PRDP SCALE UP MIDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PHILIPPINE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

DA-PRDP SCALE UP MIDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

From Measured Progress to Emerging Benefits: Scaling Impact for Philippine Agriculture through Program Evaluation and Informed Policy

Revised Draft Report
4 April 2026

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List of acronyms

AF2	Second Additional Financing
AFMP	Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan
AMAD	Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division
AMAS	Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Services
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
BDS	Business Development Support
CDA	Cooperative Development Authority
DA	Department of Agriculture
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EOP	End of Project
EQ	Evaluation Question/s
FCA	Farmers and Fisherfolk Cooperative and Association
FMR	Farm-To-Market Road
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
I-BUILD	Rural Infrastructure and Market Linkage Component
I-PLAN	National and Local Level Planning Component
IR	Intermediate Results
I-REAP	Enterprise Development Component
LGU	Local Government Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MES	Midterm Evaluation Study
MSAR	Mainstreaming Situational Analysis Reports
MTR	Mid-term Review
NOL	No Objection Letter
NPAB	National Project Advisory Board
NPCO	National Project Coordination Office
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OL	Original Loan

PCIP	Provincial Commodity Investment Plan
PDO	Project Development Objectives
PhP	Philippine Peso
PLGU	Provincial Local Government Unit
PPMIU	Provincial Project Management and Implementing Unit
PRDP	Philippine Rural Development Project
PRDP-SU	Philippine Rural Development Project Scale-Up
PSO	Project Support Office
RAEB	Rapid Appraisal of Emerging Benefits
RAFIP	Regional Agri-Fishery Investment Portfolio
RPAB	Regional Project Advisory Board
RPCO	Regional Project Coordination Office
SES	Social and Environmental Safeguard
SP	Sub-project
VCA	Value Chain Analysis

Executive Summary

The Midterm Evaluation Study (MES) is a critical milestone mandated by the Department of Agriculture's covenant with the World Bank. Its primary purpose is to objectively measure the PRDP Scale-Up's progress at its midpoint, identify operational bottlenecks, and ensure strategic alignment with its Project Development Objectives (PDOs). The study serves to validate the institutionalization of governance reforms and generate evidence-based recommendations for adaptive management and long-term sustainability.

As a flagship initiative of the DA, the PRDP Scale-Up represents a strategic evolution in the Philippine agricultural landscape. With a total investment of PhP 38.57 billion, the project transitions from localized, proponent-driven interventions toward an integrated, inter-provincial and regional framework. This systemic shift aims to modernize the agri-fishery sector by improving supply chain efficiency, food accessibility, and regional economic integration.

The MES specifically seeks to evaluate physical and financial progress, review procurement efficiency, and examine the coordination between the National (NPCO) and Regional (RPCO) offices and Local Government Units (LGUs). Ultimately, the study determines the likelihood of the project achieving its end-of-project targets: increased access to assets, improved market access, and increased farmer incomes.

In terms of achieving its PDOs and financial operations, the PRDP SU has achieved the following:

Increased Access to Agricultural Assets and Services (PDO 1). As of March 2026, the project has reached 30,152 farmers (6.7% of the EOP target), providing direct access to services through 16 completed rural infrastructure subprojects. While physical completion for large-scale assets like irrigation remains at an early stage, the I-PLAN component has already exceeded its strategic milestones with 16 approved Regional Agri-Fishery Investment Portfolios (RAFIPs), ensuring that the remaining pipeline is anchored in validated regional frameworks.

Improved Access to Markets (PDO 2). Evaluation data indicates a significant divergence between the treatment and control groups. Beneficiaries in treatment areas observed a 14.42% increase in marketed output, compared to only 2.72% in control areas. This progress is underpinned by a dramatic 54.95% reduction in travel time. Furthermore, infrastructure is serving a critical cost-mitigation function; while the impact of regional inflationary pressures remains not yet conclusive, treatment areas experienced a significantly lower rate of increase in transport costs (3.72%) compared to control areas (10.92%), effectively insulating farmers from external economic shocks.

Increased Income of Farmers and Fisherfolks (PDO 3). While nominal income growth was observed across both cohorts, the evaluation suggests that the full impact of the project on household income is currently in a gestation period. High attribution rates among beneficiaries (75% for marketed volume) indicate that the project is successfully establishing the structural conditions necessary for income growth. Although current econometric estimations yield statistically non-significant results, the observed lack of income divergence is likely attributable to the brief interval between subproject completion and the midterm survey, compounded by broader external economic shifts.

Financial Performance and Execution Efficiency. Supported by a PhP 38.6 billion budget, the project has successfully obligated PhP 14.8 billion and disbursed PhP 5.2 billion with I-BUILD as the primary financial driver, accounting for 78% of the project cost and 86% of total disbursements.

A component-based analysis reveals the following implementation progress at the midterm stage:

The **I-PLAN** component has moved beyond the production of documents to actively influencing investment flows and institutional behavior.

Total agri-fishery investments aligned with **Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs)** increased by **46.7%**, totaling **PhP 218.02 billion**. This significantly exceeds the **30% EOP target**. Notably, **68% of these funds come from non-PRDP sources**, demonstrating that PCIPs are successfully functioning as coordination and signaling mechanisms for the wider DA and LGU budgets.
Meanwhile, regional planning has seen a breakthrough with 16 approved Regional Agri-Fishery Investment Portfolios (RAFIPs). Currently, 10 out of 15 regions are already referencing these portfolios in their DA Annual Work Plans, signaling a shift from informal use to formal institutional integration.

On the institutionalization scale (1 to 5), both LGUs and DA Regional Field Units (RFUs) scored between 2.46 and 2.7, placing them in the "Utilization" stage. This indicates that tools like VCA and eVSA are being applied in daily workflows, though they are not yet fully mandated or "routinized" in formal budgeting cycles.

The development of I-BUILD and I-REAP sub-projects follows a rigorous lifecycle—from identification, technical design, business planning to procurement, work execution, and long-term monitoring. While these processes ensure high-quality, climate-resilient, and economically viable investments, the midterm evaluation reveals that the complexity of these requirements has extended implementation timelines beyond initial service standards.

