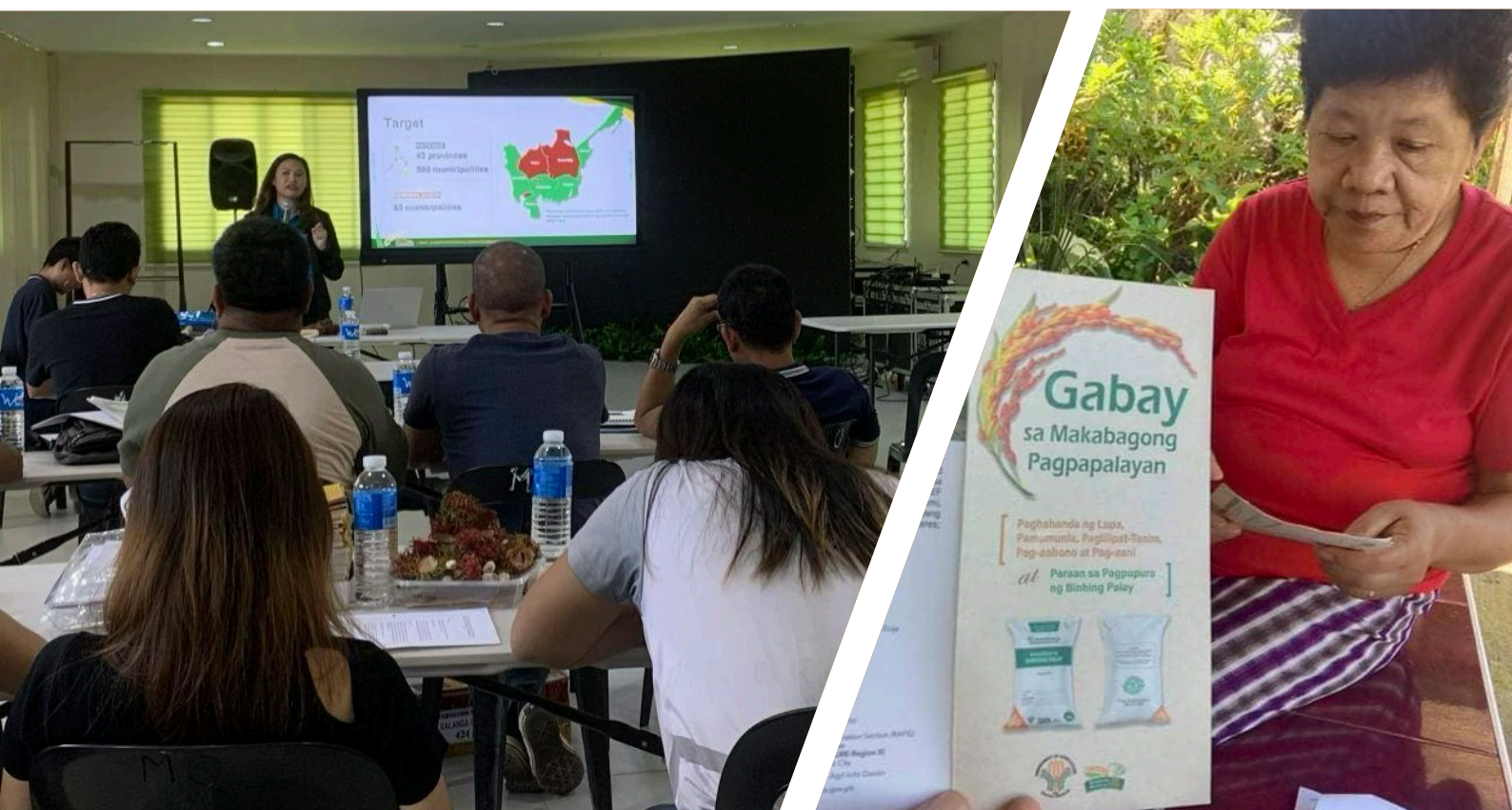


# 2023

## PhilRice R&D Highlights



## DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION DIVISION



**Philippine Rice Research Institute**  
Central Experiment Station  
Maligaya, Science City of Muñoz, 3119 Nueva Ecija



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# Development Communication Division

Hazel V. Antonio

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DevCom at PhilRice is dedicated to fostering societal change through the integration of rice science and technologies. Serving as a vital link between research and practical application, DevCom ensures that the benefits of scientific advancements reach farmers and stakeholders effectively.

