



Hibla

A Quarterly Publication of the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority

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Bukidnon IP Communities engage in Abaca production

In support to the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Farming Family Food Security Model Project of the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) provided assistance to selected IP communities in the province of Bukidnon. Undersecretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat of the DA Office for Special Concerns spearheaded the project in partnership with PhilFIDA Region X and Heneleban Foundation Inc.

Eight (8) Indigenous People communities in the province of Bukidnon were lobbied by the Heneleban Foundation Inc. to the DA requesting for livelihood assistance in support to its main

goal of protecting and conserving the watersheds comprising Mt. Kitanglad, Mt. Kalatungan, Pantaron and Matig-Salug ranges. These mountains are watershed areas of various large rivers, namely, Pulangui, Cagayan, Tagoloan, and Davao which serve as sources of power and water supply for many residents and industries in the surrounding areas.

The PhilFIDA assisted 8 tribes belonging to these farmers' associations: Apo Agbibilin Community, Landang Tribal Organization, Saamulan Ne Ugpaan Te Langen Ne Etaw Dalan Te Keupyaanan Te Inged (SOLEDKI), Basak Tribal

Organization, Bukidnon Martial Arts Agro Development Endeavor, CDO-ATD Ancestral Domain, Pigyayugaan Lumad Organization and Daraghuyan Tribal Organization. These groups were introduced to engage in abaca production as source of eco-friendly livelihood. Abaca can help in the protection of watersheds. It is known to be an effective plant that can improve the water holding capacity of soil which can then prevent floods and landslides.

During the last quarter of 2015, the PhilFIDA X conducted 8 abaca production technology trainings harmonized with the

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PhilFIDA leads first public consultation on the guidelines in the Accreditation of Abaca Plant Nurseries



It was a first for the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) to hold a public consultation on the proposed Guidelines in the Accreditation of Abaca Plant Nurseries which was held on 10 November 2015 in Tagaytay City. With the creation of PhilFIDA through Executive Order No. 366, a strategic shift in its mandate was effected. Standards implementation and trade regulation are strengthened placing in new directives on the inspection and monitoring policies, rules and regulations including the

accreditation of seed growers and machine fabricators. Since the agency is tasked with this new function on accreditation, the PhilFIDA arranged the public consultation to seek inputs from industry experts in finalizing the accreditation guidelines. Plant nursery owners, fiber traders, representatives from the academe, LGUs, and officials from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) attended and participated in the critiquing of the guidelines presented by the PhilFIDA.

Mr. Romeo O. Bordeos, Chief of Regulatory Division, said that the BPI and PhilFIDA jointly crafted the guidelines in the accreditation of abaca plant nurseries, with the two agencies now sharing the same mandate on accreditation.

OIC-Executive Director Clarito M. Barron stressed that the agreed guidelines will be used to implement policies in the accreditation of abaca plant nurseries to ensure that high quality planting materials are produced and sold. The accreditation sought to regulate plant nurseries in the identification and production of a planting material that is true to type and not the spurious kind. "The planting material should be resistant to diseases and its quality, like porosity and tensile strength, should be compliant to what is required by the buyers and investors abroad," Barron added.

Except for minor revisions, the guidelines presented came out satisfactorily and was generally accepted by the participants.

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Front Picture: **Barong Tagalog** (60% Pineapple fibers and 40% Philippine Silk) — a product of the Handicraft of Aklan Multi-Purpose Cooperative (HAMPCO) of Kalibo City

First island-wide public consultation on the PNS for Abaca fiber held in Cebu City

The Regulatory Division of PhilFIDA, as part of the Technical Working Group, participated in the island-wide public consultation for the Visayas on the draft Philippine National Standard (PNS) for hand & spindle-stripped abaca fiber and decorticated abaca fiber which was held in Cebu City on 28 October 2015.

The activity was spearheaded by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS), the agency mandated to promote and implement the use of product standards in order to ensure

consumer safety and raise the competitiveness of agricultural commodities. Ms. Farlash D. Pancho, BAFS representative, presented the draft PNS for Abaca and facilitated the interaction.

In attendance were DA officials, fiber inspectors, LGU representatives and abaca stakeholders from Regions VI, VII and VIII. After undergoing critiquing by the Visayas group, two more public consultations on the PNS shall be done in Luzon and Mindanao, after which the agreed revisions shall be evaluated for consolidation by the Technical Working Group before the final PNS will be approved by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.