Local Government Units (LGUs) often struggle with the technical rigor of PRDP's feasibility studies (FS) and detailed engineering designs (DED), which require advanced climate-resilience and geotechnical analysis often exceeding standard LGU capacities. In terms of operational bottlenecks, delays are primarily driven by iterative technical reviews across multiple project levels (RPCO, PSO, and National), as well as protracted processes for securing Right-of-Way (ROW), land titles, and environmental permits. Despite these delays, the process has served as a successful capacity-building mechanism, elevating LGU standards for infrastructure planning and safeguards compliance.

Meanwhile, the enterprise component has 7 approved sub-projects at the implementation stage and 32 in the development pipeline, representing a total investment value of approximately PhP 4.6 billion. Reaching NOL1 status for Farmer Cooperative and Associations (FCAs) takes an average of 20 to 26 months. The primary challenge is the preparation of the Business Plan, which requires sophisticated market data and technical specifications that many first-time FCA proponents find daunting. Sourcing reliable secondary data and navigating legal requirements for land conversion and titling remain significant hurdles. In practice, land conversion processes—formally around 30 days—often exceed 24 months due to inter-agency complexities.

The MES identifies a critical shift required for the project's second half: moving from process-based compliance to enforceable governance. The following recommendations are designed to bridge the gap between planning and actual investment.

1. I-PLAN: Strengthening the Planning-to-Investment Link

The primary challenge is that planning tools (PCIP/RAFIP) are currently used as advisory "decision-support" rather than "decision-control" mechanisms.

- Formally integrate PCIPs and RAFIPs into the DA Annual Work Plan (AWP) and LGU budgeting frameworks (AIP/CDP). All investment proposals must be strictly anchored on these priorities as a mandatory requirement for funding.
- Implement "PCIP alignment checklists" during proposal screening. Non-compliant proposals should be returned for revision to ensure that evidence-based planning dictates budget allocation.
- Transition from tracking the *process* of tool adoption to validating *outcomes* through a "badge-based" monitoring system linked to performance accountability frameworks for DA units.
- Align LGU compliance with I-PLAN tools to national performance systems like the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) to reinforce adoption through objective, rules-based criteria.

2. I-BUILD: Enhancing Implementation Efficiency and Sustainability

Strategic focus must shift toward streamlining the "upstream" preparation and "downstream" maintenance of infrastructure.

- Reduce the 18–24 month timeline to NOL1 by harmonizing regional guidelines and accelerating technical reviews (FS/DED) between the RPCO and NPCO.
- Implement tighter financial safeguards and performance-based instruments to manage contractor underperformance and prevent repeated failed biddings.
- Mandate the institutionalization of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) through secured LGU budget allocations and the full utilization of the SIDLAN digital monitoring platform.

- Provide intensive technical "hand-holding" for LGUs on complex requirements like geotagging, climate-resilient design, and social safeguards.

3. I-REAP: Refining Enterprise Metrics and Market Connectivity

The evaluation suggests updating the Results Framework to better reflect the "additionality" and commercial reality of enterprise clusters.

- Replace the "Partnership with Institutional Buyers" indicator (which many already have) with "Increase in Sales Volume/Value," providing a more accurate measure of project-driven commercial growth.
- Refine indicators to specifically track enterprises moving into new post-production segments (e.g., processing or cold storage) rather than just existing operations.
- Adjust gender-related indicators to focus on meaningful economic empowerment strategies rather than just raw participation numbers, ensuring metrics align with actual component interventions.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

The PRDP Scale-Up (Project hereinafter) is one of the flagship programs of the Department of Agriculture (DA or Department hereinafter) designed to address the gaps in the commodity value chains by improving the efficiency of the food supply chain towards greater connectivity, mobility, accessibility, availability, and affordability of food in the market. By adopting the DA's clustering and consolidation framework, the Project transitions from individual and siloed sub-project interventions to an integrated, cluster-based approach aimed at systemic agricultural modernization. Central to this strategy is Administrative Order No. 27, s. 2020, which established the Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2) program. This policy represents the Department's first systematic effort to implement large-scale clustering as a primary driver of food security (Inocencio et al., 2022).

Moreover, the DA-PRDP Scale Up represents a strategic evolution in the country's agricultural landscape, designed to address persistent sectoral challenges by transitioning from localized, proponent-driven interventions toward a more integrated, regional, and interprovincial investment framework. Unlike its predecessor, which focused heavily on individual proponent groups, the Scale Up project adopts a perspective that prioritizes clustering and consolidation. It moves away from siloed intervention and support toward Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2). Moreover, under the Scale Up, proponents are no longer limited to individual Farmer Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs) or Provincial Governments (PG). This shift allows for more cohesive planning across provincial boundaries, ensuring that infrastructure and enterprise investments are synchronized with regional commodity flows and spatial development goals. By expanding its scope to include rice and corn as priority commodities, the project reinforces its role as a primary driver of regional food security and economic integration.

The Project is operationalized through four (4) integrated components, namely I-BUILD, I-REAP, I-PLAN, and I-SUPPORT.

- The I-PLAN Component lays down the strategic framework in the context of overall project operations and implementation of interventions.
- The I-BUILD Component will focus on delivering climate-resilient access and value chain infrastructure support.
- The I-REAP Component aims to increase productivity and value addition and improve access to the markets of enterprise clusters through efficient cluster-based agricultural and fishery productivity enhancement interventions.
- The I-SUPPORT Component provides the backbone of the DA-PRDP Scale Up implementation. It ensures coordinated approaches and strategies among the I-PLAN, I-BUILD, and I-REAP components by providing support for effective and efficient project management, project oversight, capacity building/strengthening, complementary project staffing, technical assistance, and operating costs for the six-year implementation.

