



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Agriculture  
*OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY*  
Elliptical Road, Diliman  
Quezon City 1100, Philippines

19 September 2019

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO : DIRECTOR ALFREDO S. ATON**  
Agricultural Training Institute

**FROM : THE DIRECTOR FOR FIELD OPERATIONS SERVICE AND**  
**CHAIRPERSON, RCEF NATIONAL PROGRAM COORDINATION TEAM**

**SUBJECT : SIGNED IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES OF THE EXTENSION SERVICES**  
**PROGRAM UNDER THE RICE COMPETITIVENESS ENHANCEMENT**  
**FUND (RCEF)**

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This is to officially endorse to your Office for publication and dissemination to concerned DA Agencies/Offices, the signed Implementing Guidelines of the Extension Services Program under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Roy M. Abaya", written in a cursive style.

**ENGR. ROY M. ABAYA**

## **Implementing Guidelines for the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund-Extension Services Program**

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### **I. Legal Bases**

Republic Act 11203 has created the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) or Rice Fund to improve rice farmers' competitiveness and income amidst liberalization of the Philippine rice trade policy that lifted quantitative restrictions on rice imports and replaced it with tariffs, among others.

The Rice Fund has four key components: 1) rice farm machinery and equipment; 2) rice seed development, propagation, and promotion; 3) expanded rice credit assistance; and 4) rice extension services, which shall be implemented in an integrated manner.

Details of the rice extension services is in Section 13.d of RA 11203, where it states that *"ten percent (10%) of the rice fund shall be made available for the extension services provided by PHilMech, PhilRice, Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for teaching skills on rice crop production, modern rice farming techniques, seed production, farm mechanization, and knowledge/technology transfer through farm schools nationwide as follows: seventy percent (70%) to TESDA, and ten percent (10%) each to ATI, PhilRice, and PHilMech"*.

In the law's Implementing Rules and Regulations, Rule 13.21 specifies that a Technical Working Group (TWG) led by ATI, with members from PHilMech, PhilRice, TESDA, and the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), shall be established to formulate a Rice Extension Services Program and its corresponding implementing guidelines (IG) in close coordination with DA-RFOs. The IG shall be reviewed and approved by the Rice Fund Program Steering Committee.

Further, Rule 13.22 and 13.23 explicate that ATI, PhilRice, PHilMech, and TESDA shall formulate their respective extension services plans based on the approved IG and implement these in coordination with relevant DA agencies, National Irrigation Administration (NIA), local government units (LGUs), and other government agencies.

Under Rule 13.23, it is specified that ATI shall conduct benchmarking of and capacity building activities for agricultural extension workers (AEWs) and farmer-beneficiaries; develop an extension tool kit and training modules; implement information, education, and communication (IEC) activities; establish and enhance rice-based learning sites; conduct monitoring and evaluation of the Extension Program; and establish a program management office (PMO), if necessary, to spearhead planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of (extension) programs under the Rice Fund.

Lastly, based on Rule 13.24, TESDA shall recognize/accredit training modules developed under the Extension Program for its trainees to be eligible for TESDA scholarship.

Two other laws, RA 8435 or the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) and RA 10601 or the Agricultural and Fisheries Mechanization Law (AFMech), also guided the crafting of this Extension Program IG. It is RA 8435 that strengthened the role of ATI as the DA's extension and training arm, and overall manager of agriculture and fisheries training and extension in the country.

## II. Purpose

Together with existing programs for rice and rice farmers of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and other agencies, the Rice Fund is expected to greatly contribute to the vision of a rice-secure Philippines (Fig. 1) and, ultimately, to the attainment of Ambisyon Natin 2040 — the long-term shared life goal of Filipinos of a *Matatag, Maginhawa, at Panatag na Buhay*.

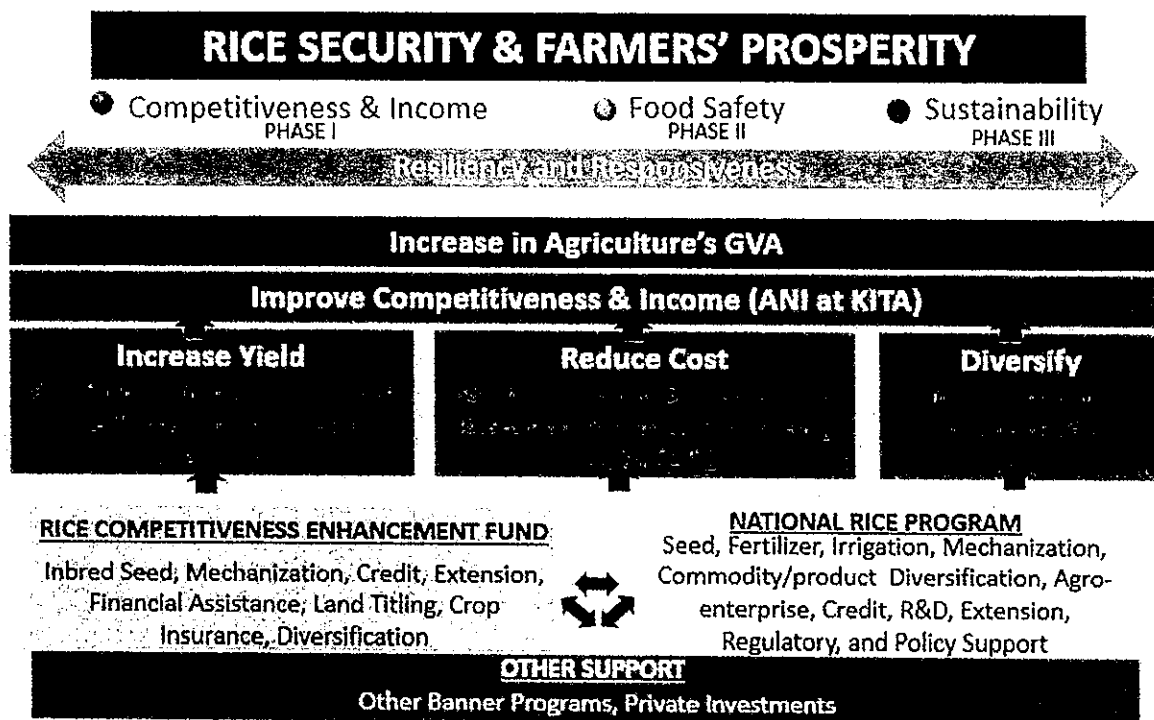


Figure 1. Alignment of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund components to the National Rice Program and the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap (PRIR)

For a rice-secure Philippines, safe and nutritious rice must be available, accessible, and affordable at all times. To this end, the PRIR targets to increase average yield in high-yielding provinces to 6t/ha, and to 5t/ha in medium-yielding provinces by 2024. It also targets to decrease production cost by 30 percent, reduce postharvest losses to 12 percent, and trim down marketing cost by P1/kg. As a result, it seeks to increase rice farming income by 50%.