PhilFIDA employees take oath of office

Thirty seven (37) employees from the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) have taken their oath after their appointments and promotions were issued as prescribed under the Rationalization Plan of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

On 16 December 2015, a mass oath taking ceremony was held at the new function hall of the DA-PCAF Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City.

The oath taking was administered by DA Secretary Proceso J. Alcala wherein 32 newly promoted and 5 newly hired employees, with Salary Grades 9 to 24, were part of the ceremony.

"Ako ay natutuwa at ngayon ay na-promote na din ang karamihan sa PhilFIDA, matagal ninyo hinintay ito at isa itong magandang regalo sa inyong lahat ngayong Pasko," Alcala said during the event.

Secretary Alcala reminded the appointed and promoted officials to always uphold the agency's vision, mission and mandate. "Marami tayong dapat gawin, ako muli ay babalik sa inyong opsina at uupo kasama ninyo upang pagusapan natin ang mga importante nating dapat gawin para mapabuti pa ang industriya hindi lamang ng abaca, ngunit pati ng pinya, buri at iba pang fibers," Alcala added.

The much awaited oath taking was held to coincide with the blessing of the new PhilFIDA Central Office and vehicles and with the agency's Christmas Party.

Aside from the abovementioned 37 employees, 62 other employees will also take their oath and assume their designated positions in their respective regions before the end of 2015.

As of the event, a total of **99** personnel were appointed and promoted with 30 employees coming from PhilFIDA Central Office, 3 from the Satellite Office in Region I, 5 from Region IV Office, 14 from Region V, 5 from the Satellite Office in Region VI, 5 from Region VII, 14 from Region VIII, 5 from Region IX, 6 from Region X, 5 from Region XI and 7 from Caraga.

Another batch of appointment and promotion of employees in the central and regional offices is expected in 2016. 🇵🇭



R-L: DA Secretary Proceso Alcala leading the oath taking ceremony and PhilFIDA OIC-Executive Director Clarito Barron giving his Christmas message during the event



PhilFIDA X conducts livelihood skills trainings on abaca “tinagak” making and abaca loom weaving



In collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry of Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, the training on “tinagak” making was successfully conducted to fifteen (15) participants from Barangay Mampayag, Manolo Fortich.

The binding of abaca fibers is mainly the essential part of abaca handicraft making. Without the knotted fiber, converters will not be able to execute beautiful works of art or ideas they envision to make. Knotting fibers into “tinagak” is the first step in creating intricate abaca handicrafts.

To produce a quality roll of knotted fiber, participants were introduced to the step by step process followed by a hands on training on the knotting of fibers. The trainees were exposed to learn the techniques and details of the simple yet tedious task of producing the abaca “tinagak” which posts high demand now in the market.

On the second day of the

event, the women of Manolo Fortich were then trained on Abaca loom weaving. For the second training, Manang Jena, a native of Manalog, Bukidnon and an expert on weaving, was tapped to be the trainer. She encouraged the participants to work hard together and help develop the abaca loom weaving industry in their barangay. She even challenged the group to make Mampayag the souvenir capital of Manolo Fortich.

The participants were trained to do the craft of dividing the thread according to the desired width, dyeing of the knotted fiber, spooling, and setting up of threads in the loom for weaving. Everybody had their hands on experience from the installation of the loom, to the preparation of the thread up to the last stage of weaving. The work entailed having steady hands, keen eyes, long stretch of patience and a wide array of ideas and patterns to create impressive designs. 🌿

PhilFIDA team visits TCL in Region VII

PhilFIDA does its share in a tripartite agreement with LGU-Valencia and Energy Development Corporation — Southern Negros Geothermal Project (EDC-SNGP) to help operationalize Tissue Culture Laboratories (TCL) in LGU-Valencia and Negros Oriental State University (NORSU) - Pamplona Campus on 10-13 November 2015.

Dr. Leny C. Galvez of the Research Division together with PhilFIDA VII personnel handed out some chemicals and antisera to the LGU-Valencia. Two (2) technical staff of LGU-Valencia were trained by the agency on enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) testing and tissue culture production techniques at the TCL in Abuyog, Leyte in June 2014. While in another development, the EDC-SNGP turned-over funds to the same LGU amounting to P500,000 for the acquisition of an ELISA Reader in September 2014.

