



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

19 September 2019

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO : EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR C. JOHN DE LEON**  
Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRICE)


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

**SUBJECT : SIGNED IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES OF THE SEED 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 Seed Program under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

Thank you.



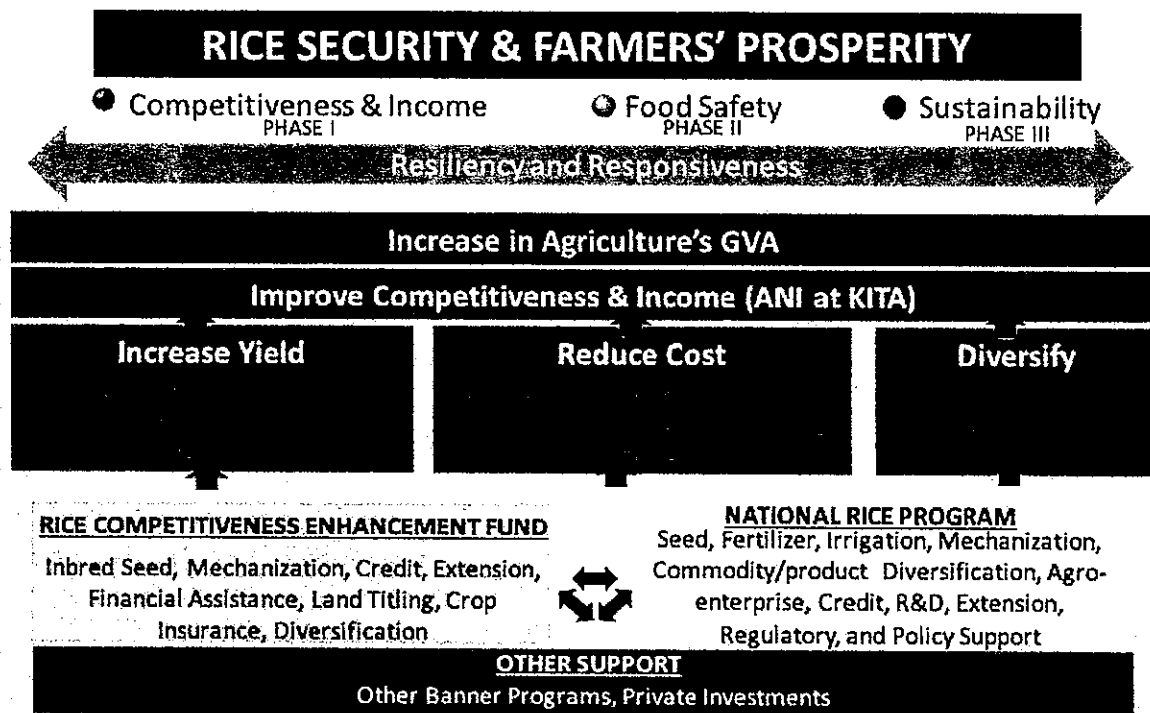
**ENGR. ROY M. ABAYA**

## Implementing Guidelines for the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund – Seed Program

### I. Legal Bases

Republic Act 11203 has created the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (Rice Fund or RCEF) to improve the competitiveness of rice farmers and increase their income amidst liberalization of the Philippine rice trade policy including, among other provisions, the lifting of quantitative restriction on rice import and replacing it with tariff. The RCEF aims to complement and supplement the existing Department of Agriculture – National Rice Program (DA-NRP).

The RCEF has four key components: 1) rice farm mechanization; 2) inbred rice seed development, propagation, and promotion; 3) expanded rice credit assistance; and 4) rice extension services. The implementation of these components shall be integrated and consistent with the existing DA interventions.



*Figure 1. Contribution of Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund to the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap.*

Section 13.b of this law states that the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) shall use thirty percent (30%) of the RCEF to implement the development, propagation, and promotion of inbred rice seeds to rice farmers and the organization of rice farmers into seed grower associations/cooperatives engaged in seed production and trade. Further, Section 13.d allocates 10% of the Rice Fund on extension services as follows: 10% each for PhilRice, Philippine Center for Postharvest and Mechanization (PHilMech), and Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), and 70% for 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.

Rule 13.17 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 11203 further specifies that PhilRice, in consultation with relevant agencies, LGUs, DA-RFOs, private sector, and farmers' groups, shall develop the Implementing Guidelines for rice seed development, propagation, and promotion consistent with the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap (PRIR), which include, but not limited to, a) eligibility criteria for prospective recipients; b) modality of selection; and c) mode of implementation. The Program Steering Committee (PSC), with DA Secretary as lead, shall review and approve these guidelines.

Pursuant to the foregoing, the following promulgates the Implementing Guidelines of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund – Seed Program (RCEF-Seed).