Strategic extension services are crucial in bringing about these improvements. Thus, the general objective of the RCEF-Extension Program is to enhance through strategic

extension services the capability of Rice Fund beneficiaries in modern rice and seed production and other relevant skills for improved competitiveness and income. Specifically, the Program shall aim to:

1. Improve knowledge, attitudes, and skills of Rice Fund beneficiaries in producing more rice at reduced production cost through training programs, enterprise development assistance, and communication support services;
2. Increase access to modern, science-based farming techniques and other relevant skills by developing farm schools and strengthening their capacities on rice knowledge/technology transfer; and
3. Enable availment of training programs under the Rice Fund through a scholarship scheme.

### **III. Development Framework**

The Extension Program shall anchor its interventions on the Filipino's *Bayanihan* spirit that encourages communal unity and cooperation, and shall complement this with features from South Korea's *Saemaul Undong* Movement that promote the "can-do" or competitive spirit. In other words, extension services shall not merely focus on rice production technologies, but also strongly promote group/united efforts and best performance, whenever practicable.

To facilitate this, a performance-based competition as a community/team (e.g., cooperative, province, municipality, association) shall be promoted and implemented in collaboration with the Machines, Seeds, and Credits Programs of the Rice Fund and with the National Rice Program.

From the *basic help* given to the Rice Fund beneficiaries, they should be able to help themselves (*self-help*) produce higher yield at a lower cost or, better yet, as next step, help each other as a cooperative, municipality, or province (*community-help*) to be more competitive and have higher income through rice/agri-based enterprises; and finally, help our country (*nation-help*) have enough rice. Based on some set guidelines, successful communities shall be incentivized or nominated to relevant award-giving bodies (e.g., Rice Achievers Award, TOFARM, Seed Innovator). The framework veers away from dole-out mentality among farmers (Figure 2).

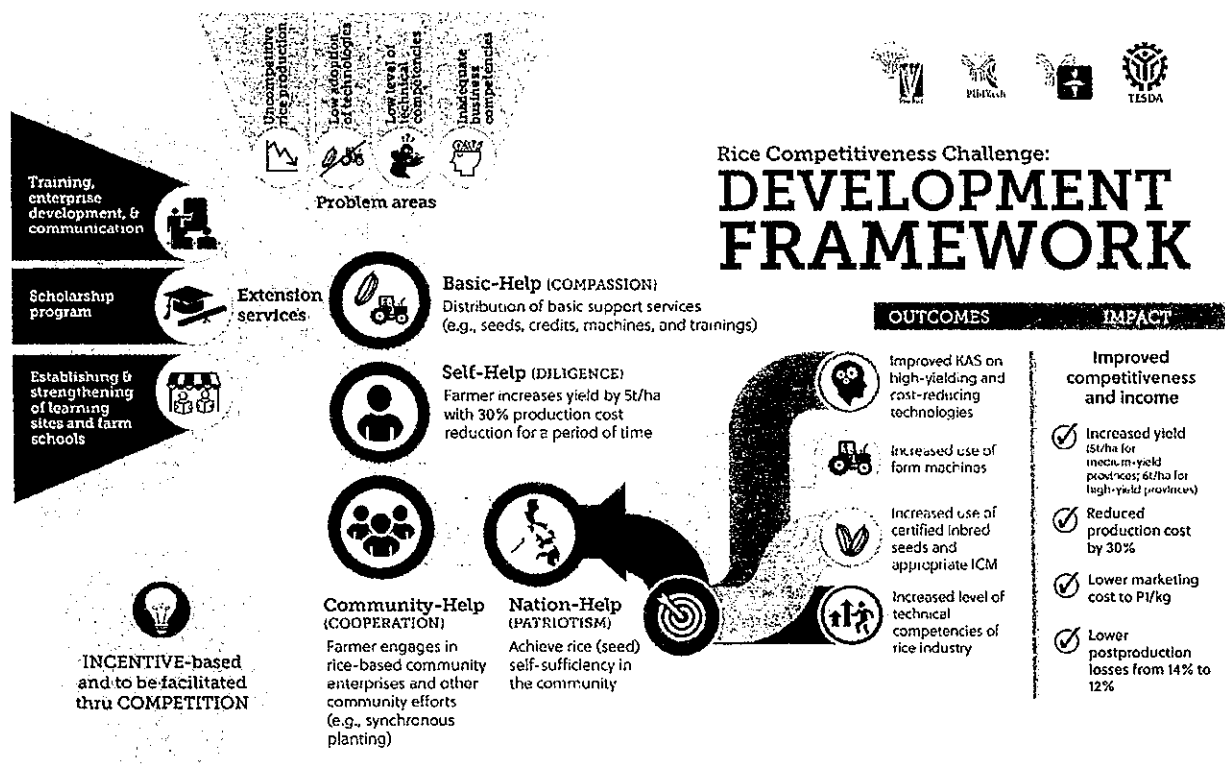


Figure 2. Rice Extension Services Development Framework

## IV. Scope, Duration, and Beneficiaries

### A. Scope

The Extension Program shall cover the targetted rice-growing municipalities and provinces approved by the Rice Fund's PSC. The allocation of training slots for farmers and extension intermediaries in these provinces shall be proportionate to their area planted, or as deemed necessary based on a set of criteria, such as but not limited to, level of adoption of certified inbred seeds and farm machines, yield level, production cost, number of farm schools, as well as current number of AEWs.

### B. Duration

The Extension Program projects and activities shall commence immediately after approval of this IG by the PSC, subject to availability of funds. Some preparatory and training activities by each agency may begin sooner to ensure the availability of support soon as the machines and seeds programs begin. The Program is set to end after six years, but may be continued, amended, or terminated depending on the results of the review by the Congressional Oversight Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization (COAFM) on the third and sixth year.