1.2 Project Description

The Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) Scale-Up is a six-year national initiative of the Department of Agriculture (DA), fundamentally designed to modernize the Philippine agri-fishery sector through a strategic shift toward Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2). With a total project investment of PhP 38.57 billion—comprising a PhP 33.00 billion World Bank loan and PhP 5.57 billion in Government of the Philippines (GOP) counterpart funding—the project serves as a primary driver of regional food security and economic integration.

The Scale-Up represents an evolution from localized, proponent-driven interventions to a more integrated, inter-provincial investment framework. It targets three core Project Development Objectives (PDOs):

- **PDO 1:** Increased access to agricultural assets or services.

- **PDO 2:** Improved access to markets.
- **PDO 3:** Increased income of farmers and fisherfolks.

1.3 Purpose of the Evaluation Study

The conduct of the Midterm Evaluation Study (MES) is part of the formal covenant of the Department of Agriculture (DA) with the World Bank. The MES serves as a critical milestone in the project's lifecycle. The study is designed to objectively measure progress, identify operational bottlenecks, and ensure alignment with the overarching goals of the PRDP Scale-Up, while also examining how planning-led governance reforms are being translated into institutional practice across DA and LGUs.

Specifically, the evaluation serves four primary functions:

1. To systematically evaluate the extent to which PRDP SU has generated tangible socio-economic benefits at the mid-point of implementation, particularly concerning value chain efficiencies, increased farmer incomes and
2. To appraise the current status of project implementation across all components (I-PLAN, I-BUILD, I-REAP, and I-SUPPORT). This process facilitates the documentation of "lessons learned," allowing for the data-driven adjustment of implementation strategies to address evolving field conditions, including how planning processes influence downstream investment programming and service delivery.
3. To rigorously evaluate the PRDP SU performance relative to its Project Development Objectives (PDOs) and the Results Framework, i.e., the performance validation against PDOs, with particular attention to the institutionalization and sustained utilization of I-PLAN innovations beyond project-driven compliance.
4. Generate evidence-based and actionable recommendations to inform adaptive management, scale-up readiness, and long-term sustainability of PRDP systems and practices.

1.4 Objectives of the Midterm Evaluation Study

The primary objective of the Midterm Evaluation is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the PRDP Scale Up's operational performance and strategic trajectory at the midpoint of its implementation. This evaluation aims to determine the likelihood of the Project achieving its end-of-life targets and to ensure that current progress aligns with the Project Development Objectives (PDO).

Specifically, the study seeks to

- Assess the overall physical progress of the project components (I-PLAN, I-BUILD, I-REAP, and I-SUPPORT) relative to the established Results Framework, including how various tools are being mainstreamed and functionally utilized beyond compliance to guide planning, prioritization, and investment decisions;
- Review the efficiency of procurement processes and the financial disbursement to identify any systemic bottlenecks in fund utilization and determine whether institutional capacities and incentives are sufficient to support the sustained application and mainstreaming of PRDP systems and innovations.
- Examine the effectiveness of the current organizational structure and coordination between the National Project Coordination Office (NPCO), Project Support Offices (PSOs), Regional Project Coordination Offices (RPCOs), and Local Government Units (LGUs), with particular attention to the extent to which I-PLAN tools and processes are being institutionalized within regular DA and LGU systems, policies, and workflows; and
- Identify necessary program adjustments or modifications to implementation strategies to ensure the Project remains responsive to achieving its PDOs, including addressing governance, capacity, and constraints that affect mainstreaming and cross-component alignment.

2 Methodology

2.1 Data Collection Methods

2.1.1 Document review

A document review of Aide Memoires, operations manuals and M&E reports was conducted to identify systemic bottlenecks, governance challenges, and emerging "best practices" documented during the period. These records provide qualitative context to the quantitative performance metrics.

2.1.2 Key informant interviews

Key Informant Interviews (KII) are semi-structured, in-depth dialogues conducted with strategic stakeholders who possess specialized knowledge of the project's operational ecosystem. These include project lead implementers from the PRDP, local government unit (LGU) officials, Farmer Cooperative and Associations (FCAs), and lead technical staff from the Department of Agriculture. For the I-PLAN Governance Review, KIIs focused on examining the planning-to-investment pathway, particularly how VCAs, PCIPs, and RAFIPs inform investment prioritization, subproject identification, and coordination across PRDP components. Interviews will also examine the extent to which planning tools have been institutionalized within DA regional planning processes and LGU agricultural investment planning systems. In addition, the KIIs with the stakeholders extract expert insights into the fidelity of project implementation (process evaluation), policy alignment, and the efficiency of the institutional arrangements within the PRDP Scale-Up framework.

2.1.3 Focus group discussions

To complement the qualitative data collection framework, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were integrated into the "Pause-and-Reflect" forum. These sessions employed a structured breakout format, categorizing participants into groups comprising representatives from project management, Farmer Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs), and Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUs).

2.1.4 Field visits / site validation

Field visits and site validation serve as the primary qualitative and physical verification mechanism for the study. This methodology entails multi-site inspections of rural infrastructure subprojects, alongside face-to-face engagements with Farmers Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs) and Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUs). These visits are designed to evaluate technical construction quality and strict adherence to PRDP Scale-Up program standards.

By facilitating direct empirical verification, this tool allows the evaluation team to reconcile reported physical progress with actual on-site conditions and documented specifications. Furthermore, these visits provide a platform for direct consultation with contractors and local implementers to identify site-specific bottlenecks. Within the framework of the Midterm Evaluation, these validations are critical for assessing the operational readiness and immediate functional utility of assets for their intended beneficiaries.

In the case of I-REAP, field visits were carried out to two sub-projects in implementation stage. These field visits entailed in-depth interviews with (a) the relevant I-REAP personnel and teams working on the sub-projects that were the subject of the case study analysis; (b) PSO representatives; (c) the managers, staff and members of the FCA-proponents; (d) representatives of the relevant provincial and municipal FGUs; and (e) existing and prospective buyers of the respective FCA-enterprises. Visits to both the current and planned enterprise facilities were also undertaken to better understand the FCA-enterprise’s operations and the rationale behind the expansion or upgrading being proposed under the sub-projects. Findings from the field visits (interviews and discussions with various stakeholders) were complemented by reviews of the business plans for the case study sub-projects.