## **II. Purpose**

Toward the vision of a rice-secure Philippines and prosperous farmers, the RCEF-Seed aims to help attain the goal of the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap, which is to improve the competitiveness of the Filipino rice farmers, increase their income, and sustain the resilience and responsiveness of the industry. To this end, the RCEF-Seed targets to contribute in increasing yield up to 6t/ha in high-yielding provinces and 5t/ha in medium-yielding provinces by 2024. Along with other RCEF components, it also intends to play part in lowering production cost by 30%, reduce postharvest losses to 12%, and trim down marketing cost by P1/kg.

Based on empirical studies, the use of certified inbred seeds can increase yield by at least 10% due to its high seedling vigor, purity, and strict limits on weeds and disease-infected seeds. Complementing the use of certified seeds with appropriate integrated crop management (ICM) can further increase yield. The use of high quality seeds also maximizes the effects of other inputs such as land, water, and fertilizer contributing in lower cost. The purity of certified inbred seeds also enhances uniformity of crop stand and timely harvest period, which minimize postharvest losses and potentially improve marketing efficiency.

The general objective of the RCEF-Seed is to increase the adoption of certified inbred rice seeds and, consequently, its corresponding ICM. Specifically, it aims to:

- 1) increase utilization of certified inbred rice seeds in provinces with high potential of improving competitiveness;
- 2) improve quality, availability of, and access to certified inbred rice seeds; and
- 3) increase the number of organized farmers engaged in seed production and trade.

## **III. Principles**

The implementation of RCEF-Seed shall adhere to the following principles:

1. **Integration and complementation of PRIR interventions.** The RCEF-Seed shall provide the platform for integration and complementation of the mechanization,

credit, and extension components of the RCEF. Whenever feasible, the convergence of various components shall be encouraged. It shall also take advantage of the DA-NRP interventions such as fertilizer, irrigation, diversification, and agro-enterprise including its R&D, regulatory, and policy support, whenever available and applicable.

2. **Capacity building for local seed production and revitalization of the rice seed network.** The RCEF-Seed shall source its seed supply from accredited local seed growers' associations/cooperatives to contribute in developing and enhancing the sustainability of the Philippine rice seed industry. It shall contribute in building the capacity of local seed growers to supply the nation's requirement for certified inbred seeds which encompasses the demand of this program, the DA-NRP interventions including its seed reserve used for responding to disasters and climate risks, and those of the private sector. The RCEF-Seed shall also contribute in creating a sustainable demand for certified inbred seeds that will continue beyond the life of the program.
3. **Empowerment of farmer organizations and farm clustering.** The RCEF-Seed shall target farmer organizations (FO) in its implementation to foster diligence and cooperation, and to promote mutual learning among farmers. In places without FOs, PhilRice shall assist LGUs and other local partners in organizing farmers for them to avail of the benefits of the program. The farm clustering shall be encouraged to harmonize and synchronize selected farm activities and operations to achieve economies of scale and bargaining power.

The RCEF-Seed shall also strengthen the FOs to become self-reliant by encouraging a roll-over system that will sustain their adoption of certified inbred seeds and associated integrated crop management (ICM) beyond the life of the program. PhilRice shall highly consider FOs that are able to sustain a roll-over system for continuous seed support and shall recommend to DA the inclusion of a reward mechanism to the Rice Achievers Award. The FOs shall be also linked to other RCEF components and, if interested, their capacity to become accredited seed growers shall be enhanced.

4. **Promotion of cutting edge, climate resilient, and sustainable technologies.** In addition to promoting certified seeds of inbred rice varieties that are high-yielding and/or with highly preferred grain quality, the RCEF-Seed shall also conduct research for development (R4D) and promotion of cutting edge (yield-increasing, cost-reducing, and value-enhancing), climate resilient (biotic and abiotic stress tolerance, climate smart practices, climate services), and sustainable (water efficiency, input-use efficiency) technologies that will enhance farm productivity and competitiveness. Toward these, it shall tap into the ongoing R4D of PhilRice and other research organizations.
5. **Performance-based provision of seeds and allied support services.** The RCEF-Seed shall adopt an incentive mechanism for FOs that will meet the program goals (e.g. target yield, sustainability plan, synchrony in cluster activities). It will also assist the FOs and their farm clusters avail of other government support and

private linkages. The FOs' performance shall be monitored using remote sensing data (e.g. PRISM) and field validation.

6. **Contribution to increasing yields and farmers' income.** The desired final outcome of the RCEF-Seed is to contribute in increasing farmers' yields and income, and rice sector competitiveness. The program shall evaluate the attainment of these outcome by employing various monitoring and evaluation tools using baseline data gathered at the start of the program.

