

2020

PhilRice R&D Highlights



**Development
Communication
Division**

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Development Communication Division

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year, the Development Communication Division (DevCom) played a central role in advancing high-impact rice knowledge, policies, and behaviors to help enhance competitiveness of the Philippine rice industry through strategic communication and stakeholder engagement with the following projects: (1) Packaging and sharing of rice S&T through strategic media; (2) Strategic communication support for Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund-Rice Extension Services Program (RCEF-RESP); (3) RCEF Seed promotion through strategic communication; (4) Communication and Stakeholder Engagement in Support to Golden Rice Regulatory Approval and Pilot-scale Deployment; (5) Building a Unified Rice Network through Campaign and Advocacy; (6) Strategic Communication for the RiceBIS Program; and (7) Strategic Communication in Support of the Public Hybrid Rice Seed Systems Project. These projects helped intensify PhilRice presence in the communities directly contributing to the achievement of the strategic PhilRice outcome on enhanced partnerships and knowledge management for rice research for development (R4D).

A total of 239 knowledge products in the forms of magazines, posters, brochures, handouts, videos, planner, calendars, ordinances, social media materials, and briefers were produced, featuring rice R4D works and outputs, RCEF Seed and Extension programs, PalayCheck System, golden rice, hybrid rice, riceponsible behavior, and truthful labelling policy. Bulk of these knowledge products were produced for RCEF at two million copies; one million of which were distributed to farmers mainly during RCEF seed distribution events in the 57 major rice-growing provinces.

Amidst the pandemic that limits mobility, knowledge sharing and learning activities were carried out through various media platforms. The PhilRice Text Center, which farmers and agricultural workers turned to for queries during the lockdown, recorded 164,708 registrants, achieving a 494% increase from last year's. Most of the new text registrants were farmer-beneficiaries of the RCEF Program. It received 23,908 text queries with 92% responded to within an hour. Text queries were generally about seeds, pest and nutrient management, and seed availability. Eighty-six (86) SMS-checked articles were uploaded on the PhilRice website and rated as either

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

excited, fascinated, or amused. Women were tapped as subject matter specialists and women success were featured in 41% of the articles. Majority (83%) of the site visitors were satisfied with the articles published. In terms of coverage, 739 news materials were either printed or aired by 111 media companies, generating more than ₱4.7 billion in PR value. Media companies that published most of PhilRice news releases and mentioned PhilRice in their stories included Manila Bulletin Online, Inquirer.Net, and Philstar. The Pinoy Rice Knowledge Bank registered about 110,000 visitors and uploaded 55 new contents on PalayCheck System with 72,238 downloads. Nine of ten visitors (90%) who responded in the survey were satisfied with the contents. PhilRice programs, technologies, and activities were featured in 67 radio segments broadcasted 226 times by six radio station-partners. The PhilRice Facebook page had current likers and followers of 82,728 and 101,364, respectively (57% men; 43% women). The number of current likers and followers was a 30% increase from last year's. It uploaded and shared 367 SMS-checked posts, with a total reach of 276,802 and 10,309 engagements. Of the audiences reached, 62% were men; 38%, women. A digital campaign, promoting the National Rice Awareness Month, was also carried out with a theme "Grow Local. Buy Local. Eat Local. #Support Our Rice Farmers". The campaign Facebook posts garnered an average reach of 492,011, an average engagement of 4,903, an average post clicks of 91,526, and an average engagement rate of 1%. This equated to 98% total reach and 196% total engagements against the target. Meanwhile, an information campaign was also pursued for the Golden Rice Project. With an aim of establishing a favorable political and regulatory environment for Golden Rice, leading to regulatory approvals and wide public acceptance of Golden Rice as a complementary intervention to combat vitamin A deficiency, it reached out to 1,534 stakeholders through training, webinars, and exhibits conducted online.

In accomplishing all this, various organizations and individuals were tapped, such as the Presidential Communications Operations Office, regional information officers, and media practitioners, in implementing the communication campaigns on a wider scale. They particularly helped in the reprinting of knowledge products, airing of broadcast releases and radio segments, and sharing of social media posts. Lastly, gender-responsiveness was highly considered in all these communication works. Among the 91 stories published in magazines, 35 stories (38%) featured women. Not only that, women interviewees and women stories were also highlighted in 31-41% of the broadcast, news, and feature releases.