2.1.5 Surveys / monitoring data analysis

This tool utilizes a quantitative framework to measure the project's performance against its Project Development Objectives (PDOs). The process involves:

- Systematic data collection from both treatment and control groups to facilitate **Difference-in-Differences (DiD)** estimation. This allows for a rigorous comparison of changes in income (PDO 3) and marketed volume (PDO 2) between those with access to project infrastructure and a counterfactual group.
- The synthesis of secondary data from the PRDP's internal management information system (SIDLAN) to track high-level indicators, such as the total number of farmers reached and the percentage of women beneficiaries.
- Tracking financial and operational performance over time, such as the disbursement rate, cumulative allotment and obligation.

2.2 Scope and Limitations

2.2.1 Coverage / boundaries

The **Midterm Evaluation Study (MES)** provides a comprehensive assessment of the **DA-PRDP Scale-Up** during its current implementation phase. The evaluation is structured around the following core parameters:

- The scope of this assessment is delimited to nine (9) completed infrastructure subprojects within the treatment areas. This focus enables a rigorous post-completion analysis of technical quality, adherence to climate-resiliency standards, and immediate functional utility for target beneficiaries relative to their baseline status and the control cohort. A detailed list of these subprojects is provided in **Annex D**.
- The MES evaluates the alignment and performance of these components across the project's Logical Framework. This includes a comparative analysis of actual accomplishments against midterm milestones, providing a clear determination of the project's current trajectory relative to end-of-project (EOP) targets.

2.2.2 Data constraints or risks

As the evaluators for this study, the following constraints are acknowledged:

a) Data Attribution—Since the survey instrument and data collection were conducted by the PRDP, the evaluation team relies on the integrity and secondary validation of the raw data provided.

b) Temporal Constraints—As a midterm study, the "impact" measured refers to *emerging* benefits rather than final long-term outcomes, particularly for infrastructure projects with longer gestation periods.

c) Selection Bias and Parallel Trends – While the Difference-in-Differences (DiD) framework controls for time-invariant selection bias, the validity of the results is contingent upon the parallel trends assumption. It is assumed that, absent the intervention, the treatment and control groups would have followed synchronous trajectories. Any unobserved, time-varying differences between these groups could bias the estimated effects.

d) Recall Bias—Given reliance on retrospective baseline recall (2022), potential recall bias is acknowledged.

3 Project Implementation Progress and Results

3.1 Overall Implementation Progress

The PRDP SU is designed around achieving three (3) Project Development Objectives which are:

- PDO 1- Increased access to agricultural assets or services
- PDO 2- Improved access to markets
- PDO 3- Increased income of farmers and fisherfolks

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) data shows that the project has reached 30,152 farmers to date, representing 6.7% of the total End-of-Project (EOP) target of 450,000 farmers. These beneficiaries are expected to gain access to services through the completion of 16 rural infrastructure subprojects.

Disaggregation by gender further shows that of the total farmers reached, 14,539 (48%) are women. The current reach reflects the initial phase of infrastructure utility, with figures expected to scale as additional subprojects reach completion.

Meanwhile, the comparative analysis of the actual progress for PDO 2 and PDO 3 along with the intermediate results in the I-BUILD are summarized in Table 1 for the treatment group and Table 2 for the control group.

As can be seen in **Table 1 (Treatment)** and **Table 2 (Control),** a significant divergence is observed in the magnitude of change across physical and economic indicators between the two cohorts. In terms of Marketed Output (PDO 2), the treatment group showed a baseline-to-midterm increase of **373.6 kg** (a **14.42%** improvement). In contrast, the control group experienced a marginal increase of only **119 kg** (**2.72%**). This suggests that infrastructure interventions in treatment areas are more effectively facilitating increased market participation.

Meanwhile, for Increase in Incomes (PDO 3), while both groups saw income growth, the control group reported a larger nominal increase of **18,250.80 Pesos** (**38.30%**) compared to the treatment group's **7,604.10 Pesos** (**22.13%**). This indicates that external economic factors—such as broader market shifts or non-project related livelihood changes—are strongly influencing income levels across the region, potentially masking the isolated impact of the project at this stage.

For the intermediate results, for **travel time,** the treatment group achieved a dramatic **54.95% reduction** in travel time (decreasing by **24.2 minutes**) , whereas the control group saw a negligible reduction of **10.10%** (**1.9 minutes**).

Regarding transport costs, both cohorts experienced marginal increases—3.72% in the treatment group and 10.92% in the control group. While an upward trend in costs may appear counterintuitive following infrastructure improvements, the substantially lower rate of increase in treatment areas suggests that rehabilitated road networks are providing a cost-mitigation effect, partially insulating beneficiaries from regional inflationary pressures, such as rising fuel prices and vehicle maintenance costs. The infrastructure ensures that even as external market costs rise, the "per-unit" burden on the farmer remains manageable, preventing a contraction in market participation.

Furthermore, this trend likely reflects a structural transition in local logistics. Improved road conditions often incentivize a shift from small-scale transport (e.g., motorcycles or tricycles) toward larger-capacity vehicles (e.g., trucks or multi-purpose vehicles). While larger vehicles incur higher nominal fuel and operating expenditures, they offer superior economies of scale by reducing the per-unit cost of marketed output—a shift that is consistent with the **14.42% increase in marketed volume** observed in the treatment group.