During the team’s visit to the Negros Oriental State University (NORSU) - Pamplona Campus TCL, it was found that the 3-year old ELISA reader is not being used due to lack of personnel who has the technical know-how in the operation of the machine. Except for a few parts to be replaced, the reader came out to be still functional. This TCL caters to the needs of the banana sector

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PhilFIDA V Forges Partnership with CSPPO

A Memorandum of Agreement for the monitoring of shipments of abaca fibers originating from Camarines Sur was signed by PhilFIDA V OIC-Director Mary Anne R. Molina and Philippine National Police (PNP) – Camarines Sur OIC-Provincial Director

PSupt. Walfredo G. Pornillos on 5 November 2015. This partnership stemmed from reports that several shipments of abaca fibers remain unrecorded and shippers do not secure the necessary permit to transport due to lack of PhilFIDA personnel to man the many exit points in the province. This led to the understatement of production

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PhilFIDA X holds culminating program of Abaca FFS in Bukidnon

The Farmers' Field School (FFS) on Abaca production initiated by PhilFIDA X, which started in April 2015, ended last October 2015 through a culminating program in Maampayag, Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon. The activity was a team up with the Maampayag LGU which identified 34 Maampayag farmers as recipients of the project. Barangay Captain Mr. Joseto Antonio Gaid utilized his residence as the venue for the conduct of the course and provided financial support to the group's educational tour. Due to the length of the program and for family and livelihood reasons, only 30 farmers were able to complete the course.

The six-month training course aimed to increase productivity and income of farmers and incorporated production activities in aid of environmental protection. Like in other developing countries, the Philippines has adopted the science-based knowledge using Farmers Field School (FFS) for small farmers to learn new

farming system and develop decision making skills to build up their own farming approach that can contribute to the sustainability of the abaca industry. The training course involved participatory activities, hands on analysis and decision making. This training enabled the farmers to have greater control over the day to day conditions and challenges they encounter in their farms. The farmers learned how to make organic pesticide and fertilizer to restore and improve soil fertility, identify beneficial insects and pests and the different diseases

affecting the abaca plant and its proper management. The finale of the learning experience was an educational trip to the biggest pulp processing plant in the country, the Newtech Pulp Incorporated at Balo-i, Lanao del Norte. The participants were oriented about the operation in the pulp mill, the current demand of the global market and future expansion plans of the plant. With their exposure to a major industry player, the farmers got assurance that there is a growing market for abaca fibers and abaca production is a viable source of livelihood. 🌱

PhilFIDA V and CASI collaborate towards enhancement of abaca production

The PhilFIDA Regional Office V together with Catanduanes Abaca Sustainability Initiative (CASI) conducted a *Training on Enhancement of Abaca Production* on 27-30 October 2015. The 4-day training was held in Gigmoto, Viga, Bato and San Miguel with 202 participants mainly abaca producers who are members of CASI. This undertaking sought to address the problem on the declining abaca production in Catanduanes primarily due to improper harvesting, post-harvest practices and the occurrence of abaca diseases.

A lecture on *Farm Practices Toward Fiber Quality Improvement* was delivered by Mr. Marlon F. Rebancos, Head of the Technical Assistance Unit, wherein he gave tips on how to attain highest fiber yield and best quality in fiber through proper timing of harvesting and tuxying, proper stripping using conventional and mechanical methods as well as proper drying, bundling and storage of abaca fibers.

Another lecture on



Increasing Fiber Production thru Pest and Disease Management was provided by Mr. Abmer O. Patricio, Fiber Development Officer I, which highlighted the wrong practices causing spread of diseases, integrated control of the abaca bunchy top disease and community participation in abating the diseases.

Raised during the open forum were issues on disease eradication and the need for planting materials for replanting. This led to an agreement on doing replanting thru resource sharing among the farmers, PhilFIDA and CASI. The output of the training aimed to attain reduced abaca disease incidence in the certified farms under the CASI.

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indigenous culture of all the tribes, involving 349 members of the identified 8 IP communities. The Regional Office was also able to establish 4 abaca nurseries with techno-demo farms for 4 tribes wherein the Landang Tribal Organization, SOLEDKI, Basak Tribal Organization and Apo Agbibilin Community belong.