### **C. Beneficiaries**

The primary beneficiaries of the Extension Program include the rice farmers<sup>1</sup> and farmer-cooperatives and associations<sup>2</sup> in the target provinces. To be able to reach them, the following secondary beneficiaries shall be tapped, capacitated, and mobilized: AEWs of LGUs, rice and machine specialists and trainers, potential seed growers, seed inspectors/analysts, owners and potential owners of farm schools with rice components, farmer-leaders, local farmer technicians, farm service center engineers and operators, and other extension intermediaries.

### **V. Strategies**

The implementation of Extension Program shall pursue the following strategies:

- 1. Integration with other components of the Rice Fund and the National Rice Program to optimize use of resources and impact.** This is to optimize the use of resources and impact.
- 2. Focus on key messages for consistency and scientific principles to promote technology utilization.** Given that the rice production and farm mechanization technologies to be disseminated are knowledge-intensive, key messages shall be identified by concerned agencies to provide focus and consistency especially when there is time limitation or the need to fast track dissemination. In addition, the emphasis shall be on scientific principles (*i.e.*, the “why”) behind the technology recommendations to support and promote technology adaptation/localization.
- 3. Inclusion of salient information about AmBisyon 2040, PRIR, and RA11203/RCEF to provide context and promote harmonization.** Training participants and recipients of communication services shall not only learn about production technologies but also see their link to the other components of the program, to higher programs and, most importantly, to the long-term vision of the country. This was one of the documented factors that made Masagana 99 a success.
- 4. Complementation of agencies’ extension platforms.** While each agency may have developed its own extension services platforms through the years, efforts on how these can complement shall be pursued. The most strategic, empowering, and sustainable mix of extension delivery platforms shall be tested and prioritized.

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1 Based on the DA-validated Registry System for Basic Sector in Agriculture (RSBSA)

2 Must be accredited by the DA, Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)

5. **Setting up of directories and databases of rice and machine experts, trainers, learning sites/farm schools, and assessors per province to expand/fast track reach, including course offerings and other extension support services.** To ensure continuity and responsiveness, the ATI together with PhilRice, PHilMech, and TESDA shall maintain and regularly update their databases and directories of experts, trainers, course offerings, learning sites/farm schools, and other extension services.
6. **Outsourcing of information, education, and communication (IEC) for inclusion of new/fresh ideas.** A public relations (PR) company may be tapped to provide fresh and advanced, but appropriate IEC approaches, to strengthen interest and impact on the ground.
7. **Implementation of performance-based incentives or linkage to existing awards.** This shall be carried to motivate farmers and farmer organizations to apply skills learned and achieve the targeted outcomes.

## VI. Components and Implementation Scheme

### **Component 1: Design and delivery of training programs, enterprise development assistance, and communication support services**

#### **A. Training Programs**

The agencies under this component shall design and deliver training programs for : A.1) rice and machine specialists; A.2) trainers; and A.3) farmers, seed growers, and other beneficiaries to improve their knowledge, attitude, and skills primarily on inbred rice and seed production, mechanization, and other relevant skills. These training programs shall be complemented with trainings for those in the seed industry, such as seed growers, inspectors, and analysts (discussed in A.3.3 and A.3.4)

Below is the initial list of training programs with brief description:

#### A.1. Specialists' Training Programs.

*A.1.1. Rice Specialists' Training Course (RSTC)* – To be led by PhilRice, the RSTC is designed to develop the technical competence of the trainees on rice and rice-based production technologies, specifically in diagnosing and managing field problems based on the concepts and principles of the PalayCheck and Palayamanan Systems. As a modified season-long course, the trainees shall complete three modules for a total of 90 days. The first two batches of training, with a maximum of 30 participants, shall be mainly for the rice focal persons of ATI and DA-RFOs. Others who will be developed as rice specialists shall come from TESDA, the provincial and municipal agricultural offices, and other project implementers including PhilRice-hired project implementers. After finishing the course, the rice specialists shall be included in the pool of resource persons for rice production training programs and to address requests for technical support in their area. Special orders shall be issued to ensure their active engagement in the program after completing the training.

Selection criteria:

1. Male or female graduate of an agriculture-related course or has been personally managing a rice farm for at least a year;
2. Physically and mentally fit and preferably, not more than 40 years old;
3. Open to both male and female participants;
4. With basic ICT skills;
5. Good interpersonal communication skills;
6. With strong commitment and dedication to serve;
7. Office is based at any the target provinces and municipalities; and
8. Preferably, holding a permanent position or highly recommended by the head of agency.

*A.1.2. Training Courses on Rice Mechanization* - This shall develop a core of subject matter specialists to serve as resource speakers for several training courses to be conducted by PHilMech and ATI on rice mechanization. They shall not only serve as resource speakers, but also provide technical assistance to related matters on rice mechanization (*e.g.*, performance testing and evaluation of machinery). Participants shall be composed of project implementers, technical staff from DA-RFOs preferably, from the RAED and Rice Program; technical staff from ATI, TESDA, DAR, LGUs, and other agencies, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs); members of the Philippine Society of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineers (PSABE). There are several training courses to be conducted, and the participants shall undergo three (3) levels of training per course before they can be certified by PHilMech as PHilMech Rice Mechanization Specialist (PRMS) and be deployed as resource speakers to trainings.

The three levels of the training are the following:

Level 1: Enhancement of knowledge and skills development training courses;

Level 2: Resource persons development course and immersion (under study) with the experts; and

Level 3: Deployment of the trainees to the actual training. (Note: On their first deployment, they shall be supported by the experts).

Criteria of the training participants include the following:

1. Male or female graduate of, at least, BS Agricultural Engineering, Agriculture, and other related courses;
2. Must not be over 50 years old;
3. With prior learning and with practical experience related to agricultural mechanization and postharvest; and
4. Mentally and physically fit.

*A.1.2.1. Training on the Performance Testing and Evaluation of Rice Machinery* - This shall be carried out to enhance the technical capability of agricultural engineers in



conducting performance testing and evaluation of farm machinery to assure the beneficiaries of its technical performance of the farm machinery delivered to them. A 5-day training with 30 participants per batch, it shall be conducted by PHilMech nationwide in coordination with other partner agencies (BAFE, AMTEC). Preferably, the participants shall include agricultural engineers from PHilMech and other agencies.