#### **IV. Scope and Duration**

##### ***A. Coverage***

The RCEF-Seed shall cover 57 provinces with high potential for improving competitiveness. These are selected based on their cumulative scores on various criteria: 1) size of area harvested; 2) yield level; 3) cost of production; and 4) share of irrigated area. A province can score a maximum of 12 and a minimum of 4. Thus, all provinces with a score of 8 or higher were included in the coverage area. The allocation of seeds for distribution in the provinces shall be proportionate to their area planted.

Rice-producing cities and municipalities within the target provinces shall be verified by comparing data on area planted and area harvested to rice from Local Government Units (LGU), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), and the Philippine Rice Information System (PRISM). To have better focus and efficiency in the initial implementation, the RCEF-Seed shall select cities and municipalities with an annual area planted larger than 100 ha as potential operation areas. Potential beneficiaries are farmers listed in the Registry System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA), and DA-accredited farmer organizations.

As provided for in RA 11203, RCEF-Seed shall promote high quality inbred rice seeds to farmers in both irrigated and rainfed lowland areas during the target crop season. The DA-NRP shall cover the promotion of hybrid rice seeds, and rice areas in upland and adverse ecosystems. In general, areas not covered in RCEF will be supported by the DA-NRP.

##### ***B. Duration***

The RCEF-Seed projects and activities shall commence immediately after the effectivity of RA 11203, its IRR, and this Implementing Guidelines in 2019, subject to availability of funds. The Program is set to last until 2024 when it is reviewed by the Congressional Oversight Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization (COAFM). Due to administrative processes, seed promotion, and distribution shall cover all rice plantings starting 2020 Dry Season until 2025 Dry Season.

#### **V. Component Projects and Implementation Scheme**

The RCEF-Seed shall have four component projects that serve as the implementation pillars of its operational framework. These are: 1) Promoting and distributing certified

seeds of inbred rice varieties; 2) Mobilizing and strengthening local seed production; 3) Supporting variety development; and 4) Strengthening farmer organizations.

#### ***A. Promoting and distributing certified seeds of inbred rice varieties***

This project comprises distribution of certified seeds to qualified farmers or farmer organizations (FOs); the conduct of technology demonstration and field days to showcase the benefits of using certified inbred seeds and associated ICM; and communication, social preparation, and capacity building.

##### A.1) Eligibility criteria

The following outlines the criteria for farmers or farmer organizations who shall be eligible partners under the program.

- 1) For farmer-recipients:
  - a) Must be included in the DA-updated RSBSA; and
  - b) Must be farming in rice fields located in the selected municipalities.
- 2) For farmer organizations:
  - a) Must be accredited by DA or any accrediting government agency recognized by DA; and
  - b) With members whose rice farms can cover a cluster of at least 20ha in one to two adjacent villages in one selected city or municipality.

##### A.2) Distribution Guidelines

- 1) PhilRice, in consultation with DA-RFOs and C/MLGUs shall validate rice-producing municipalities within the target provinces. Together, they shall firm-up the allocation of seeds per city/municipality, which must consider its area planted and number of eligible beneficiaries in the area.
- 2) PhilRice, in consultation with DA-RFOs and C/MLGUs, with assistance from other organizations, shall identify eligible beneficiaries based on the set criteria.
- 3) DA shall establish a general guideline for accrediting organizations to be eligible under the RCEF. This guideline shall also cover the accreditation of FOs registered through other government agencies (e.g. CDA, SEC, NIA, DAR, DOLE). For newly formed FOs, the concerned LGU shall endorse to DA their accreditation to qualify under the program.
- 4) The FO shall help validate its members who shall qualify as recipients based on the set criteria.
- 5) The farmer-recipients must fill out relevant information forms and assist in the geo-referencing of his/her field for the program's database if needed.
- 6) PhilRice, in partnership with C/MLGUs, ATI, other implementing agencies, and some FOs, shall brief farmer-recipients about the program and the recommended varieties in their area before seed distribution.

7) Farmer-recipient shall receive free seeds based on the following allocation:

<b>Farm size (ha)</b>	<b>Bags (20kg/bag)</b>
Less than or equal to 0.5	1
More than 0.5 to 1	2
More than 1 to 1.5	3
More than 1.5	4

- 8) The qualified farmers or FOs shall receive free seeds initially for two consecutive planting seasons, subject to availability of resources.
- 9) Eligibility to receive seeds in the next program cycle shall depend on achieving the set target yields at 14% moisture content for the two seasons that they receive free seeds, as follows:

<b>Baseline Yield</b>	<b>Yield Target for Low-Yielding Season</b>	<b>Yield Target for High-Yielding Season</b>
<b>Irrigated Area</b>		
Below 4 t/ha	4 t/ha	5 t/ha
4 t/ha and above	5 t/ha	6 t/ha
<b>Rainfed Area</b>		
Below 4 t/ha	3.5 t/ha	-
4 t/ha and above	4.5 t/ha	-