These abaca nurseries cum techno-demo farms will serve as learning field on abaca production technologies for these communities. The nurseries will be jointly maintained by the 4 associations through the "Hunlus" or bayanihan system.

The nurseries are expected to produce 800 suckers every quarter or 3,200 abaca planting materials annually. Every recipient will give back the number of planting materials received after two (2) years for distribution to other farmers who are also interested in the production of abaca. Sustaining the system of distribution and maintaining the demo farm will ensure continued income for the tribesmen and will capably sustain the abaca fiber production in their area.

Through private partnership

Regulatory Division conducts refresher and re-orientation course for fiber inspectors

The PhilFIDA through its Regulatory Division organized a refresher and re-orientation course for all fiber inspectors nationwide in Sto. Domingo, Albay, with the theme, *Fiber Inspectors – the Key to Sustained Global Competitiveness of Philippine Natural Fibers*. The training aimed to transform the participants into all-around inspectors knowledgeable on the classification and grading of all Philippine fibers based on established standards.



with OKM Trading and Yahsua Fiber Products, the project has distributed 4 units of decorticating machines to these companies commissioned to acquire the harvested abaca of the IP communities. The machines will provide efficiency in fiber extraction, double the fiber recovery and increase the income of the IPs from abaca farming.



Director Clarito M. Barron, OIC Executive Director, underscored in his message the purpose of the training. "This training will also update the regulatory personnel with the accreditation policies and these policies will serve as the bible of all abaca farmers who are interested to establish abaca nurseries and laboratories," Barron said.

According to Director Barron, "there are two things that the agency should work on-- the sustainability of the abaca disease management program that will end in 2016, and the rehabilitation and upgrading of Tissue Culture

Laboratories all over the country."

As stated by Mr. Romeo Jr. O. Bordeos, Chief of the Regulatory Division, the course targets to remind the fiber inspectors that the global competitiveness and continued patronage to the Philippine natural fibers depend on the accuracy of classification and grading of fibers produced. "The PhilFIDA is continuously exerting efforts to accelerate the growth and development of the fiber Industry. Programs are not only geared towards increasing the volume of supply but also focused on maintaining the quality standard of all fiber commodities. The activity is

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PhilFIDA Holds 2015 Sericulture Stakeholders' Meeting

The Philippine Fiber Industry Development (PhilFIDA) initiated the holding of the Sericulture Stakeholders' Meeting on 14 October 2015 at Hotel Supreme, Baguio City. The meeting aimed to assess the current situation of cocoon production and the prospects of pushing through with the development of silk production in the Philippines.

Representatives from the local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), national government agencies in the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR), academe, silk processors/buyers, cooperatives/associations of cocoon producers and officials and staff of PhilFIDA convened for the event.

In his message, Executive Director Clarito M. Barron emphasized the need to develop the silk production in order to meet the demands of the industry.

"With the present situation of the sericulture industry, there is a need to do a lot of work from increasing cocoon production to raw silk production," Barron said. He challenged everyone to work together and face all existing challenges in the industry to boost the development of sericulture in the Philippines.

Participants from the national agencies, the academe and one of the NGOs involved in sericulture activities in the Philippines presented their specific roles in uplifting the industry. Stakeholders particularly farmers, buyers, processors and even LGUs discussed prevailing industry problems and suggested possible interventions and strategies to address the issues. They plan to focus mainly on the construction of additional rearing houses, provision of rearing inputs, commercial production of silkworm eggs, cocoon market cum warehouse establishment and the operationalization of the PhilFIDA Silk Processing Center in Wangal, Benguet.

The joint efforts and commitments of the PhilFIDA,



The participants to the 2015 Sericulture Stakeholders' Meeting held at Hotel Supreme, Baguio City

government agencies in CAR, the academe and LGUs together with the private sector are expected to improve the development of the sericulture industry in the region. The PhilFIDA is looking forward to help the industry propagate cocoon production in CAR and eventually to other areas in the country. The industry players agreed to initially solve the gap in the local supply of silk.

A visit to the Provincial Sericulture Center at the PhilFIDA Regional Satellite Office in Wangal, La Trinidad, Benguet was also held after the meeting. The group were

able to observe silkworm rearing, cocoon production and raw silk processing. This facility will become the demonstration/training center for silk production and will serve as an incubation area for silkworms intended for private business ventures that will spearhead the development of sericulture industry in Northern Luzon. The PhilFIDA will continue to provide technical support to the sericulture farmers through the center as part of its contribution to the local economic development of CAR.