*A.1.2.2. Training Course and Resource Person Development on the Operation and Maintenance of Rice Machinery* - This course shall be conducted for 5-8 days the operation and maintenance of rice machinery, including the basic principles and methods of land preparation, crop establishment, crop care, harvesting, threshing, drying, and milling. With 25 participants per batch, it shall be conducted by PHilMech with its field operation clusters nationwide in coordination with other partner agencies. The participants shall include program implementers, technical staff from LGUs, DA-RFOs, ATI, DAR, SUCs, PSABE, and other agencies/organizations. After the training, they shall serve as subject matter specialists or resource speakers.

*A.1.2.3. Training Course and Resource Person Development on the Operation and Management of Agri-Machinery Pool* - The technical staff from PHilMech, DA-AMAS, ATI, SUCs, LGUs and other agencies shall be trained to enhance and strengthen their technical and managerial capabilities, particularly on the managerial system to include decision-making process, functions of management, planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling, budgeting, organizational control and evaluation, business planning and management. A 5-6 days training with 25 participants per batch, it shall be conducted by PHilMech together with its field operation clusters nationwide in coordination with other partner agencies.

*A.1.2.4. Training Course and Resource Person Development on Drying and Milling Plant Servicing* - The training shall enhance the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the participants on the basic routine maintenance, repair, calibration, and servicing of drying, and milling processing plant for rice. The training shall be conducted by PHilMech together with its field operation clusters nationwide. It shall be carried out for 5 days with 25 participants per batch.

*A.1.2.5. Training Course and Resource Person Development on Repair, Maintenance and Troubleshooting of Farm Machinery (By Technology)* - The training shall enhance the technical capability of the participants on the operations, repair, troubleshooting, and maintenance of different farm machinery. The training shall be conducted by PHilMech together with its field operation clusters nationwide. It shall be carried out for 3-5 days with 30 participants per batch.

*A.1.3. Training on Inbred Rice Seed Production and Certification for Deputized and Designated Seed Inspectors* - To be conducted for 5 days with 30 participants per batch, this course is for the seed inspectors consisting of deputized LGU and designated BPI staff to improve their technical capabilities on field inspection, seed testing, seed sampling for inbred seed production and certification. They shall also be updated with

the status of implementation of rice program in the regions, harvest and post-harvest technology, varietal selection and characteristics of newly approved varieties, role of seed inspectors, seed sampling, bagging and tagging, and seed reserve. ATI shall conduct this training in partnership with BPI-NSQCS and PhilRice.

*A.1.4. Training on Seed Testing for Seed Analysts* – BPI-NSQCS shall conduct an annual 5-day training among 30 identified BPI seed analysts to strengthen their technical capability in seed testing specifically in seed sampling and sample preparation, moisture content determination, physical purity, varietal purity, seed health and germination testing of inbred rice seeds through thorough and in-depth lectures and practicum/hands-on.

## A.2. Training of Trainers (ToT)

*A.2.1. ToT on the Production of High-quality Inbred Rice Seeds and Farm Mechanization* - This 10-day training with 30 participants per batch is designed for owners/operators of farm schools with rice component, trainers from TESDA Technology Schools (TTS), SUCs, LUCs, and LGU AEWs. It shall be conducted by PhilRice, PHilMech, and ATI. Graduates of this course may be tapped by rice specialists and extensionists in conducting trainings to improve the capacity of rice farmers, especially those within their organization, group or area, to increase their yield and income, and produce their own high-quality inbred seeds, especially in areas where there are no or limited source of high-quality inbred seeds.

Selection criteria:

1. Male or female and preferably, a holder of a permanent position or has been in government service for at least 1 year;
2. Preferably, with a degree in agriculture or any related course or has been personally managing a farm for at least a year;
3. Mentally and physically fit and preferably, not more than 45 years old;
4. Based at any of the target municipalities and provinces;
5. With basic ICT skills (i.e., word processing, uses an android phone); and
6. Preferably, has attended any rice-related training program.

*A.2.2. Refresher Courses for Rice Extensionists* - Existing AEWs and other rice extensionists (e.g., AgRiDOCs) who have had prior trainings on rice and rice-based farming shall be provided with specialized training courses to continuously update and develop their diagnostic and decision-making skills in order to further equip them in helping rice farmers address their field problems. To be conducted by PhilRice and partner agencies, each batch of the refresher course shall be composed of 25-30 participants. The course duration shall depend on the specific target skill to be developed. Extensionists who have undergone these refresher courses may complement or work hand in hand with rice specialists in conducting trainings and technical briefings for farmers and in helping promote the use of high-quality inbred rice seeds,

machines, credits, and other services. Possible topics to be discussed are but not limited to rice technology updates, integrated rice-based farming system, rice-based products processing, packaging, and labeling.

### A.3. Training for Farmers, Seed Growers, Farm Machinery Operators, and Other Beneficiaries

*A.3.1. Farmer Field School (FFS) on Modernized Production of HQ Inbred Rice and Seeds* - The FFS is a season-long training led by ATI and TESDA with 12 sessions/meetings that shall train a group of 25 farmers on the latest rice farming system. It shall be conducted in farm schools (described in Component 2) with graduates of RSTC and TOT as resource persons and under a scholarship scheme (described in Component 3). In areas where there is no farm school or training provider, a community-based or on-site approach shall be implemented by TESDA in coordination with LGUs. The farmers shall meet once a week to be assisted by the training facilitator. They shall be taught on various topics, such as pest, soil fertility, and water resources management; local varietal selection and purification; farm mechanization; marketing; record keeping; and financial literacy.

*A.3.2. Training Courses for the Farmer Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs)* - The FCA beneficiaries target shall be equipped with principles and methods of the different rice farm machinery and equipment maintenance and operations. They shall specifically be taught with skills and knowledge on the operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting of the agricultural machinery. The training shall cover the operation and basic maintenance of rice machinery for land preparation, crop establishment, crop care, harvesting and threshing, drying, and milling.

Another training course shall be conducted to enhance the knowledge and skills of the participants on the operation and management of agri-machinery pool of the FCAs. The participants shall comprise the head of the operation, bookkeeper, accountant, and technician of the FCAs.

