Partners’ Assembly highlights key accomplishments of WIBI Mindanao Project

All responsible partner agencies of WIBI Mindanao Project presented their accomplishments in an assembly organized by PCIC and UNDP (Page 1)

Crop insurance, an essential attribute to attract investments on climate finance

Weather index-based insurance for crop introduced during the consultation meeting with LGUs in Mindanao for the GCF Readiness Program (Page 2)

Exploratory meeting with the Frankfurt School of Management (FSM)

Two consultants of FSM carried out an assessment for the financial sector in PH including climate finance and risk transfer mechanisms such as WIBI (Page 2)

ATI reaches almost 500 farmer grads of Climate-Smart Enhanced Farmers’ Field School (CS-EnFFS)

ATI in collaboration with local government units was able to generate about 500 farmer graduates of CS-EnFFS (Page 3)

PMO participates in Project Quality Assurance Workshop

WIBI-PMO completed the UNDP Quality Assurance Workshop for the year 2016 (Page 4)

Project Board approves $300k for 2017 annual workplace

2017 Annual Work and Financial Plan of WIBI Mindanao Project approved by the members of the Board (Page 4)

WIBI participates in CCC week, PM delivers TED Talk

WIBI Mindanao Project Manager shared his experiences in overcoming the challenges of implementing a development project and inspiring reasons to carry on (Page 4)

Partners’ assembly highlights key accomplishments of WIBI Mindanao Project

Over 40 representatives from various project partner agencies have gathered on December 8, 2016 in an assembly to collectively share the current milestones of WIBI Mindanao Project in two years of implementation. The one-day event was organized by the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Mr. Yusuke Taishi, the Regional Technical Adviser of the Project who is currently based in the UNDP Regional Hub in Bangkok shared his fundamental question during the design or development stage of the project. “What enabling conditions are needed for WIBI to be upscaled at the national level or for WIBI to be sustainably adopted by the PCIC?”, said Mr. Taishi during his reaction after hearing all the reports. He affirmed that linking WIBI provision with the Agricultural Guarantee Fund Pool (AGFP) provides additional incentives for financial service providers (FSPs) to extend the distribution of the product.

“You have exceeded my expectations.”, he added. The House Bill 3560, the act mandating PCIC to offer index-based insurance coverage and allowing the corporation to engage in reinsurance will change the insurance landscape of the country. The policy will set the stage for other players of WIBI. “We are on our way to achieving almost all targets that we’ve envisioned in the project document. But from the standpoint of WIBI roll-out, we still have a long way to go. This project can contribute a piece of that long road in terms of the national roll-out.”, ...

(See page 2)
Crop insurance, an essential attribute to attract investments on climate finance

Representatives from local government units (LGUs), private sector, development organizations and national government participated in a consultation meeting and workshop on November 29, 2016 organized by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to outline the potential strategic investment roadmap for a low carbon and climate-resilient development pathway for Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) in support of its local Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program.

Through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness Program for the Philippines in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the activity aimed to generate outputs such as identified and prioritized investment interventions to attract climate financing and to determine the potential contributions to climate-smart PPP partnership. One of the interest area of discussion was on innovative insurance products and risk management solutions to address climate threats.

With the existing project co-implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), the significant milestones accomplished by the “Weather Index-Based Insurance (WIBI) Mindanao Project” were disseminated to the participants. Several members of the LGUs expressed their interest to be part of the project emphasizing the importance of providing the farmers the financial support during calamities. If farmers are enrolled in a crop insurance program, lending institutions will have strengthened confidence and trust on the farmers that they will be able to repay their loans and replant within the cropping cycle because of the payouts. Moreover, banks that will offer WIBI may avail a reduced rates from 2% to 0.45% (regular WIBI-insured) and 0.25% (WIBI-insured agrarian reform beneficiary) guarantee fee per annum.

During the presentation of the proposed investment interventions for the climate-smart development of Mindanao, some LGUs included agricultural crop insurance in their plans due to their improved knowledge on the existence of such available risk transfer mechanisms in the Philippines.

Exploratory meeting with Frankfurt School of Management (FSM)-UNEP Collaborating Centre for Climate and Sustainable Energy Finance

The WIBI PMO participated in an exploratory meeting with representatives from Frankfurt School of Management (FSM)-UNEP Collaborating Centre for Climate & Sustainable Energy Finance on December 14, 2017 at the UNDP Philippines Country Office in Makati City.

Ms. Lisa Becker and Ms. Corazon Conde, both consultants of FSM were conducting their mission in the Philippines to carry out a needs assessment of the financial sector. They identified various associations in the agri-sector, national commission of SMEs and government institutions related to climate change. With a strong partnership with the government through the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), the WIBI Mindanao Project was chosen as one of the respondents. The information shared by the PMO will be included in the general assessment and mission report to be submitted to FSM.
Ms. Rosalina de Guzman, the Chief of Climate Data Section of PAGASA demonstrated the sophisticated system developed by the agency called PUMIS - the PAGASA Unified Meteorological Information System which gives a real-time weather data. With smooth access to rainfall data, this system together with the PCIC Automated Business System (PABS) will provide a more efficient monitoring, processing and release of payouts to the farmers. Ms. de Guzman also shared the initial results of the correlation study carried out by her team on the four high value crops (i.e. banana, sugarcane, coconut and cacao) with the selected weather parameters in major crop growing areas. The findings of this study will help determine the feasibility of developing WIBI products for the said crops.