Packaging and Sharing of Rice S&T through Strategic Media

Ronan G. Zagado

This project packaged science-based and gender-sensitive rice farming technologies and practices into useful and digestible forms of knowledge, and shared them to our end- and next- users through appropriate and effective communication channels (face-to-face, print, radio, SMS, social media, website, etc.). Designed to inform and influence our target clients' decision-making towards a competitive rice industry, the project's outputs included 22 knowledge products in the forms of magazines, videos, handouts, brochures, journals, and planners. In addition, 11 radio segments, 132 Facebook posts, and 37 press releases on topics related to rice R&D activities and outputs were also produced. Moreover, the project also produced 1,112 new photos, tagged 6,324 photos, and shared 5,816 via Google Drive.

About 2,000 copies of the knowledge products produced were distributed to the intended users (e.g., policymakers, partner-agencies, and extension workers), while more than 70,000 materials were downloaded from the PinoyRice Knowledge Bank (PinoyRice). Moreover, the contents generated were shared through the PhilRice Text Center (PTC), website, PinoyRice, social media, and radio. Based on the survey conducted to determine whether clients were satisfied with the use of these platforms, the PTC, PhilRice Online, PinoyRice, and radio segments registered 92% client satisfaction. One issue of the PhilRice Magazine, which was evaluated by the Visayas State University, was perceived as comprehensive, attractive, acceptable, self-involved, and persuasive by 30 farmers and extensionists. The news and feature materials generated a savings of ₱4.7 billion in PR value.

Six (6) organizations including the Presidential Communications Operations Office were engaged as infomediaries. They particularly helped in the reprinting of knowledge products, airing of broadcast releases and radio segments, and publishing and sharing of PhilRice stories.

Lastly, gender-responsiveness was highly considered in this project. Among the 91 stories published in magazines, 35 stories (38%) featured women. Not only that, women interviewees and women stories were also highlighted in 31-41% of the broadcast, news, and feature releases.

Packaging of Rice S&T into Knowledge Products and Management of Communication Resources

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This study aimed to develop and produce gender-responsive knowledge products (KPs) that meet the needs and preferences of specific end-users to enable them to appreciate and understand rice S&T. This involved the development and production of science-based and high-impact KPs, photo and video documentation and management, and communication database management. A total of 22 KPs, 11 radio segments, 132 Facebook posts, and 37 press releases were produced. In addition, there were 6,324 photos tagged, 5,816 shared via Google Drive, and 1,112 photos uploaded to the database. Among the 91 stories published in magazines, 35 stories (38%) featured women.

Sharing of Rice S&T Information through Strategic Media

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DevCom Division works through various platforms, which ensure that R&D initiatives in all its stations are covered and that relevant rice S&T outputs reach the intended audience. To create a wider and greater impact on the ground, sharing of rice S&T information to various stakeholders using strategic media and providing communication support to branch stations through balanced news coverage were done.

Under this study, contents generated from the production of KPs were shared through SMS, website, PinoyRice, and radio. A survey was also conducted to determine whether clients were satisfied with the use of these platforms.

PROJECT 1

PTC DA-PhilRice Facebook page, PhilRice Online (website), PinoyRice, and radio segments registered 83-92% client satisfaction. The PTC registered 164,708 new texters while followers and likers of the DA-PhilRice FB page increased by 30%. One issue of the PhilRice Magazine, evaluated by the Visayas State University, was perceived as comprehensive, attractive, acceptable, self-involved, and persuasive by 30 farmers and extensionists. Women interviewees and women stories were also featured in 31-41% of the broadcast, news, and feature releases. The news and feature materials generated a savings of ₱4.7 billion in PR value. About 2,000 copies of the KPs were distributed to the intended users while more than 70,000 materials were downloaded from the PinoyRice. Six (6) organizations including the Presidential Communications Operations Office were also engaged as intermediaries.

Strategic Communication to Support Delivery of RCEF Extension Services

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One of the major interventions under the RCEF is to deliver extension services (i.e., training) to teach farmers with skills and knowledge on rice production, particularly on the use of certified inbred seeds and mechanization. Training, however, without information will not be complete. They must co-exist to facilitate effective learning - in this case - to enhance farmers' knowledge and skills and address the gender issue on information access. Report suggests that not all farmers have universal access to information that would be useful to them to improve their farm productivity.

This project was designed to provide strategic communication support to the RCEF-RESP. It particularly sought to produce information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on science-based farming for use in the training programs. These materials were produced in the form of print publication, audio, and video materials.

One hundred thirty-one (131) IEC materials were produced in the form of print, audio, and video materials. Of these, 21 printed materials included one *Tekno Kalendar*, 12 handouts, four posters, one Flipchart, one flashcard, one educational planner, and one localized print material. Over 300,000 copies of IEC materials were printed and distributed (49%) to male and female farmer-beneficiaries during the RCEF seed distribution and other knowledge sharing and learning (KSL) activities. There were 22 videos produced in technology-type, dramatized, testimonials, impact, and briefer materials. A total of 88 audio materials were produced in the form of audio clips, radio ads, and school-on-the-air (SOA) learning materials. Contents of these materials focused on the *PalayCheck* System, myths and facts on rice production, social values, and RCEF-RESP promotion in major languages such as Tagalog, Ilokano, Bicolano, Hiligaynon, Bisaya, and Maguindanaon.