*A.3.2.1. Training Course on the Operation and Maintenance of Rice Machinery (for FCA beneficiaries)* - PHilMech through its field operation clusters nationwide shall train the FCA machine operators on site. To be conducted for 5 days with 40 participants per batch, the training shall aim to enhance their knowledge, skills, and attitudes on the operation and basic maintenance of rice machinery for land preparation, crop establishment, crop care, harvesting, threshing, drying, and milling.

*A.3.2.2. Training Course on the Operation and Management of Agri-Machinery Pool (for FCA beneficiaries)* - The FCA officers (operation head, bookkeeper, accountant, and technician) shall be trained by PHilMech to be conducted for 5 days with 60 participants per batch. The training shall enhance and strengthen their technical and managerial capabilities, particularly on managerial system (that includes decision-making process, functions of management, planning, organizing, staffing, directing,

controlling, budgeting, organizational control and evaluation, business planning, and management).

*A.3.2.4. Training Course on Drying and Milling Plant Servicing (for FCA beneficiaries)* – This will be conducted for 5 days with 40 participants per batch by PHilMech, with a goal of enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the participants on the basic routine maintenance, repair, calibration, and servicing of drying, and milling processing plant for rice.

*A.3.2.5. Training on Repair, Maintenance and Troubleshooting of Farm Machinery (By Technology)* – This will be conducted for 3-5 days with 30 participants per batch by PHilMech, with a goal of equipping the technical skills of the target FCA technicians and mechanics on repair, maintenance and troubleshooting of rice farm machinery.

### *A3.3 Training on Inbred Rice Seed Production and Certification for Potential Seed Growers*

- This training course is designed for advanced rice farmers who have the potential to become inbred rice seed growers. Target participants are interested advanced farmers in areas where there is no or limited number of seed growers or where supply of high-quality seeds is limited. It shall be carried out for 5 days with 30 participants per batch. Module development/updating and the conduct of training shall be managed by ATI and BPI-NSQCS in partnership with PhilRice. Participants to this training may avail themselves of the scholarship program offered by TESDA.

*A.3.4. Refresher Course for Existing Seed Growers* - ATI and BPI-NSQCS shall offer this 3-day refresher course to existing seed growers to provide them with latest updates on inbred rice seed production and certification as a requirement for the renewal of their license or accreditation. Composed of 30 participants per batch, the course shall also tackle and address weaknesses/problems experienced by existing seed growers. To integrate new developments *vis-a-vis* inbred seed production and certification, the module of the course shall have to be updated in consultation with concerned agencies, such as PhilRice and BPI.

Selection criteria for farmer/seed grower participants:

Must submit and complete documentary requirements stated in the DA Department Circular No. 9 Series of 2018 Re: Revised Guidelines for the Accreditation of Inbred Rice Seed Growers/Producers (only for seed growers).

1. Male or female who are farming in rice fields located in the selected municipalities;
2. Must be farming in rice fields located in the selected priority municipalities; and
3. Must have a minimum area of 1 hectare for accreditation and should be fully irrigated with supplementary source of irrigation and good drainage, not to mention with postharvest facilities (warehouse, thresher, seed cleaner) (only for seed growers)

*A.3.5. Trainings and Briefings on Farm School (including learning sites) Certification and Registration*– The learning site (LS) is an innovative extension modality conceptualized by ATI where farmers and other participants interested to learn agriculture are brought for actual experience/hands-on training to complement classroom training. ATI shall conduct region-wide briefings on learning site certification to interested rice-based farmer cooperators. Each briefing shall orient 30 participants. Certified cooperator shall receive a grant for LS establishment and an additional grant for the succeeding year for enhancement. The LS cooperator shall undergo a series of rice-related trainings upon endorsement of the LS as farm school to TESDA.

*A.3.6. Other Relevant Trainings for Rice Fund beneficiaries* - TESDA may offer training courses for Rice Fund beneficiaries to equip them with added skills relevant to improving their competitiveness and income. Information about these courses may be acquired from any TESDA office in the target provinces. There shall only be limited slots, and therefore shall be available through a competitive scheme.

## **B. Enterprise Development Assistance**

PHilMech shall offer enterprise development assistance to farmers' organizations to ensure viable and sustainable FCA operations. Specific assistance to be extended include: feasibility study preparation, business plan preparation, and preparation of technical and management operations manual. These shall be provided through any of the following: seminars, workshops, coaching, mentoring, exposure trips, etc.

B.1 Feasibility Study Preparation – The FCA recipients (FO, cooperatives, LGUs) shall be assisted in the preparation of pre-feasibility study, which is one of the requirements for the establishment of FCA. They shall be taught on FCA as an enterprise, particularly on its operational requirements. Primary data gathering through survey (template), focus group discussion, and/or personal interview, as well as data analysis, discussion of results shall likewise be imparted to them. A feasibility study template shall be developed to serve as a guide for the FCA managers.

B.2 Business Plan Preparation – The FCA management team, composed of FO, Cooperative or LGU, including the farm technician and the assigned DA RFO-AMAS staff, shall be assisted to prepare their business plan to ensure viable operation and management of their FCAs. To do this, a training workshop on business planning shall be conducted. The workshop expected outputs are business plans of the participating FCA management teams.

B.3 Technical and Management Operations Manual Preparation – Intended for the FCA recipients, this manual shall be produced as a guide reference on the operations of the machinery, equipment, and facilities. It also contains policies and guidelines in the management of the Center. The existing operations manuals generated from the implementation of related service centers shall be used as a reference in crafting the said FCA manual. The contents of the manual shall be developed in partnership with the

management team, Board of Directors and Management Boards of the FO recipient, cooperatives, and LGUs through workshops and joint meetings.

B.4 Need-based Learning Sessions/On-site Capability Enhancement - The FCA recipients including the Management Teams, FO/Coop Board of Trustees/Directors, Management Boards, and relevant staff shall undergo need-based learning sessions/on-site capability enhancement to enhance their enterprise capability through coaching, mentoring, seminars, workshops, exposure trips, on-the-job trainings, and specialized short term trainings. Each FCA shall select and designate or hire the management team that is responsible in the operationalization of the FCA. It shall be composed of the manager, machine operators, accountant-bookkeeper, repair and maintenance technician, and farm technician. With the guidance from their Board of Directors or Management Boards or Consultant, they are responsible in the operation and management of the FCA on a viable and sustainable manner. They shall also undergo learning sessions to enhance their capacity on accounting, bookkeeping, and financial status reporting.