Other presenters were the following: i) Ms. Diane Carmeliza Cuevas of University of the Philippines in Los Banos, an actuarial specialist assigned to compute for the premium pricing of WIBI; ii) Mr. Norman Kraft of Agricultural Credit Policy Council to report the initial results of the impact assessment studies; iii) Mr. Bonifacio Pales and Mr. Roy Arthur Alamban, project regional focal persons from PCIC to share the implementation updates in the field; iv) Dr. Jacob Tio of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to report the accomplishments on Capacity Building on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) for WIBI Mindanao Project Partners, Local Barangay Officials and; v) Engr. Renato de la Cruz of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) to share the effective practices on Rice Crop Manager & Climate Smart Enhanced Farmers’ Field School.

The event was concluded by a message of appreciation from the Project Manager, Mr. Israel de la Cruz. He emphasized the importance of establishing trust and collaboration with partners especially in a development project like WIBI where each specialized partner agency has specific role in achieving the project outcomes.

As of December 2016, ATI was able to generate 498 farmer graduates from the two regions. Several graduation ceremonies in Davao City, Tagum City in Davao del Norte and Malaybalay and Valencia Cities in Bukidnon were held and participated by farmers, representatives from the head offices of ATI, PCIC and PMO as well as the local chief executives and farmer leaders.

ATI is the mandated agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA) that leads the provision of e-Extension services in collaboration with various agencies, bureaus and organizational units of the Department to integrate ICT-based extension delivery system for agriculture and fisheries (A&F). It is the Institute’s mission to empower and build capacities of A&F stakeholders for sustainable development.
WIBI-PMO participates in UNDP-PH Project Quality Assurance Workshop

As part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Strategic Plan, the Country Office in the Philippines aims to ensure that improved development effectiveness, greater accountability for results and uniform corporate processes and programming quality standards were rolled-out across projects.

Under the Inclusive and Sustainable Development (ISD) Unit, the WIBI Mindanao Project with the PCIC as its implementing partner participated in a Quality Assurance (QA) Workshop on November 7 to 8, 2016 in Tagaytay City to assure the PMO’s adherence to UNDP quality standards. Specifically, the workshop aimed to provide an orientation on UNDP Corporate Quality Assurance tools for projects and its importance for better programming quality and to assess the quality of ongoing ISD projects through a systematic review of project implementation vis-a-vis UNDP uniform quality standards.

The PMO, in the context of the WIBI Mindanao Project answered the QA rating tools under the Implementation Stage applying the following criteria: strategic, relevant, social and environmental standards, management and monitoring, efficient, effective and sustainability and national ownership. Participants were also required to provide appropriate management responses to items with low or unsatisfactory rating. The outputs of this workshop were entered to the UNDP Corporate System for QA for the year 2016.

Project Board approves US$300K for the 2017 annual work plan

Four (4) members of the WIBI Mindanao Project Board discussed and approved the 2017 Annual Work and Financial Plan for the project during the 5th Board Meeting on December 9, 2017 in Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The total budget permitted by the members was USD 300,000.00.

UNDP Country Director Mr. Titon Mitra enquired about the huge potential of the project for upscaling especially now that the initial correlation studies were completed by PAGASA. This will be the basis for the weather parameters to be explored in conceptualizing the Phase 2 of the project. While there are no final decision inked yet, the PCIC through the leadership of its President Atty. Jovy C. Bernabe assured UNDP that PCIC is open and welcoming to this type of innovation. Atty. Bernabe also emphasized that this shall be simultaneously discussed with the PCIC Board.

The Project Management Office (PMO) also discussed the upcoming national stakeholders’ forum scheduled on March 2017. The event will be conducted in Davao City where the project was launch in 2015. Legislators both from the House of Representatives and Senate of the Philippines were invited to participate in the event and join the policy discussion. As way forward, Mr. Mitra emphasized that the project was able to establish strong foundation and demonstrated its capacity for expansion. He suggested that if PCIC has to decide to extend the project beyond the current scope, one option to consider is the combination of different funding sources including that of the government. This will also establish the strong ownership of the Philippine government on this innovative crop insurance program.

WIBI participates in CCC week, PM delivers TED Talk

In his piece, he vividly describe the situation of the rain-fed farmers in Mindanao where he met two widow and senior ladies who benefitted from the project. “I have soft spots for old people, maybe perhaps I treat them like my own grandparents. The story of Lily Francisco and her best friend Lola Norma touches my heart like no one does for a long time.”, shared by Mr. de la Cruz.

“These farmers rent a small piece of land to be able to plant rice, not to earn money but to have something to eat after three months... they were advised by DA not to plant that season (November) because it’s El Nino but they did otherwise for they will have nothing to serve on their table come summertime.”, he added. As the Project Manager, he knew that the project is making a difference. “Maybe it will not change the world, but it can change the world on the likes of Nanay Lily and Nanay Norma. It’s my first time I can say, I am doing something good.”, he explained. This powerful talk inspired others to follow their hearts especially when it comes to their career. For Mr. de la Cruz, the WIBI Mindanao Project became an instrument for him to finally realize his true calling.