- 10) The yield level shall be monitored through remote sensing and field validation. PhilRice, with partner agencies, shall collaborate to monitor the impact of the intended seed support on yield.
- 11) PhilRice shall identify the seed delivery schedule and drop-off points in consultation with DA-RFOs and C/MLGUs, and/or FOs. When feasible, the FOs with PhilRice authorized delivery inspector may receive the seeds from the seed grower association/cooperative during the agreed schedule of delivery. Farmers can claim the seeds during the set schedule from the drop-off points.
- 12) The farmer-recipient shall be instructed to plant the seeds in the immediate planting season or to properly store the seeds based on recommended procedures in case of delay in planting.
- 13) Farmers who use the seeds for purposes other than planting (e.g. milling, feed for animals, selling) shall be disqualified from the program upon validation. Such activities may be reported through the PhilRice feedback mechanism.
- 14) Seeds not claimed within 30 days from the date of delivery shall be transferred to the nearest seed-deficit municipality for redistribution, provided that its certification is within 90 days from the last seed test.
- 15) PhilRice shall retrieve unclaimed seeds with certification beyond 90 days from the last seed test. These seeds which are no longer fit for planting may be milled for food consumption. These shall be donated for relief operations and feeding programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development or food of inmates in the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. They shall shoulder the hauling and milling of the seeds.

### A.3) Technology Demonstration Guidelines

- 1) PhilRice, in coordination with DA-RFOs and PLGUs, shall select areas suitable for technology demonstrations (techno-demo) on rice production. It shall enter into an agreement with farmers whose farms shall be selected as techno-demo sites using the following criteria:

For the farm:

- a. 6 ha contiguous area;
- b. irrigated or with reliable water source;
- c. accessible, visible, and generally peaceful; and
- d. within a cluster of rice farms not less than 100 ha

For the farmer-partner:

- a. member of a farmer organization;
  - b. must be a cultivator with at least 1 ha of rice farm;
  - c. must be willing to provide counterpart (e.g. labor, land preparation); and
  - d. must have undergone Farmer Field School or any rice production training
- 2) PhilRice, in coordination with DA-RFOs and PLGUs, shall establish farmer-managed techno-demo in one site per province for two seasons, in complementation with DA-established model farms. The sites may change every year.
  - 3) Each site shall feature the three national and two regional variety recommendations per season in 1ha area per variety, and other component technologies to increase yield. A part of the demo shall feature location-specific cultivation techniques (e.g. direct seeding, AWD, SRI methodology), which may be conducted in partnership with civil society organizations.
  - 4) At the end of every season, PhilRice, DA-RFOs, PLGUs, and other implementing agencies shall jointly conduct a farmers' field day per site.
  - 5) PhilRice shall ensure provision of the required production inputs, including the enrolment of the farms for crop insurance.
  - 6) The farmer-partner shall ensure the implementation of the prescribed technology protocol, among other provisions in the agreement. He/She may also be tapped as a resource person during the field day.

### A.4) Communication, Social Preparation, and Capacity Building Guidelines

- 1) RCEF-Seed shall work with RCEF-Rice Extension Services Program (RCEF-RESP) and other components in developing and implementing a communication plan to properly disseminate the information about the program and to promote and achieve desirable behaviors towards the use of certified inbred seeds and appropriate ICM. This shall be carried out in complementation with the interventions of the RCEF-RESP and DA-NRP.
- 2) RCEF-Seed shall coordinate with the RCEF-RESP and partner with DA-RFOs, P/C/MLGUs and other local champions in conducting technical briefings on rice production to farmer-recipients. The briefings shall be localized (e.g. use of local dialect) depending on the needs of the community. Whenever suitable to the situation, translated briefing videos may be used to maximize reach. Consistency of messages shall be emphasized during the conduct of technical briefings.
- 3) RCEF-Seed shall assist RCEF-RESP in capacity enhancement activities, such as training and knowledge sharing and learning activities (e.g., fora, briefings, dialogues, and seminars) on the use of certified inbred seeds and appropriate ICM. It shall be implemented in partnership with DA-RFOs, ATI, and P/MLGUs. Various



intermediaries such as media, public relation companies, and bloggers shall also be tapped.

### ***B. Mobilizing and strengthening local seed production***

This project involves propagation of nucleus, breeder, foundation, registered, and certified seeds to ensure their availability and accessibility at the right place and time.