B.5 Assessment and Planning Workshops - Mid-year and year-end assessment and planning workshops shall be conducted among the FCA recipients to keep track of accomplishments, problems encountered, unresolved issues and concerns, as well as sharing of best practices and solutions to unresolved problems, issues, and concerns. This activity is a very important part of the learning process of newly established enterprises particularly in their start-up and growing periods. Also, this is to ensure that the FCA are moving and accomplishing their targets based on their business plans as well as to provide an avenue for discussion of corrective action to deviations and crafting of corresponding action plans. Assessment procedures and tools, as well as action planning guides and tools shall be developed.

B.6 Monitoring and Gathering of Data on FCA Operations and Management - The FCA recipients, program implementers and evaluators, policy makers, and other interested parties shall be involved in the monitoring and data gathering to keep track of the growth and development of all FCAs, and shall serve as a reference document for impact studies in the future. Each FCA shall be oriented on the need to keep track of their growth and development as an organization and as an enterprise, how to record important events, major accomplishments and milestones in operating and managing their FCA, and how to fill out the monitoring forms. The Enterprise Development implementers, on the other hand, shall gather, analyze, record, and maintain a database specific for this purpose.

### **C. Strategic Communication Support Services**

The agencies involved shall develop and deliver the following strategic information, education, and communication (IEC) interventions in support of the Rice Fund extension services component. It shall seek to enhance the target client's knowledge and access to information services on high-yielding and cost-reducing technologies as well

as other skills and opportunities (e.g., machine services, scholarships, training offerings) to improve their competitiveness and income. Additionally, it shall seek to reinforce favorable changes in perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of farmers toward a competitive rice industry.

#### C.1. Design, Development, and Distribution of IEC Materials

PhilRice shall develop science-based contents on high-quality inbred seed and its associated integrated crop management (ICM); PHilMech on rice machinery and equipment operations and enterprise development for the FCAs; and TESDA on training scholarships. LandBank and DBP shall be looped in and engaged in content development concerning credit assistance, and BPI on seed certification and seed grower registration. ATI shall consolidate all the contents and package them into an extension tool kit together with information materials about the Rice Fund and its components.

PhilRice shall particularly develop materials on the updated PalayCheck System (an integrated crop management system) for inbred rice and seed production; PHilMech, a rice mechanization extension toolkit for machine specialists and AEWs who will be involved in the rice mechanization component; and TESDA, print materials (posters, standing banners, flyers, still & animated infographics, 30-second infomercials, etc.), as well as appropriate promotional collaterals for their scholarship program and Rice Fund training programs.

The IEC materials shall be mainly distributed to the intended clients via trainings, technical briefings, and other knowledge sharing and learning (KSL) activities. They shall also be made available and accessible at the Farmers Information and Technology Services (FITS) Centers, FCAs, Farm Schools, and offices of the involved agencies. Moreover, the IEC materials shall likewise be shared via existing strategic media platforms (e.g., social media, radio, SMS, print, and website) of the involved agencies and partners.

#### C.2. Exhibition/Expo/Demonstration

PHilMech shall carry out a nation-and-island-wide farm machinery exhibition, expo, and demonstration to create awareness, better understanding, and appreciation on the Rice Fund, specifically on Rice Mechanization Component and PHilMech Extension Services Component. With this activity, exhibits of the different farm machinery and rice farming technologies complemented with technical seminars and demonstration/roadshow shall be conducted. On the other hand, ATI and PhilRice shall beef up its existing knowledge resource demonstration/exhibit facilities and services that complements or supplements the Rice Fund to create greater impact. Intense promotion of the Rice Fund and its salient features shall also be administered by ATI during the AgriLink. There shall be learning videos, interactive activities, hotline for queries, and consultation with experts and key implementers to be carried out during the event. PhilRice's and

TESDA's IEC materials shall be displayed and distributed at the aforementioned events and learning avenues.

At PhilRice's technology demonstration areas, farmers and other rice stakeholders shall be encouraged to visit especially during the farmers' field day, when there shall be distribution of handouts and posting of collateral (e.g., banners) in conspicuous areas in the community. Strategic groups (e.g., youth, students, biker clubs, health & wellness groups, 4H club, farmer organizations) in the local community shall be tapped to execute this activity. Moreover, it shall be carried out in a form of a parade, motorcade, roadshow, or community walk with jingle on the background to get the local people's attention. ATI, PhilRice, PHilMech, TESDA, BPI, LandBank, and DBP shall implement this in coordination with DA-RFOs and P/C/MLGUs.

### C.3. Information Caravan/Roadshow

In support of the extension services, this information caravan shall amplify promotion of the Rice Fund's technologies and services through distribution of handouts and posting of collateral (e.g., banners) in conspicuous areas in the community. Strategic groups (e.g., youth, students, biker clubs, health & wellness groups, 4H club, farmer organizations) in the local community shall be tapped to execute this activity. Moreover, it shall be carried out in a form of a parade, motorcade, roadshow, or community walk with jingle on the background to get the local people's attention. This may be done along with the other extension activities, such as the technical briefing. ATI, PhilRice, PHilMech, TESDA, BPI, LandBank, and DBP in collaboration with DA-RFOs and P/MLGUs shall implement it.

### C.4. Information Campaign/Drive.

PHilMech shall carry out this campaign using appropriate content and communication channels to raise awareness about the rice mechanization in the FCA service areas. TESDA shall also conduct an info drive (Pulong Sulong) to orient target beneficiaries about the TESDA training programs and scholarship grant. IEC materials and other communication services of PhilRice and ATI shall also be promoted during the campaigns.

### C.5. School-on-Air (SOA)

ATI shall implement 15 SOAs simultaneously through its 15 regional centers. It shall offer season-long training courses aired through radio to enhance knowledge and skills on inbred rice production, basic farm mechanization, rice value-adding technologies, and rice-based integrated farm technologies with Rice fund farmer-beneficiaries as participants. ATI shall develop the SOA modules in partnership with PhilRice, PHilMech, TESDA, BPI, LandBank, DBP, and other interested collaborators.