DevCom spearheads three significant projects: Production and Sharing of Rice Science and Technology Through Strategic Media; RCEF Seed Promotion through Strategic Communication; and RCEF Extension Strategic Communication. These initiatives are meticulously guided by feedback and communication needs assessment surveys, ensuring alignment with the practical needs of our stakeholders.

The project objectives include promoting modern rice farming practices, advocating for high-quality seed utilization, empowering extensionists and farmers with up-to-date knowledge, and cultivating a RICEponsible citizenry who practices the ABKD of rice: A - Adlay, mais, saba, atbp. ay ihalo sa kanin (Mix rice with other food staples), B - Brown rice ay kainin (Eat brown rice or unpolished rice), K - Kanin ay huwag sayangin (No to rice wastage), D - Dapat bigas ng Pilipinas ang bilhin (Patronize locally produced rice).

DevCom addressed the El Niño challenges in the Philippines. By providing timely and pertinent information to agricultural extension workers and farmers, we facilitated the adoption of good agricultural practices to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Furthermore, we are at the forefront of sustaining the public's generally favorable perceptions of the Institute and the RCEF Programs. We also established partnerships to maximize our institutional reach.

# Production and Sharing of Rice S&T Through Strategic Media

**Charisma Love B. Gado-Gonzales, Hazel V. Antonio, Hanah Hazel Mavi B. Manalo, Anna Marie B. Berto, Fredierick M. Saludez, Christina A. Frediles, Carlo G. Dacumos, Sarah Joy N. Ruiz, Jaime F. Miguel III, Yobhel Louisse P. Beltran, Joshua P. Mendoza, Minard F. Pagaduan, Christine Mae A. Nicolas, Mariel M. Espinoza, Ardian M. Dolera, Rocel Dyan C. Silva, Marnielita Grace P. Sante, Derwin J. Villena, and Rhyden S. Ramirez**

The project tackles challenges in the rice sector by disseminating scientific knowledge through media channels and communication campaigns. With rice being vital for global food security yet facing obstacles like climate change, bridging the gap between research and technology application is crucial. For 2023, the Division exceeded targets in knowledge product (KP) development, achieved growth in ICT platforms and media presence, gained positive user feedback, executed innovative approaches, conducted training, and received recognitions.

The project made notable progress in enhancing public awareness of rice-related initiatives and in tackling urgent issues in rice production. We surpassed the target of 26 new titles by producing 41 KPs with completion rate of 157.7%. These materials included the award-winning PhilRice magazines, which shed light on the El Niño phenomenon and promoted initiatives such as MaSaGana and the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) programs. A 100% circulation rate from the CES to branch stations was also achieved.

New sections in the PhilRice Magazine were introduced: "Start it up," "Motivate," and "AgriBIZ." They provide insights regarding the journeys of individuals venturing into rice farming, share inspiring narratives and triumphs in rice production, and explore the commercial aspects of agriculture, respectively.

Photo resources expanded through the documentation of crop management practices across two seasons, resulting in 190 photos. This output is way above our initial target of 90 photos by 111.1%.

Communication and knowledge products had a substantial impact, as evidenced by high satisfaction ratings: DA-PhilRice page, 97%; PinoyRice, 92%; and the PhilRice Text Center (PTC), 92%. Our news releases were picked up by an average of 29 media outlets per month.

The PTC recorded 188,912 new registered clients, a 249% increase from last year's registrants. In anticipation of the El Niño difficulties, we sent 4 text blasts to 132,246 recipients, providing guidance on coping with climate challenge.

Engagement in the DA-PhilRice page increased by 72% from 369,576 in 2022 to 634,608 this year. This was achieved through strategies such as developing memes

based on social media trends, initiating conversations in the comment section, posting quizzes, reaching out to farmers, and conducting a demographic profile survey of our followers. By the end of the year, the page had 220,456 followers.