The most critical distinction between the two groups lies in the respondents' perception of **direct causality**. Among treatment beneficiaries who observed positive changes, **75%** highly attributed the increase in marketed volume to the project. Furthermore, **69.70%** highly attributed reduced transport costs and **94.12%** highly attributed reduced travel time directly to the rural infrastructure subproject

Table 1. Consolidated Results for the Treatment Group

Indicator	Unit Measure	Baseline (2022)	Midterm (2025)	Change from Baseline to Midterm		Extent of Attribution of Change to PRDP Interventions (% of Responses)				
				Figure	%	% No	% Yes	Out of those that responded "Yes"		
								Slightly Attributable	Moderately Attributable	Highly Attributable
PDO 2: Increase in volume of marketed outputs	Kilogram	2,591.10	2,964.60	373.5	14.42	92.86	7.14	25.00	0.00	75.00
PDO 3: Increase in farmers and fisherfolk income derived from commodities and product form	Pesos (Annual)	34,362.70	41,966.80	7,604.10	22.13	78.57	21.43	35.71	0.00	64.29
IR 2.1: Reduction in transport cost in roads linking production areas to markets	Pesos	546.6	566.9	20.3	3.72	58.02	41.98	9.09	21.21	69.70
IR 2.2: Reduction in travel time of farmer/fisherfolk from farm to market	Minute	44.1	19.9	-24.2	-54.88	18.75	81.25	1.96	3.92	94.12

Table 2. Consolidated Results for the Control Group

Indicator	Unit Measure	Baseline (2022)	Midterm (2025)	Change from Baseline to Midterm		Extent of Attribution of Change to PRDP Interventions (% of Responses)				
								Out of those that responded "Yes"		
				Figure	%	% No	% Yes	Slightly Attributable	Moderately Attributable	Highly Attributable
PDO 2: Increase in volume of marketed outputs	Kilogram	4,377.40	4,496.50	119	2.72	98.33	1.67	0.00	100.00	0.00
PDO 3: Increase in farmers and fisherfolk income derived from commodities and product form	Amount in Pesos (Annual)	47,651.20	65,902.10	18,250.80	38.30	93.22	6.78	50.00	50.00	0.00
IR 2.1: Reduction in transport cost in roads linking production areas to markets	Amount in Pesos	149	165.3	16.3	10.92	92.68	7.32	33.33	66.67	0.00
IR 2.2: Reduction in travel time of farmer/fisherfolk from farm to market	Minute	18.4	16.5	-1.9	-10.10	98.31	1.69	0.00	0.00	100.00

In the control areas, an overwhelming majority of respondents—ranging from **92.68%** to **98.33%**—reported **no attribution** of observed socio-economic shifts to project interventions. Among the marginal percentage of respondents who perceived a link, the intensity of attribution was significantly lower, often concentrated at "moderate" levels.

These results validate the **internal consistency** of the evaluation framework; as control areas were excluded from rural infrastructure investments, the reported lack of attribution is logically consistent with the absence of treatment. This absence of a project-driven "pull factor" reinforces the **counterfactual "business-as-usual" status** of these areas, providing a robust baseline against which the significant attribution levels in the treatment group can be measured.

3.2 Financial and Operational Progress

3.2.1 Overall Financial and Operational Progress

The DA-PRDP Scale-Up continues to advance its implementation phase, supported by a total project cost of 38.6 billion pesos. This funding structure is primarily driven by a 33.0-billion-peso loan program from the World Bank, complemented by 5.6 billion pesos in Government of the Philippines (GOP) counterpart funding.

As of March 2026, the project's financial standing reflects a robust pipeline moving toward mid-stage implementation:

- **Allotment-** 25.7 billion pesos have been officially allotted.
- **Obligation-** 14.8 billion pesos have been obligated for specific subprojects.
- **Disbursement-** 5.2 billion pesos have been actually disbursed to date.

The I-BUILD component remains the primary driver of both budget allocation and actual expenditure, highlighting the project's strategic focus on capital-intensive investments such as roads, bridges, irrigation, and water supply systems.

In contrast to the physical infrastructure timeline, the project's planning backbone is already firmly established. The I-PLAN component has successfully reached or slightly exceeded its targets for the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Investment Portfolio (RAFIP). These RAFIPs have been formally approved across 16 regions by their respective Department of Agriculture (DA) Regional Field Offices. This achievement ensures that the strategic investment framework, which consolidates Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs), is fully operational as the project enters its final three-year implementation phase.

3.2.2 Financial Performance

Overall project cost is about 38.57 billion pesos, with the Loan Program at 33.00 billion pesos (around 85 percent) and the Government of the Philippines counterpart at 5.57 billion pesos (around 15 percent). Cumulative allotments have reached about 25.74 billion pesos (roughly 67 percent of total project cost), with cumulative obligations at about 14.76 billion pesos and cumulative disbursements at about 5.15 billion pesos.

As illustrated in **Figure 1** on **per component and project cost basis**, I-BUILD is the dominant component at about 30.02 billion pesos (78 percent of project cost), followed by I-REAP at 5.12 billion pesos (13 percent), I-PLAN at 0.83 billion pesos (2 percent), and I-SUPPORT at 2.61 billion pesos (7 percent).

Meanwhile, in **Figure 2,** in terms of **cumulative allotments**, I-BUILD still carries the largest share (about 21.00 billion pesos or 81 percent of allotments), with I-REAP at 2.87 billion pesos (11 percent), I-PLAN at 0.44 billion pesos (2 percent), and I-SUPPORT at 1.44 billion pesos (6 percent).

In **Figure 3** on **cumulative obligations**, I-BUILD accounts for about 13.18 billion pesos (almost 89 percent of total obligations), I-REAP for 0.72 billion pesos (about 5 percent), I-PLAN for 0.20 billion pesos (about 1 percent), and I-SUPPORT for 0.67 billion pesos (about 5 percent).

Finally, in terms of **cumulative disbursements** as shown in **Figure 4**, I-BUILD again dominates with about 4.41 billion pesos (86 percent of total disbursements), followed by I-SUPPORT at 0.43 billion pesos (8 percent), I-PLAN at 0.12 billion pesos (2 percent), and I-REAP at 0.20 billion pesos (4 percent).

