-lined canals*

2. CIS

CISs shall continue to be operated and maintained by IAs. The national government shall provide the funds for CIS O & M.

The different IA/ISC O & M Committees will be mobilized to assist the IA/ISC in managing irrigation systems.

The IMT policy and guidelines in NIS shall also be adopted in CIS.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IAs/ISCs

The NIA and other government agencies or private institutions shall provide technical assistance to IAs/ISCs on the operation and maintenance of NISs and CISs as well as on-farm enterprise management. The interventions and assistance programs shall be designed based on the result of their annual functionality survey

Existing System Management Committees (SMCs) shall be strengthened or will be formed in all NISs and IMOs.

RATE OF ISF FOR NON-EXEMPT FARMERS / IRRIGATION USERS

TYPE OF SYSTEM - CROP	WET SEASON	DRY SEASON	THIRD CROPPING
1. Reservoir			
Rice	2.5 cav / ha	3.5 cav / ha	3.5 cav / ha
Other Crops	60% of the rate of rice		
Fish Pond	6 cav / ha		
2. Diversion System			
Rice	2.0 cav / ha	3.0 cav / ha	3.0 cav / ha
Other Crops	60% of the rate of rice		
Fish Pond	5 cav / ha		
3. Pump System			
Rice	2-10 cav / ha	2.75-12 cav / ha	2.75-12 cav / ha
Other Crops	60% of the rate of rice		
Fish Pond	15 cav / ha		
4. Stand-Alone Pump System			
Rice	60% of the prevailing rates for reservoir diversion and pump systems as the case maybe		
Other Crops			
Fish Pond			



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