Uploaded were 287 original posts, 99% beyond the set goal of 144 posts. User-generated content (UGC) exceeded expectations with 27 posts each reaching at least 40,000 views. Our #BeClimateSmart social media campaign reached 202,654 and engaged 15,243, winning a high engagement rate of 7.5%.

A survey conducted among 132 respondents showed that 97% of them appreciated the overall content of the DA-PhilRice FB page; 93.2% were satisfied with the information and responses. Not only that, 70.5% of them confided that the responses from the page helped reduce their farming expenses and increase their yields.

An innovative approach to social media coverage during Lakbay Palay was also employed through vlogging, which unlocked an 11% increase in the event's reach. From 48,000 during the 2022 WS, it rose to 53,200 during this year's WS.

PhilRice's visibility brightened up, with media coverage rising from an average of 18 to 29 articles per month. This boost led to a 373% growth in PR value from PhP28 million in 2022 to PhP133 M in 2023. Including media mentions, the institute's overall PR value surged by 699%, shooting up from PhP15.8 M in 2022 to PhP126.4 M in 2023. This remarkable growth highlights the enhanced visibility and positive perception of PhilRice in the media over the past year.

Fifty-one articles about the Institute's regular programs were published in the PhilRice Online, exceeding the target of 24 by 112.5%. The gender distribution of subject matter specialists was balanced, with 45% (23 articles) featuring men interviewees, 39% (20 articles) engaging women, and 15% (8 articles) involving both genders.

The Pinoy Rice Knowledge Bank recorded 600 downloads and added 19 new materials related to El Niño. PhilRice radio broadcast 23 programs, including 27 presentations anchored on El Niño, with an equal distribution of 17 men and 17 women specialists. The nationwide "Be RICEponsible" campaign carried out 35 activities and created 50 collateral materials, promoting responsible rice consumption. Some 35 agencies supported the observance of National Rice Awareness Month, amplifying the campaign's reach and impact.

In the 2022 Binhi Awards by the Philippine Agricultural Journalists Inc, held in July 2023, the DA-PhilRice FB page was distinguished as the first recipient of the Best Agri-related Social Media Page. The PhilRice Magazine glowed with the Hall of Fame Awards for Best Agricultural Magazine, and PhilRice was recognized for waging the Best Agri-info and Media Campaign.



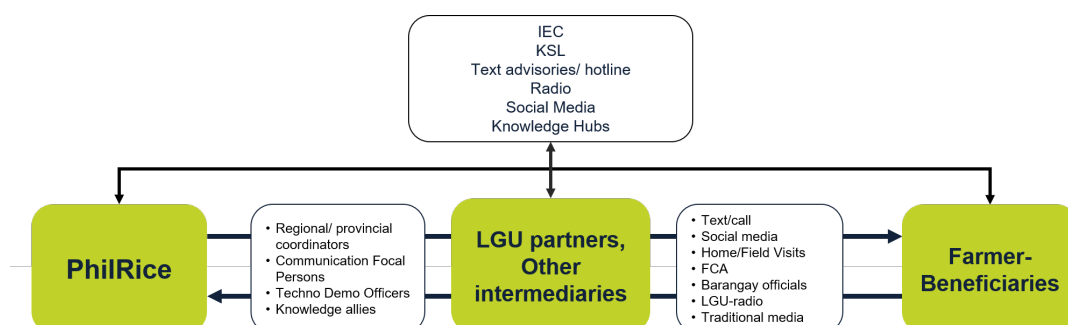
The division's senior staffers were also tapped as resource persons on knowledge product development and social media management in three seminar-workshops conducted by the ATI.

## Seed Promotion through Strategic Communication (RCEF-funded)

**Ronan G. Zagado, Anna Marie B. Berto, Yobhel Louisse B. Beltran, Minard F. Pagaduan, Jaime F. Miguel III, Shannel M. Cabansag, Nonilon I. Martin, Mishelle C. Domingo, Rhea Grace Y. Malapascua, Lalaine P. Perillo, Girlie A. Carreon, Aeron E. Calang, Fredierick M. Saludez, and Christine Mae A. Nicolas**

Under the RCEF Seed Program, this project effectively communicated important information to its target audience through strategic channels. It responded to the evolving communication needs, garnered support for promoting site-specific fertilizer recommendations using the Minus-One-Element Technique (MOET), and assisted a farmers' cooperative/association (FCA) in marketing its produce.