In the design and implementation of KSL activities, a total of 109 posts were uploaded on our Facebook Page, which was 14% higher than the 96 targeted posts. Four text blasts were sent to more than 37,000 recipients and 39 queries were responded to within an hour through the PTC. In partnership with six radio stations, 23 radio engagements were conducted, 92% higher than the 12 targeted

engagements. Fifty-five (55) IEC materials on PinoyRice and 21 videos on Youtube were uploaded. Eleven face-to-face KSL activities were conducted in the form of webinars, media briefings, and *kapihan*. Online and face-to-face KSL activities had a total reach of 3,985,480.

Two communication workshops were conducted to monitor the implementation of the project. These were done face-to-face in the first semester and online in the second semester. Participants of the said workshop were project implementers in DevCom and communication focal persons from the branch stations.

Seed Promotion through Strategic Communication

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While the RCEF-Seed Program aims to provide the basic seed needs of the rice farmers from 2019 to 2024, the issue of sustainability still remains crucial. Thus, there is a need to promote the use of certified seeds to farmers to ensure its continuous adoption even after the program cycle. This project aimed to implement a strategic communication plan through the use of appropriate communication modalities and conduct of social mobilization activities to raise program awareness, promote positive, desirable behaviors, and gain public support of the programs among the intended beneficiaries. There were 22 KPs produced; 30 articles and three photo news releases published in the PhilRice Magazine, website, and national dailies; and 22 radio engagements aired in six radio stations, particularly in DXSA 105.5, DWET 1179kHz, DWAY 1332, RW95.1 FM, DYTR 11GkHz, and DZRH 666 kHz. Topics covered were about seed distribution, program updates, and farmers' success stories. In addition, a Facebook page for the RCEF-Seed Program was also launched in June 2020. Sixty-eight (68) original and 143 shared posts were uploaded through the page. These posts had 1,028,176 reach and 77,779 engagement. Since its conception in June 2020, the page garnered 6,032 followers. The top five most followed posts include *Lakbay Binhi* vlogs on *PalaySikatan* and seed certification, seed delivery program updates, and guidelines on how to acquire seeds. The project also responded to 2,599 queries through PTC. Among the top queries include schedule of seed distribution, confirmation of claim codes for the *Binhi e-Padala* system, payment of seeds by seed growers, and proper

seed soaking. Lastly, to create wider information dissemination about the program, mobilization of partners was carried out. Letters were sent to the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) and the DA-Regional Information Officers (DA-RIOs) for the coverage of related stories and other possible communication support for the program. The PIA Central Office cascaded the information to their regional offices, thus, their frequent sharing of news and feature stories about the regional program stories. The DA-RIOs also actively shared social media posts through their official accounts, and disseminated program updates specifically the weekly seed delivery schedules through their communication networks.

Communication and Stakeholder Engagement for Nutritionally Enhanced Rice: Finishing and Delivering Golden Rice and High-Iron and Zinc Rice Varieties

Ronan G. Zagado, Reynante L. Ordonio, Gladys May G. Cristobal, and Hannah Mae A. Tolentino

This project provided communication and stakeholder engagement for the regulatory application and pilot-scale deployment of Golden Rice. It particularly aimed to establish a favorable political and regulatory environment for Golden Rice, leading to regulatory approvals and wide public acceptance of Golden Rice as a complementary intervention to combat vitamin A deficiency.

This year's communication, stakeholder engagement, and policy advocacy works focused on supporting the regulatory application for the commercial propagation of Golden Rice. Along with the COVID-19 pandemic came the changes in carrying out the team's planned activities for the year. With the revolving guidelines and restrictions, the team took the opportunity to engage with key stakeholders online through briefings, webinars, virtual surveys, and training.

The team reached out to a total of 1,534 stakeholders through the training, webinars, and exhibits conducted online. Around 90 key stakeholders from the agriculture and nutrition sectors were briefed about the updates on the project. The Golden Rice E-Newsletter was sent to 250 local and international project partners and stakeholders monthly.

The Golden Rice Project Facebook page had also seen a 196% increase in page reach from 116,875 to 346,474, 78% increase in post engagement from 13,275 to 23,683, and 29% increase in page likes from 2,609 to 3,355.

The Golden Rice Communications Team also won the Best Agricultural Information and Media Campaign during the *Binhi* Agricultural Journalist Awards 2020.