#### **B.1) Guidelines for Propagation of Higher Seed Class**

- 1) The total inbred seed requirement of the country including the demand under RCEF, DA-NRP, and seed reserves for disaster response shall be considered in planning the volume of seeds to be produced for the identified varieties. As such, PhilRice shall further build its capacity to produce higher seed classes (i.e. breeder, foundation, and registered seeds) particularly of the rice varieties that will be prioritized under the program. It shall expand its seed production area either through acquisition, lease, or partnership with DA-RFOs and SUCs with seed farms accredited by the Bureau of Plant Industry-National Seed Quality Control Services (BPI-NSQCS).
- 2) PhilRice Central Experiment Station (PhilRice-CES) shall handle nucleus-to-breeder, and breeder-to-foundation seed production with selected branch stations as back-up. PhilRice-CES as well as branch and satellite stations shall engage in foundation-to-registered seed production.
- 3) PhilRice shall also improve its seed production, postharvest, and storage equipment and facilities to ensure the highest standards required in the seed certification process. PhilRice shall also strengthen its internal seed quality control system.
- 4) For irrigated and rainfed lowlands, only the seeds of the recommended varieties at the national and regional levels shall be produced. PhilRice shall follow the DA issuance on recommended varieties.
- 5) Under its core fund, PhilRice shall produce the breeder and foundation seeds of varieties specific for adverse environment (e.g., upland, saline, submerged-prone, and drought-prone). DA-RFOs with seed farms shall produce the registered seeds of these varieties.
- 6) All breeder, foundation, and registered seeds shall meet the requirement of BPI through the NSQCS certification.
- 7) The RCEF-Seed shall also support the BPI-NSQCS to expand its capacity in anticipation of the increased demand for seed certification services. NSQCS shall strategize to hasten the certification process including, but not limited to, field inspection, seed sampling and transport to seed laboratories, analysis, and certification. PhilRice shall enter into agreement with BPI through NSQCS to enhance its capacity to perform such tasks.
- 8) PhilRice shall partner with NSQCS and ATI in: 1) conducting seed production training for other government agencies which will engage in seed production or be involved in seed distribution; 2) retooling of existing and training of new seed inspectors; and 3) developing and deploying the Rice Seed Information System to enhance traceability, monitoring of supply, and facilitating trade of certified seed. These agencies shall also collaborate to ensure that seed grower associations/cooperatives can deliver the required volume of seeds of the identified varieties at the right place and schedule.

## B.2) Guidelines for Propagation of Certified Seeds

- 1) In support to strengthening farmer organizations engaged in seed production and trade, and the government's program on promoting agriculture enterprise development as provided for in RA 11321, PhilRice shall tap local seed grower associations/cooperatives in propagating certified seeds.
- 2) PhilRice shall select from the masterlist of seed grower associations/cooperatives accredited by BPI through NSQCS using the following criteria:
  - a) Must be registered with either Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC);
  - b) Must be fully owned, managed, and operated by Filipino citizens;
  - c) Members who will engage in seed production must have an active accreditation from the BPI through NSQCS;
  - d) Must have BIR tax clearance/tax exemption and official receipts;
  - e) Must be PhilGEPS-registered;
  - f) Must be engaged in seed production in the last three years;
  - g) Must have a physical area within the Philippines for seed production cultivated by the organization and/or the BPI through NSQCS accredited members;
  - h) Must have operational seed postharvest facilities (e.g., dryer, thresher, seed cleaner-blower, and storage); and
  - i) Must have good performance in seed-related transactions in the last two years with DA-RFOs.
- 3) As mandated to propagate breeder, foundation, and registered seeds (RS) per RA 7308, PhilRice shall be the exclusive source of RS of recommended varieties as a critical component to ensure quality of certified seed propagation. All seed grower associations/cooperatives that satisfy the eligibility criteria shall be allowed access to these RS. Only in case of shortfall in PhilRice RS production shall the eligible seed grower associations/cooperatives participating in the RCEF-Seed be allowed to source RS from DA-accredited RS producers who obtained foundation seeds from PhilRice.
- 4) PhilRice shall enter into agreement with all eligible seed grower associations/cooperatives which committed to propagate the required volume of certified seeds per variety, using the government authorized buying price of certified inbred seed.
- 5) PhilRice shall allocate the seed production volume requirement to all contracted seed grower associations/cooperatives proportional to area capacity, variety, location, and planting schedule. Certified inbred seeds shall be sourced from the nearest seed grower association/cooperative to enhance timely distribution.
- 6) The contracted seed grower associations/cooperatives shall: a) follow the PhilRice and NSQCS recommended inbred seed production protocol and prescribed certification process; and b) use the prescribed packaging, among other provisions to guarantee seed quality.
- 7) A printed direction/instruction for use as recommended by PhilRice shall be included within the seed packaging to promote the use of associated ICM for specific varieties.
- 8) All certified seeds to be acquired must pass the NSQCS certification.
- 9) Contracted seed grower associations/cooperatives shall deliver the seeds to designated drop-off points within the region identified by PhilRice in consultation with DA-RFOs, C/MLGUs, and FOs within the set schedule.