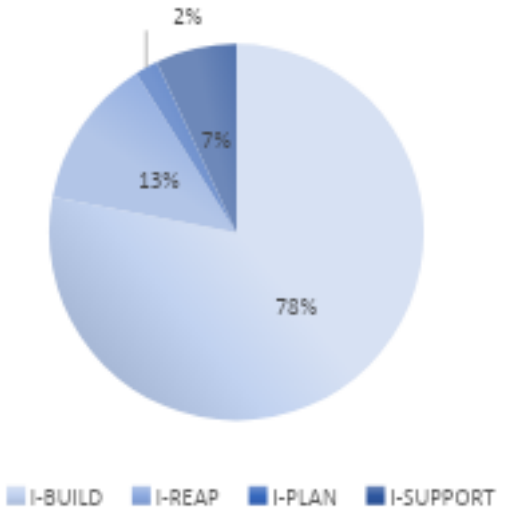


Figure 1. Percentage share of project components in terms of project cost as of March 2026.

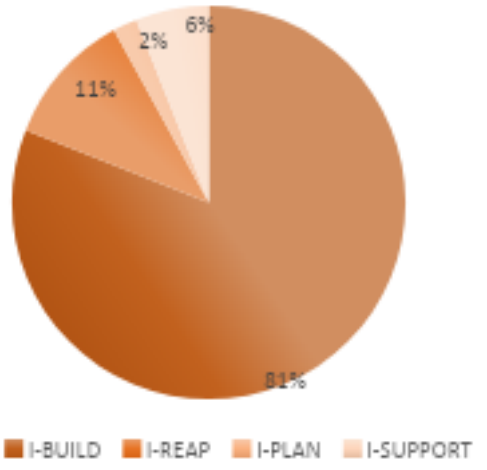


Figure 2. Percentage share of project components in terms of cumulative allotment as of March 2026.

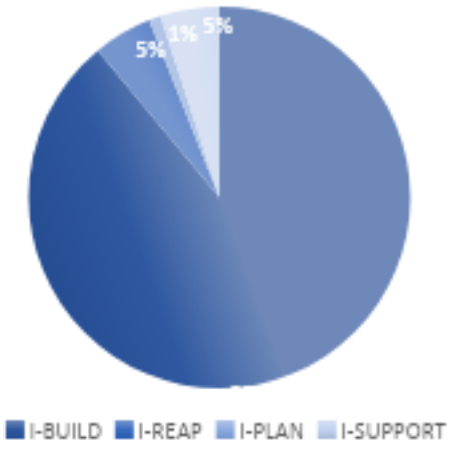


Figure 3. Percentage share of project components in terms of cumulative obligation as of March 2026.

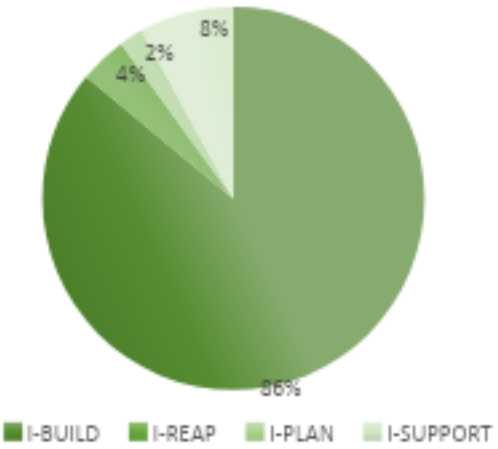


Figure 4. Percentage share of project components in terms of cumulative disbursement as of March 2026.

3.2.3 Regional and Cluster Distribution

At the administrative level, the **National Project Coordination Office (NPCO)** accounts for the largest allocation, receiving approximately **9.32 billion pesos**, or **36%** of the total project allotment. This is followed by the **Mindanao** regional cluster, with the **Luzon** (North and South) and **Visayas** clusters and their respective regions holding smaller individual shares of the remaining budget.

While regional obligations and disbursements generally follow these allotment patterns, a notable trend in **execution rate** is observed in specific clusters. Several regions in **Mindanao and Visayas**—specifically **Regions VIII**, **IX, X, XI, and XII**—report high disbursement levels relative to their counterparts. This trend indicates superior **disbursement efficiency** and higher **project absorption** in these areas.

Table 3. Summary of Allotments, Obligations, and Disbursements by Region and Cluster (as of March 2026)

Region / Cluster	Allotments (Total)	Share of allotments	Obligations (Total)	Share of obligations	Disbursements (Total)	Share of disbursements
NPCO	9.32 B	~36%	0.18 B	~1%	0.15 B	~3%
North Luzon	0.17 B	~1%	0.08 B	~1%	0.05 B	~1%
CAR	1.57 B	~6%	1.53 B	~10%	0.36 B	~7%
RI	1.27 B	~5%	1.12 B	~8%	0.13 B	~3%
RII	1.10 B	~4%	1.04 B	~7%	0.34 B	~7%
RIII	0.77 B	~3%	0.61 B	~4%	0.05 B	~1%
South Luzon	0.17 B	~1%	0.09 B	~1%	0.05 B	~1%
RIV-A	1.16 B	~5%	1.00 B	~7%	0.21 B	~4%
RIV-B	0.81 B	~3%	0.55 B	~4%	0.28 B	~5%
RV	0.85 B	~3%	0.73 B	~5%	0.27 B	~5%
Visayas cluster	0.15 B	~1%	0.08 B	~1%	0.03 B	~1%
RVI	1.14 B	~4%	1.14 B	~8%	0.16 B	~3%
RVII	1.24 B	~5%	1.14 B	~8%	0.22 B	~4%
RVIII	0.78 B	~3%	0.72 B	~5%	0.50 B	~10%
Mindanao cluster	0.24 B	~1%	0.10 B	~1%	0.05 B	~1%
RIX	1.15 B	~4%	1.08 B	~7%	0.53 B	~10%
RX	1.07 B	~4%	0.99 B	~7%	0.51 B	~10%
RXI	0.47 B	~2%	0.43 B	~3%	0.29 B	~6%
RXII	1.03 B	~4%	0.95 B	~6%	0.65 B	~13%
RXIII	1.06 B	~4%	1.00 B	~7%	0.19 B	~4%
BARMM	0.22 B	~1%	0.22 B	~1%	0.13 B	~3%
Total	25.74 B	100%	14.77 B	100%	5.16 B	100%

Across the regions, a distinct variance exists between fund allocation and actual expenditure. Several areas in **North and South Luzon** exhibit relatively high allotments alongside lower disbursement shares. This disparity suggests that while the initial capital has been released, these funds remain concentrated in the **pre-operational stages**, likely tied up in procurement processes or early-phase construction.