The project followed a communication system that coincided with RCEF Seed Operations (Figure 1), relaying information, and addressing concerns of farmer-recipients through its field and operations personnel and LGU partners, and multimedia platforms such as IECs, text advisories, radio, and social media.



**Figure 1.** PhilRice RCEF Flow of Communication, 2023.

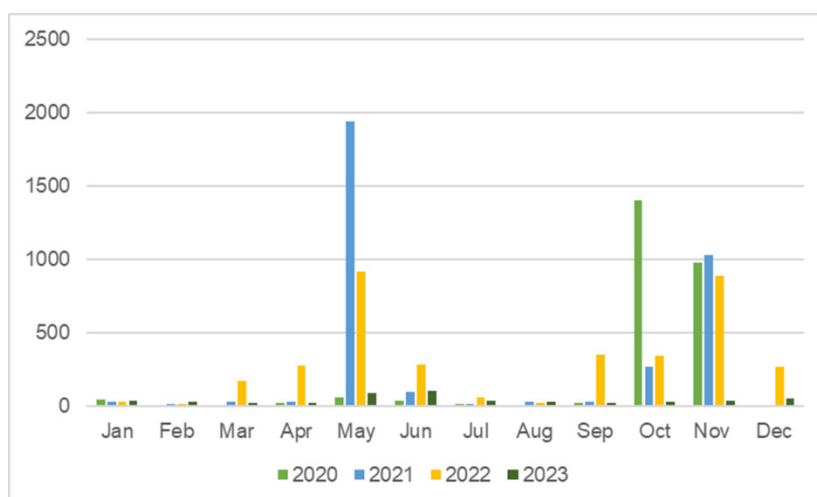
The project produced 298 IEC materials, including program-related briefers and annual reports distributed to stakeholders. Additionally, 20 event highlights and testimonial videos were shared during events and on social media; 213 sets of banners and 57 booklets on site-specific fertilizer recommendations were distributed to partner-municipal government units. Thirty-one news and feature stories were published on the PhilRice website, seven of which were picked up by



29 media outlets, generating a total PR value of P6.43M. Notably, stories such as ‘Certified seeds distribution expanded’, ‘PalaySikatan sites launched in Bicol’, and ‘RCEF program delivers El Niño-ready rice seeds’ gained the highest PR values. Moreover, six text blasts on variety selection and proper seedling management were sent to 133,411 RCEF seed recipients across regions.

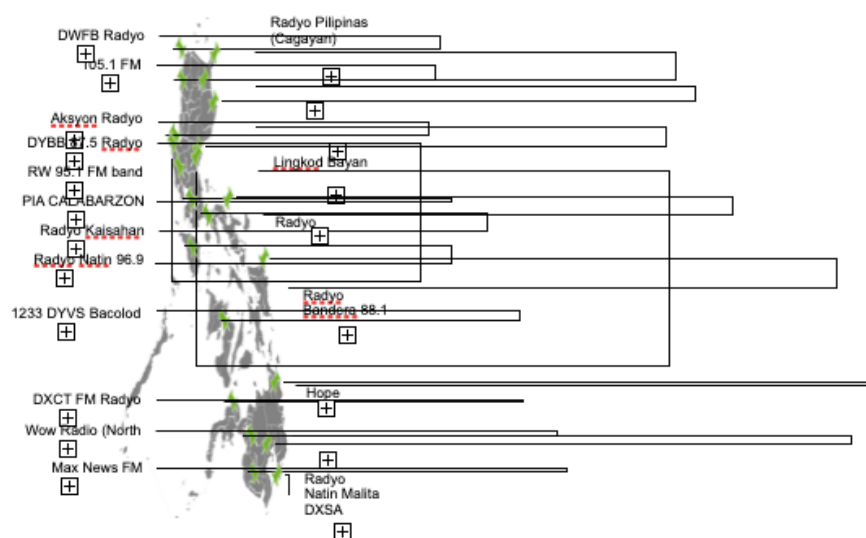
The official Facebook page of the RCEF Seed Program published 160 original and 102 shared posts, reaching 364,440 people with 47,897 engagements and a 13.14% engagement rate. Top-engaging posts covered program guidelines, edutainment content, FAQs, and PalaySikatan technologies. In addition, 378 original RCEF-Seed related posts were published on branch stations’ Facebook pages.