### C.6. Online Courses

ATI shall spearhead course writeshop (module writing) and courseware development workshop among PHilMech, PhilRice, BPI, LandBank, and DBP representatives to



expand current selection of online courses relating to rice production. The courseware developed shall undergo quality circle check, and shall be made available for the public through ATI's e-Learning portal.

### C.7. Knowledge Sharing and Learning (KSL)

Complementing the training programs, this KSL initiative is a dynamic, interpersonal communication engagement designed to facilitate knowledge sharing and learning with program beneficiaries and partners or intermediaries, such as the media including farmcasters, policy-makers, and other intermediaries. PhilRice, PHilMech, and ATI shall organize it in various forms, such as briefings, fora, and dialogues. The main objective is to brief the program's extension and communication partners about the program and its services, and engage them to actively take part in the program. To implement, various agencies and organizations, such as Philippine Information Agency (PIA), Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO), Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP), Print and Online Media, DA-Regional Information Officers, SUCs extension staff, and P/C/MLGU agricultural extension workers, shall be tapped.

*C.7.1. Technical briefing for Rice Fund beneficiaries.* This is designed to orient beneficiaries about the salient features of the high-yielding and cost-reducing rice farming technologies, machine services, credits, and scholarship grants. A half-day event, it shall be conducted by batches in the provincial level covering the target municipalities with a maximum of 500 farmers per batch. It shall be carried out within the program's period with the Technical Briefing Team composed of but not limited to staff from PhilRice, PHilMech, DA-RFO, ATI, including local farmer technician (LFT). The implementation strategy shall be closely consulted and coordinated with the regional/provincial/municipal staff and partners to ensure that it is localized and adjusted to the needs of the community, whenever practicable. Consistency of messages shall be emphasized during the technical briefing. The expenses incurred shall be borne by ATI, PHilMech, and PhilRice through a cost-sharing scheme.

*C.7.2. Rice S&T Updates/AgriKapihan/Palay-aralan/AgriTalk.* ATI, PhilRice, and PHilMech, together with partners shall also conduct a half-day S&T Updates or AgriKapihan with the LGU executives and farmers' coop/association officers from the target municipalities to inform them about the program as well as the technologies and services to be promoted to their local farmers, and encourage them to provide policy support to ensure sustainable technology adoption in their area. *Palay-aralan* shall likewise be conducted by PhilRice as another learning platform to teach rice stakeholders on certain topics on rice and rice-related topics. ATI's AgriTalk shall give the general public including farmers, AEWs, and farm owners access to information about the Rice Fund program in malls with three (3) topics per day. To be organized by ATI in partnership with Manila Bulletin, it can accommodate 250-300 participants per day. Information

about this event shall be advertised via the ATI Facebook account ([facebook.com/ATIinteractive](https://facebook.com/ATIinteractive)).

*C.7.3. Media/Press/Info Officers Briefing.* ATI, PhilRice, PHilMech, and TESDA shall also conduct a half-day briefing with media, including farmcasters, to inform them of the important key messages about rice production technologies and other RCEP services, and encourage them to help spread correct, useful information to the public. During the event, a press kit shall be handed over to the media participants. The media practitioners shall be invited through the Philippine Information Agency (PIA).

Information officers at the ATI, DA, PHilMech, PhilRice, TESDA and OPAG regional and provincial offices shall also be briefed and mobilized. The briefing shall not only inform them about the program, but also engage them on how they can help the program using their existing resources and networks.

## **Component 2: Developing farm schools and strengthening their capacities on rice knowledge/technology transfer**

The Farm Schools shall refer to existing TESDA-registered farm schools, technology institutions (TTI), ATI learning sites, state colleges and universities (SUCs), local colleges and universities (LUCs) offering agriculture qualifications, and other training providers (e.g., ATI, PhilRice, PHilMech, and RFOs) with TESDA accredited agriculture/rice-related training programs under the Rice Fund. It is where the beneficiaries could attend modified FFS. These Farm Schools shall be strengthened by allowing their owners/managers and their staff to undergo capacity enhancement on inbred rice and seed production, mechanization, knowledge/technology transfer to be offered by PhilRice, PHilMech, and ATI, as well as on training methodology by TESDA. In areas where there is no Farm Schools or training providers, the modified FFS shall be conducted using a community-based (on-site) approach through TESDA Provincial Offices in collaboration with LGUs.

To fast track the establishment of farm schools (i.e. learning sites), start-up and enhancement funds shall be provided by ATI to qualified farms.

## **Component 3: Development and implementation of a scholarship program**

TESDA shall design and implement a scholarship program through the use of vouchers (scholarship grant certificate). It is intended for farmers and farm workers listed in the Registry System for Basic Sector in Agriculture (RSBSA), including the Rice Cooperatives and Associations recognized by DA, and implemented mainly through the modified FFS (described in A.3.5) to be conducted in farm schools.

A scholarship voucher shall be awarded to beneficiaries, which may cover the following: training cost, assessment cost, entrepreneurship training cost, and training support fund.

Aside from the FFS, the scholarship program shall also cover relevant or applicable Training Regulations (TRs) from the existing list of TESDA TRs.

The training provider (e.g. farm school) locates the trainer-farmer listed in the RSBSA through the LGU-MAO/PAO. The provider orients the trainer-farmers about the program and organizes them in preparation to the implementation of the training.

The provider conducts the training inside its premises or at the community where the farmer lives. After graduation, the trainer-farmers will be assessed to determine their level of skills acquisition. The provider will bill TESDA the cost of training.

The allowance or training support fund will be paid directly by TESDA to the farmers.

## **VII. Implementing agencies and partners**

Extension Program shall be designed and executed by PHilMech, PhilRice, TESDA, and ATI. While these key players have their individual set of extension activities, they shall have to work closely together to ensure harmonized, complementary extension efforts. This collaborative spirit shall be facilitated through the formation of a technical working group (TWG) with ATI as the lead agency (*See Chapter V for details*). To optimize resources and achieve efficiency in extension delivery, sharing of resources between and among the agencies shall be encouraged. Other government and non-government agencies shall also be mobilized. At the national level, agencies identified as allies or partners include (but not limited to): DA, BPI, LandBank, DBP, NEDA, DOF, and NFA. They shall particularly be consulted or involved in the design and delivery of trainings and communication support services. At the regional, provincial, and municipal levels, DA-RFOs, P/C/MLGUs, learning site and farm school owners, and farmers' cooperatives and associations shall be tapped in the promotion and conduct of all extension services on the ground. Intermediaries, such as media, policy-makers, civic organizations, and champions, shall likewise be mobilized to help in the program.