A detailed breakdown of financial performance by component is presented in **Table 4**. By component, I-PLAN has an obligation-to-allotment ratio of about 46 percent and a disbursement-to-obligation ratio of roughly 61 percent, so although only about half of its allotments are obligated, those obligations tend to convert quickly into disbursements. I-BUILD has a higher obligation-to-allotment ratio (about 63 percent) but a much lower disbursement-to-obligation ratio (around 33 percent), which is consistent with longer procurement and construction lead times for infrastructure.

I-REAP shows a lower obligation-to-allotment ratio (about 25 percent) and a disbursement-to-obligation ratio of about 27 percent, pointing to slower commitment and utilization of funds for enterprise-related interventions at this stage. In contrast, I-SUPPORT has an obligation-to-allotment ratio of about 46 percent and a relatively high disbursement-to-obligation ratio of about 64 percent, reflecting faster-moving support and management expenditures once committed.

Over time (from the 4th ISM in June 2025 to the 5th ISM in March 2026), obligations and disbursements have increased sharply; for instance, I-BUILD obligations rose from about 11.11 billion pesos to 13.18 billion pesos, and disbursements from about 0.94 billion pesos to 4.41 billion pesos, indicating a strong recent acceleration in infrastructure spending. I-PLAN and I-SUPPORT also registered notable jumps in disbursements over the same period, suggesting that planning and support activities are increasingly converting into actual expenditures.

Table 4. Comparative Analysis of Financial Execution and Component Performance (as of March 2026)

Level / Component	Obligations / Allotments	Disbursements / Obligations
Overall	~57%	~35%
I-PLAN	~46%	~61%
I-BUILD	~63%	~33%
I-REAP	~25%	~27%
I-SUPPORT	~46%	~64%

3.3 Difference-in-Difference Estimation

Table 5 presents pooled regression-based DiD estimates for increase in income (PDO 3) and marketed volume (PDO 2) using the combined FMR, Warehouse–Solar Dryer, and Fish Landing panel, to evaluate the overall impact of the PRDP SU rural infrastructure interventions. The models use household fixed effects, a post-midterm indicator (2025), and a *treatment x post* interaction, with standard errors clustered at the household level.

The pooled analysis—which aggregates data from FMR, Warehouse Facilities, and Fish landing subprojects—shows that at this midterm stage, the broader socio-economic impacts are not statistically significant.

The DiD term for increase in income is **-5,045.8 pesos**, which is noted as non-significant (NS) with a p-value of 0.725. This suggests that when all subprojects are grouped together, the intervention has not yet produced a divergent income growth trend compared to the control group. Similarly, the pooled marketed volume shows a positive DiD term of **832.5 units**, but this remains non-significant (p=0.259).

When isolating the impact of FMRs, a clear distinction emerges. The FMR subprojects yielded statistically significant improvements in travel efficiency. Travel time was reduced by **29.07 minutes** per trip (p=0.039), and transport costs were reduced by **65.19 pesos** per trip (p=0.017). These results provide the strongest evidence of the project's midterm success in improving rural connectivity.

Despite the gains in travel efficiency, the DiD terms for marketed volume (**1,333.66 units**) and income (**-1,519.90 pesos**) under FMR subprojects remain statistically non-significant. This indicates that while the "cost of doing business" has decreased, these savings have not yet translated into a statistically verifiable increase in household wealth or production volume.

The evaluation of Warehouse Facility subprojects reflects high nominal gains but lacks the statistical power to confirm a project-wide effect due to the smaller sample size (N=80).

The DiD terms for marketed volume (**2,306.48 units**) and income (**34,050.56 pesos**) are nominally much higher than the FMR and pooled results. However, the high standard errors and p-values (0.324 and 0.49, respectively) mean these results are not statistically significant.

Table 5. Difference-in-difference Estimation Results

Outcome	Units	DiD term	Std. error	p-value	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	N obs
Pooled DiD Estimation							
Income	pesos	−5,045.8^{NS}	14,346.4	0.725	−33,345.5	23,253.8	380
Marketed volume	units	832.5^{NS}	734.8	0.259	−616.9	2,282.0	380
Farm-to-Market Road Subprojects							
Marketed volume	units	1,333.66	1,421.69	0.358	-1,614.75	4,282.06	194
Income	peso/ year	-1,519.90	18,067.34	0.934	-38,989.26	35,949.47	194
Travel time	minutes/ trip	-29.07	13.15	0.039	-56.58	-1.55	93
Transport cost	pesos/ trip	-65.19	24.32	0.017	-117.03	-13.34	85
Warehouse Facility Subprojects							
Marketed volume	units	2,306.48	1,958.29	0.324	-3,925.66	8,538.62	80
Income	pesos/ year	34,050.56	43,469.94	0.491	-104,290.20	172,391.30	80
Loss volume	units	40.70	61.99	0.558	-156.58	237.98	80

Finally**,** the DiD term for loss volume was **40.70 units**, which was also non-significant (p=0.558). This suggests that the impact of warehouse facilities on reducing post-harvest losses is not yet evident in the midterm data.

The predominantly non-significant (NS) results for high-level outcomes—specifically **Income** and **Marketed Volume**—should be interpreted within the context of project maturity. While the **Intermediate Results** for **Farm-to-Market Roads (FMR)** regarding travel time and transport cost are already statistically significant

(p=0.039 and p=0.017, respectively), the broader socio-economic goals are subject to a necessary **gestation period**.