Young-age silkworm rearing in the Egg Production and Multiplication Center in PhilFIDA Regional Satellite Office I in Wangal, Benguet



Left & above: Cocoon reeling machine in PhilFIDA's processing center in Benguet

specifically the "Lakatan" variety. Mr. Alan Faburada, the Farm Manager of NORSU, stated that the University continues to support the promotion and development of the abaca industry in Negros Oriental.

Meanwhile, as part of reinforcing its collaboration efforts with other agencies/sectors of the industry, PhilFIDA VII has lined up the following plans: Tap existing TCLs for the production of disease free planting materials especially the "Laob" variety; Rehabilitate ADMP treated areas in Valencia and in some parts of Cebu and Bohol; Expand/open new areas especially for the "Abakahuyan" project in Southern Negros Oriental and potential areas in the newly-created Negros Island Region (NIR); and Collaborate with DA-Regional Field Office 7, DTI, DOST, DOLE and the LGUs thru the Provincial and Municipal governments of Negros Oriental and the Regional and Provincial Agriculture and Fisheries Councils and the private stakeholders.

PhilFIDA V forges...from page 4

data from fiber-producing provinces since the record is sourced from the Permits to Transport Fibers (PTF).

The support to include the abaca shipments in their province-wide check points as assistance to PhilFIDA was initially pledged by the Camarines Sur Police Provincial Office (CSPPO) thru PSupt. Amado B. Montaña in the Provincial Abaca Stakeholders Forum held on 23 June 2015 in Goa, Camarines Sur.

The joint efforts of PhilFIDA and PNP in fiber monitoring will help intensify PhilFIDA's campaign for "No PTF, No Shipment" policy and thus, produce true record of production in Camarines Sur, which is noted for producing excellent grades of abaca in the Bicol region.

Tagaytay farmers train on pineapple fiber production

Series of trainings were conducted in response to the request of Senator Loren Legarda to extend the PhilFIDA fiber processing technologies to the people of Barangay Neogan, Tagaytay City.

A three-day hands-on training on the operation, maintenance and safe-use of the FIDA-designed Multi-Fiber Decortication Machine was conducted by the Fiber Utilization and Technology Division (FUTD) of the PhilFIDA for the pineapple farmers of Barangay Neogan. During the training the farmers participated on the actual proper harvesting of matured pineapple leaves and the extraction of its fibers through decortication.

PhilFIDA V and CASI...from page 5



Mr. Marlon Rebanco delivering his lecture on Farm Practices Toward Fiber Quality Improvement

The CASI project is being implemented by a private organization consisting of abaca farmers, sub-traders and traders in Catanduanes organized by GLATFELTER, a global supplier of specialty papers and engineered products with abaca fiber as raw material. The CASI seeks to work towards the promotion of sustainable abaca farming in the province primarily through administrating and financing the acquisition of certification of abaca farms with the Rainforest Alliance (a global certifying body on sustainable agriculture). To date, CASI has a total of 961 hectares of certified abaca farms and a total of 245 members from abaca-producing barangays of Viga, Bato and Gigmoto.

A training for 14 women members of Kababaihan, Kabataan Kabalikat ng Tagaytay (KKKT) was conducted as the second part of the training. The pineapple fibers used by the KKKT were the extracted fibers from the previous training. The women learned the techniques of scrunch making, bleaching and dyeing of fibers and handmade papermaking to create various native handicrafts.

The processing of fibers using a handloom weaving device will be the third part of the training. The PhilFIDA Region IV and the FUTD will undertake this training on the first quarter of 2016.

Regulatory Division...from page 6



PhilFIDA OIC-Executive Director Clarito Barron giving directives to the fiber inspectors during the training



Fiber inspectors during the hands-on training on fiber classification and grading

consistent with the mission to strengthen the organizational and human resource capability of the agency in leading the Philippine fiber industry. This goal should be vigorously pursued in order to keep the country's commercial reputation as a responsible and reliable source of best quality fibers," Bordeos added.

The fiber inspectors, who are at the forefront in the implementation/enforcement of the regulatory policies and regulations, play a major role in producing the best quality fibers required by the end-users and in ensuring the continued trading of Philippine fibers globally.