An online survey with 564 participants found that 94% of followers were farmers, 5% were agriculture extensionists, and 1% were students from 69 provinces where RCEF Seed operates. Queries received through the PTC and RCEF Seed Facebook page (533 text/call and 1,253 messenger) mostly focused on seed distribution schedules, allocation, process/requirements, and recipient master lists. The program received appreciation messages via messenger, with query trends peaking during seed distribution seasons. A 100% client satisfaction rate was recorded in messenger. Respondents praised the page for being informative, offering correct and easy-to-understand information, regular updates on seed distribution schedules, and providing content on modern technologies and practices.



**Figure 2.** Monthly queries received via PTC, 2020-2023.

Thirty-eight radio engagements were carried out by 22 radio stations (Figure 3) across the country. Topics were updates on registration requirements, and myths and facts on seeding rates.



**Figure 3.** Engaged radio stations across the country, 2023.

The project engaged stakeholders to support site-specific fertilizer recommendations, producing operational plans with templates for ordinances, resolutions, and project proposals. Presentations reached 251 stakeholders, including 199 city/ municipal local government units (LGUs), 27 agencies (DA-Regional Field Offices, Agricultural Training Institute, Bureau of Soil and Water Management), 15 provincial LGUs, and 9 Sangguniang Bayan committees that were presented with the operational plan, harvesting 78 commitments, such as intensified knowledge product displays and institutional policies. Likewise, in collaboration with the RiceBIS Program and PhilRice Isabela, support was provided to the St. Vincent Parish Multipurpose Cooperative (SVPMP), leading to a PhP7M business deal with People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network (PDRRN) Inc. in November.

SVPMP, an RCEF-assisted FCA in Nueva Vizcaya, was supported through the development of their business proposal, branding and packaging, and provision of milled rice sacks as promotional materials, linkage with RCEF Isabela in the availment of marketable varieties (NSIC Rc 160 and Rc 218), and market linkage.

# RCEF Extension Strategic Communication Project

**Hanah Hazel Mavi B. Manalo, Christina A. Frediles, Vanneza B. Isidro, Reuel M. Maramara, Kiara Mae A. Panyo , Joshua P. Mendoza, Mariel M. Espinoza, Jezalyn N. Grospe, Derwin P. Villena, Rhyden S. Ramirez, Charisma Love B. Gado-Gonzales, Christine Angel D. Damaso, Franzel Monique D. Bonilla, Nonilon I. Martin, Claudine G. Pascua, Diana P. Lim, Andres L. Dela Cruz Jr., Jayson Naniong , Christine M. Reyes, Jacqueline O. Lee Canilao, Michael L. Satuito, Anthony Romeo S. Rivera, Vanessa A. Tingson, Rojen F. Austria, Kristianne Marie C. David, Alona P. Tape, Keith Elysah M. Espina, Kimbie M. Pedtamanan, and Ommal H. Abdulkadil**

The project provides information access, increases knowledge, and influences the RCEF farmer-beneficiaries to approve the knowledge, to develop the intention to act on it, to practice, and advocate for it.

The project created and distributed IEC materials and collaterals on RCEF Program services and science-based rice production through multiple platforms, tailored to the preferences and accessibility of RCEF beneficiaries. There were 51 new titles, audio-visual materials, and collaterals (long sleeves, arm covers) developed and distributed to farmers, trainees, farmers cooperatives and associations (FCAs), and LGUs, totaling 3,458,879 copies disseminated through various activities.

Conducted were 725 knowledge sharing and learning (KSL) activities through interpersonal (briefings, field days) and mediated channels (social media, radio, website, SMS) with a reach of 2,716,821 persons.

Twelve communication workshops, including multimedia training for branch station staff and review sessions with focal persons and implementing agencies, were held to tackle challenges, document best practices, and plan strategic interventions. An evaluation study via focus group discussions revealed increased farmer adoption of technologies, mainly learned from printed materials, which were the most accessible and useful channel among RCEF interventions, followed closely by social media.