- 10) PhilRice shall designate delivery inspectors among its personnel and may deputize permanent staff from C/MLGUs and/or DA-RFOs for the purpose.
- 11) The contracted seed grower associations/cooperatives must comply with all the requirements to facilitate payment.
- 12) PhilRice reserves the right to add provisions in the agreement as necessary.
- 13) PhilRice shall continue to engage in dialogues with all accredited seed grower associations/cooperatives to guide them in their seed production and synchronize the seed requirement of the program to the availability of seed supply.

### ***C. Supporting variety development***

This project shall augment the PhilRice core function of R4D particularly in developing better rice varieties for future generation. The Institute shall develop inbred rice varieties that are high-yielding, have good eating quality, and climate resilient through the use of conventional breeding, selection, biotechnology and other modern tools (e.g., genomics). Varieties shall be screened for yield performance, pest and disease resistance, grain quality, special qualities, nutrient- and water-use efficiency, abiotic stress tolerance, and suitability for crop establishment method (i.e., direct seeding and transplanting). Crop management optimization, adaptability trial, and seed yield and quality improvement shall also be conducted.

Initial focus shall be given to post-breeding activities, specifically the National Cooperative Test (NCT) and DNA fingerprinting. The NCT shall be done to ensure that upcoming rice varieties to be released by the National Seed Industry Council performs well in multi-environment. It shall include the Distinctness, Uniformity, and Stability Test to ensure stable performance of the released varieties.

Meanwhile, DNA fingerprinting of released varieties shall be done to complete seed reference and establish fingerprint reference to enhance traceability in case of mislabeling in seed production and trade.

#### **C.1) Guidelines for Supporting Variety Development**

- 1) PhilRice shall enter into agreement with SUCs, DA-RIARCs, and other research institutions in conducting the NCT based on the prescribed protocol.
- 2) The seed reference for all NSIC released varieties, including its breeder seeds, shall be completed. These varieties shall be subjected to DNA fingerprinting according to standard protocol to establish the fingerprint reference. PhilRice through its Genetic Resources Division (GRD), and the DA-Crop Biotechnology Center (CBC) shall conduct the said activity and maintain its database. The generated information shall form part of each variety's passport data. GRD and CBC shall perform verification of varietal authenticity. This shall be also used as inputs for breeding.
- 3) PhilRice shall share with BPI through NSQCS the DNA markers for all NSIC-released varieties and corresponding protocol for testing to enable the agency to regulate and ensure varietal authenticity.
- 4) The RCEF-Seed shall support other R4D activities related to variety and seed development that may emerge from the implementation of the program.

#### ***D. Strengthening farmer organizations***

This project shall cover social mobilization, mind-setting, and values formation for newly-formed organizations to prepare for the program. Existing FOs shall be encouraged to engage in farm clustering and agro-enterprise building. The RCEF-Seed shall also empower the FOs to become self-reliant by encouraging them to institutionalize a roll-over system that will sustain their adoption of certified inbred seeds and associated ICM beyond the life of the program.

To achieve economies of scale and bargaining power, establishment of farm clusters within an FO shall be encouraged to harmonize and synchronize selected farm activities and operations.

The RCEF-RESP shall support the implementation through the conduct of training programs on seed production and certification for potential seeds growers in collaboration with BPI-NSQCS and ATI; and communication, advocacy campaigns, and technical briefings with ATI, other implementing agencies, and local partners.

#### **D.1) Guidelines on strengthening organizations**

- 1) PhilRice and ATI shall assist P/C/MLGUs in conducting social mobilization, mind-setting, and values formation activities to encourage farmers become members of existing FOs or form new organizations.
- 2) The FOs shall be encouraged to institutionalize a roll-over system that will sustain their adoption of certified inbred seeds and associated ICM beyond the life of the program. This shall form part of exit strategy for the sustainability of the program. For FOs that are able to sustain a roll-over system and meet the target yield, PhilRice shall recommend to DA the inclusion of a reward mechanism to the Rice Achievers Award. The FOs which adopted roll-over system shall be also highly considered for continuous seed support under the RCEF Seed.
- 3) PhilRice, in partnership with LGUs and other local champions, shall establish farm clusters among FO members whose farms totaling at least 20ha are located in one or two adjacent villages within a city/municipality. Their capacity to engage in collective activities such as, but not limited to, use of single variety, establishment of group nursery, bulk ordering of inputs, and group marketing leading to agro-enterprise development shall be enhanced.
- 4) RCEF-Seed shall work with RCEF-RESP and other organizations to facilitate training and knowledge sharing and learning activities on seed production and trade among FOs. If interested, their capacity to become accredited seed growers shall be enhanced.
- 5) The FOs shall also be linked to other RCEF components, whenever feasible.