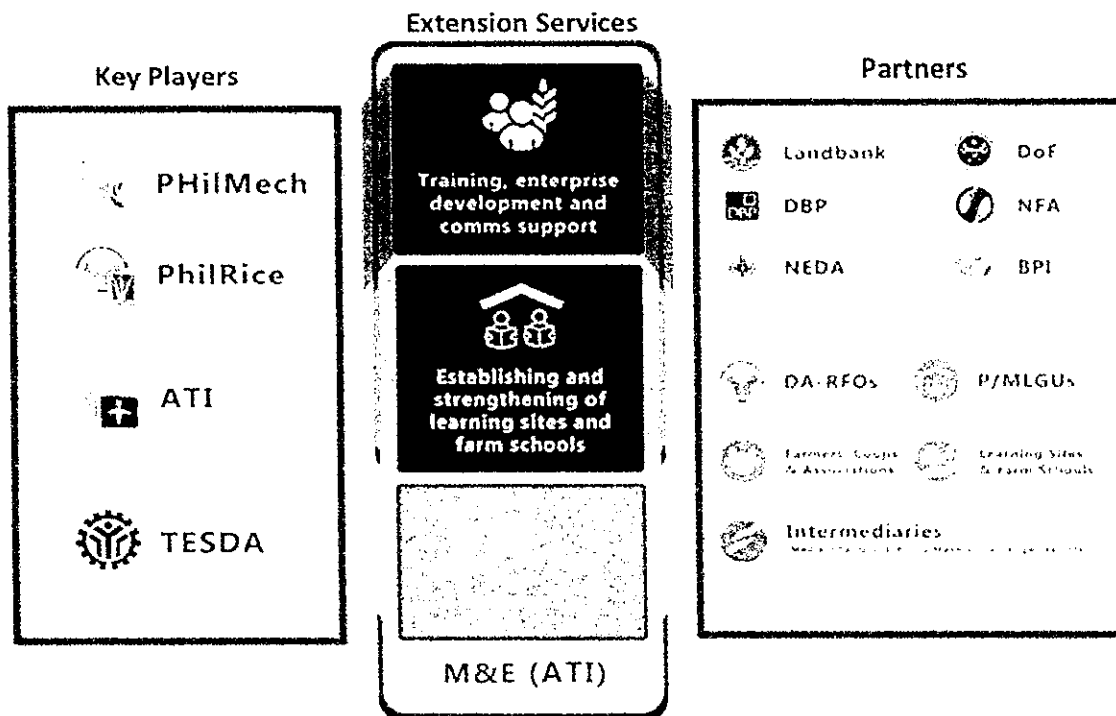


Figure 3. Organizational structure to ensure smooth, effective Extension Program operations

### VIII. Technical Working Group

The Technical Working Group (TWG) for the Extension Program shall be organized to assist the PSC in the implementation of the IRR of RA 11203, particularly the extension services component as detailed in IRR Rules 13:21-24. It shall be led by ATI with the following members: PhilRice, PhilMech, TESDA, BPI, and other relevant agencies as identified by the PSC. It shall submit to PSC the final list of its members and their specific terms of reference on the set deadline. It shall also provide the PSC regular updates on the implementation of its activities and their integration to the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap, and a status report on the achievement of the targets and utilization of the Fund as collected by the TWG on Monitoring and Evaluation.

### IX. Monitoring and Evaluation

The M&E to be led by ATI shall be designed and conducted, and based on its results, the TWG shall recommend policy interventions to ensure sustainability of program impact. Specifically, random site, programs, activities, and projects validations shall be conducted to ensure proper, efficient and effective implementation of the program activities. Quarterly physical and financial as well as progress reports shall be submitted by the different implementing agencies to the ATI. Moreover, an annual report shall be submitted at the end of each implementation year.

To have a baseline for monitoring and evaluation, ATI shall conduct a benchmarking study for AEWs and farmers. In collaboration with PhilRice, PhilMech, and TESDA, it

shall also keep a directory of the rice/machine specialists, trainers, and farmers trained under Extension Program. Moreover, part of the M&E is also to monitor competitiveness performance of the target beneficiaries. As discussed in the development framework above, farmers, farmers' cooperatives/associations, or municipalities that perform and satisfy the set standard parameters shall be incentivized. The incentive system shall be developed in close coordination with DA. For the yield performance monitoring, ATI shall coordinate with PhilRice which would perform the monitoring through remote sensing and field validation.

#### **X. Sustainability**

Through a Special Order, all Extension Program trainees (i.e., specialists, trainers, and farmer-leaders) shall be required to carry out a re-entry plan to be implemented when they go back to their Extension Programective areas. The farmer training beneficiaries, on the other hand, shall likewise be encouraged to participate in a capital roll-over scheme instituted by the farmers' cooperatives and associations involved in the Rice Fund. In the FCAs that will be established by PHilMech, enterprise development assistance shall be provided to ensure sustainable operation of the Centers (details in Component 1.B). Moreover, a development framework, as earlier discussed, shall likewise be put into full effect as a strategy to ensure effective, sustainable results.

#### **XI. Separability**

In the event that the provisions of this administrative order (AO) or any part thereof are declared invalid, the validity of all other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

#### **XII. Amendments**

Amendments to this guideline shall be made in writing and signed by the members of the Rice Extension Services TWG to be valid and binding subject to all applicable and appropriate government laws, rules and regulations. All orders and circulars previously issued inconsistent with this AO are hereby amended accordingly. The PSC shall periodically review and assess the implementation of this AO and submit recommendations for the amendment of any of its provisions. Amendments to this AO shall be subject to the approval of the PSC.

#### **XIII. Effectivity**

This implementing guideline shall be effective immediately upon publication in Official Gazette or any newspaper of national circulation.

APPROVED BY:

**EMMANUEL F. PIÑOL, PhD**

*Secretary*

Department of Agriculture