#### **VI. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 1) PhilRice, when necessary, shall assist DA in validating and updating the RSBSA and list of farmer-recipients.
- 2) PhilRice shall conduct baseline survey in RCEF provinces not covered in the 2016-2017 Rice-based Farm Household Survey funded by DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research. The generated information shall be used as a benchmark for impact evaluation in the third and sixth year of program implementation.

- 3) PhilRice, in partnership with DA-RFOs and P/C/MLGUs, shall conduct periodic monitoring and reporting of physical accomplishments of the program based on the set targets.
- 4) PhilRice shall develop a Rice Seed Information System as a knowledge management tool for the program to aid monitoring of seed supply. The system shall include, but not limited to, information on accredited seed growers, actual area planted per variety, projected harvest time, projected volume, and time of seed availability.
- 5) PhilRice shall recommend policy interventions to ensure sustainability of program impact. It shall also conduct policy advocacy on supporting local rice farmers.

## VI. Program Management

PhilRice shall establish a Program Management Office (PMO) to manage the day-to-day operations of the RCEF-Seed. It shall be PhilRice's coordinating arm with the RCEF-Program Steering Committee (PSC) led by the DA Secretary, and other implementing agencies for convergence of various applicable interventions (i.e. mechanization, credit, and extension).

The PMO shall be led by a Deputy Executive Director with a full staff complement requested from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). PhilRice shall engage in contracted services to augment its human resource requirement for the program when necessary. PhilRice personnel who shall be involved in the program shall be trained appropriately.

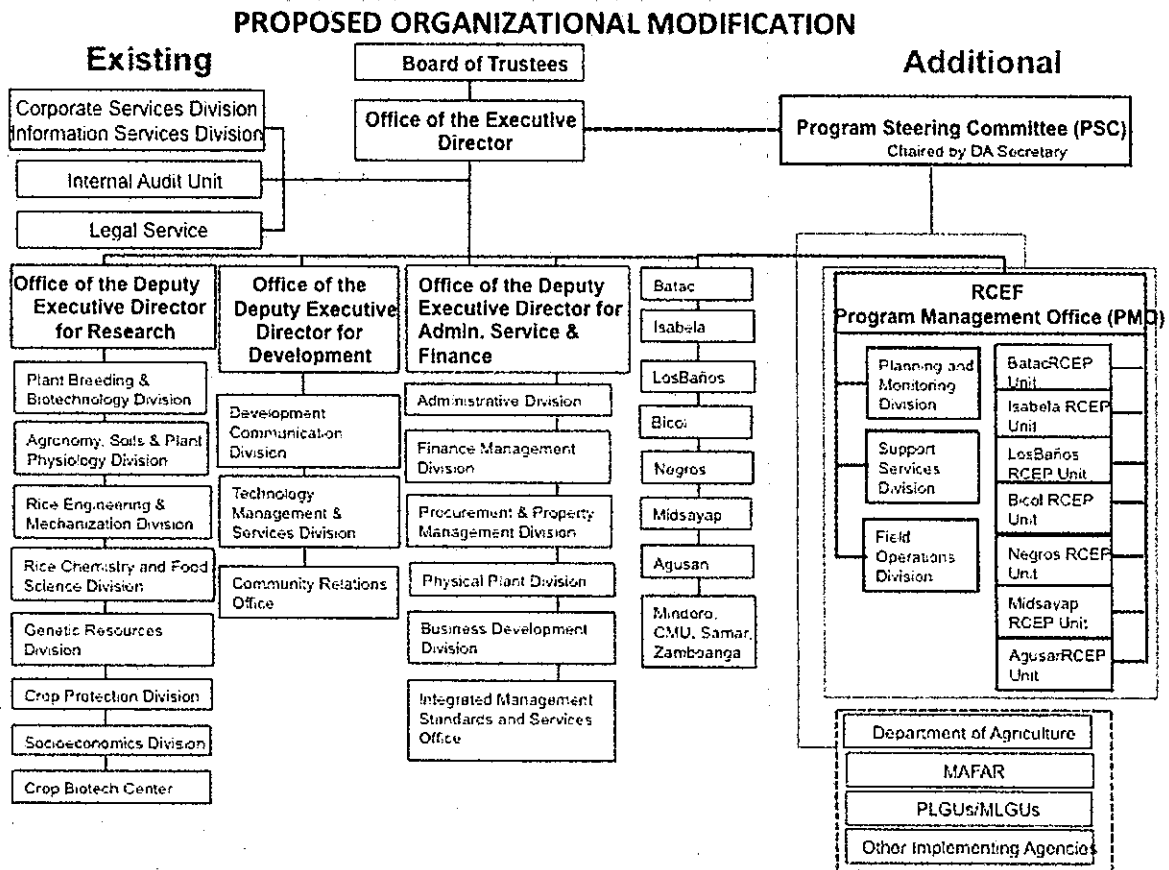


Figure 2. Existing and Proposed Organizational Structure of the RCEF-PMO

The **Program Management Office (PMO)** shall:

- 1) spearhead the seed component program management, planning, implementation, and monitoring;
- 2) coordinate with the DA and other implementing agencies in the planning and implementation of the program;
- 3) coordinate within PhilRice particularly with the Research Sector for developing varieties, Development Sector for extension, and Business Development Division for seed production;
- 4) institute and operationalize systems to mobilize personnel, allocate and disburse funds, report on financial and physical performance, and facilitate collaboration with the DA, and the regional and provincial partners;
- 5) ensure timely availability, positioning, and quality of higher seed classes for propagation; and
- 6) report regularly to DA, Project Steering Committee, and other RCEF oversight committees on the progress of implementation.

Three divisions shall be created under the PMO, namely Field Operations Division (FOD), Planning and Monitoring Division (PMD), and Support Services Division (SSD).

The **Field Operations Division (FOD)** shall:

- 1) lead the seed promotion and distribution;
- 2) monitor the program's field performance, and consolidate and submit progress reports to PMD;
- 3) conduct technology demonstrations and field days;
- 4) assist in monitoring the contracted seed growers' seed production area to ensure higher seed yield, quantity, and quality and facilitate timely certification in collaboration with BPI-NSQCS, DA-RFOs and P/MLGUs;
- 5) conduct periodic validation of target municipalities and beneficiaries, as necessary; and
- 6) provide necessary support to the extension group on the conduct of training and communication initiatives.

The **Planning and Monitoring Division (PMD)** shall:

- 1) lead the operational planning including setting of targets, performance indicators, and corresponding budget;
- 2) oversee the validation and regular updating of target municipalities and beneficiaries, and maintenance of farmers' database;
- 3) identify and manage operational and contingent controls associated with risks in program implementation;
- 4) monitor periodic progress of the program and submit corresponding reports to PSC;
- 5) facilitate conduct of baseline generation and impact evaluation for the program; and
- 6) coordinate partnerships and agreements with stakeholders.

The **Support Services Division (SSD)** shall:

- 1) lead the acquisition of certified seeds and ensure its timely availability;
- 2) facilitate payment to suppliers;
- 3) prepare and submit financial and administrative reports; and
- 4) provide logistics and administrative support to operations.

The **Branch Station RCEF-PMO Units** shall:

- 1) lead the program implementation in respective areas of responsibility;
- 2) coordinate the progress of the program to the PMO and the office of branch director for monitoring and support;
- 3) submit periodic reports on field performance to FOD, finance and administrative concerns to SSD, and other updates to the top management as necessary; and
- 4) provide logistics and administrative support to program staff, and branch station staff.

The PMO shall closely work closely with the DA-RFOs, P/C/MLGUs, and other relevant agencies in the planning and implementation of the program. To formalize partnerships, PhilRice shall enter into agreement with these institutions whenever necessary.

To ensure efficient implementation in the ground and enhance complementarity of RCEF-Seed with the DA-NRP, the DA Secretary through Regional Executive Directors shall designate a RCEF Focal Person in each DA-RFO as planning and operation counterpart for the RCEF. The PhilRice RCEF Regional Coordinator shall be stationed to the DA-RFO and work closely with the RCEF Focal Person under the supervision of the Regional Executive Director. Similarly, the PhilRice RCEF Provincial Coordinator shall be stationed to the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist under the supervision of the Provincial Agriculturist. The Regional and Provincial Coordinators shall regularly report to their respective PhilRice base stations.

Program operations shall include the following:

- 1) Regular consultation with stakeholders and coordination with implementing partners;
- 2) Coordination with and assistance to DA in updating the list of target municipalities and harmonizing farmers' masterlist database;
- 3) Conduct of periodic meetings at the provincial, regional, and national levels as necessary;
- 4) Provision of technical support;
- 5) Monitoring and evaluation of the program's outputs and seasonal assessment of cluster and FO performance;
- 6) Preparation and submission of financial and physical reports;
- 7) Establishment and maintenance of a feedback mechanism to enhance program implementation; and
- 8) Establishment of baselines, and impact evaluation of outcome on the third and sixth year.

## **VII. Separability**

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

### **VIII. Amendments**

The PSC shall periodically review and assess the implementation of this AO and submit recommendations for the amendment of any of its provision. Amendments to this AO shall be subject to the approval of the PSC.

PhilRice, in consultation with DA-RFOs, may recommend supplemental guidelines within the bounds of this AO to address location-specific concerns to be approved by the DA-Secretary.

### **IX. 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