Several factors may explain why these impacts did not yet materialize at midterm stage:

- Limited Operational Window- At the time of data collection, a period of only few months had elapsed between the completion of certain subprojects and the conduct of the household surveys. This duration is insufficient to capture seasonal shifts in agricultural production or annual changes in household income.
- Infrastructure Maturity- In rural development, there is a recognized time lag between the delivery of physical assets and the resulting behavioural changes in the value chain. The immediate benefits are logistical (efficiency), while the downstream benefits (income and volume) require multiple production cycles to manifest.
- Partial Utilization of Facilities- Regarding Warehouse Facility Subprojects, some subprojects were not yet in full operation during the data gathering phase. As these facilities reach peak operational capacity, their impact on reducing loss volumes and increasing marketed output is expected to stabilize and become statistically measurable.
- Isolating the Treatment Effect- The significant DiD results for FMR travel time (-29.07 minutes) and transport cost (-65.19 pesos) confirm that the technical "utility" of the project is active. These logistical gains serve as leading indicators, suggesting that the structural conditions for improving PDO 2 and PDO 3 are in place, even if the final economic outcomes are still in the early stages of the gestation cycle

3.4 Implementation Progress of the different Components

3.4.1 I-PLAN

The following section assesses the midterm performance of the I-PLAN component using three key indicators that capture its intended contribution to value chain–based agricultural investment planning under PRDP Scale-Up. Taken together, these indicators examine whether I-PLAN has moved beyond producing planning documents and tools to influencing investments, institutional processes, and planning capacities within the DA and LGUs.

Indicator 1: Percent increase in the amount of agri-fishery investments in PCIPs supporting priority value chains (Percentage)

This indicator measures the extent to which the PCIPs, as the primary planning output of the I-PLAN component, have translated into actual increases in agri-fishery investments aligned with priority value chains. The indicator is operationalized as the percentage increase in the total value of investments supporting PCIP-identified commodities, drawing from both PRDP and non-PRDP funding sources, including DA programs, other national government agencies, local government units, and private sector actors.

Table 6. Composition of Agri-Fishery Investments Supporting PCIP Priority Value Chains, Before and During PRDP Scale-Up (in Billion Pesos)

Funding	Cost of Investments in Billion Pesos		
	Before Scale-Up	During Scale-Up	Total
PRDP	44.13	23.77	67.90
Non-PRDP	102.91	46.31	149.22
Other DA Programs	12.00	6.88	18.88
Other NGAs	30.04	6.69	36.74
PLGUs	28.77	16.97	45.75

Funding	Cost of Investments in Billion Pesos		
	Before Scale-Up	During Scale-Up	Total
C/M LGUs	0.87	0.53	1.40
Other private financing	0.02	0.002	0.02
Others	31.20	15.23	46.43
Total	147.04	70.08	217.12

Based on the Results Framework data, total aligned investments increased from Php 147.04 billion before Scale-Up to Php 217.12 billion during implementation, equivalent to an additional Php 70.08 billion or a 47.7 percent increase. This significantly exceeds the end-of-project target of 30 percent and provides strong evidence that value chain–based planning is already influencing actual investment decisions.

This performance reflects a key emerging outcome of the enhanced planning process under the I-PLAN component. The use of VCA and PCIP has enabled a more structured and strategic approach to investment planning, where resource allocation is increasingly aligned with identified commodity priorities and value chain gaps. Rather than functioning as compliance documents, PCIPs are operating as practical planning instruments that shape investment prioritization and coordination across multiple actors.

A defining feature of this result is the strong resource-leveraging effect. Approximately 68 percent of total investments originate from non-PRDP sources, indicating that the increase is not driven solely by project financing. Instead, PCIPs are functioning as coordination and signaling mechanisms that influence investment decisions across DA programs, LGUs, and other national government agencies. The increase in DA investments outside PRDP, from Php 12.00 billion to Php 18.88 billion, further suggests early institutional uptake, where value chain priorities are beginning to inform regular DA programming, albeit still at the level of reference and alignment rather than full integration into formal budgeting processes.

The findings also demonstrate improved strategic alignment of investments with value chain priorities. Investments are increasingly justified based on VCA-identified constraints and opportunities, reflecting a shift away from ad hoc or supply-driven proposals toward more evidence-based and system-oriented planning. This indicates that the planning process is contributing to improved decision-making quality and a more integrated agri-food systems approach.

At the same time, provincial LGUs play a central role in driving investment mobilization, with investments increasing from Php 28.77 billion to Php 45.75 billion. This suggests that PCIPs are most effective where they function as coordination platforms that enable provinces to convene stakeholders around shared commodity priorities. In such cases, the planning process improves not only technical investment selection but also governance quality, strengthening intergovernmental coordination and collective action.

However, several limitations remain. First, regional variation is substantial, with investment growth ranging widely across regions, indicating uneven levels of institutionalization and planning effectiveness. Second, vertical integration remains limited, as city and municipal LGU participation is relatively low compared to provincial engagement. Third, private sector participation remains negligible, constraining value chain deepening, particularly in downstream segments such as processing, logistics, and market integration. Finally, data classification challenges, particularly the large proportion of investments categorized under “Others,” limit the precision of attribution and monitoring.

These findings suggest that while the I-PLAN component has been effective in improving the strategic content, coordination, and resource mobilization functions of planning, it has been less effective in fully embedding these gains within formal institutional systems, particularly in budgeting, approval processes, and monitoring frameworks. From an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development- Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) perspective, this corresponds to substantial effectiveness with incomplete institutional integration.

Overall, the evidence demonstrates that I-PLAN has successfully contributed to increased and better-aligned investments, stronger value chain orientation, and improved coordination across actors. However, these gains remain uneven and are not yet fully institutionalized across all regions and systems. Sustaining and scaling these

results will require deeper embedding of PCIPs and VCA within formal planning, budgeting, and monitoring processes, as well as stronger engagement of sub-provincial LGUs and private sector actors.

3.4.1.1 Indicator 2. Number of Regional Agriculture and Fishery Investment Portfolio (RAFIP) utilized in the DA annual work plan

The indicator on the "Number of RAFIP utilized in the DA Annual Work Plan" measures the extent to which value chain–based regional planning is formally integrated into DA regular programming and budgeting processes. As of the midterm assessment period, while full formal utilization is still in progress, there is already substantive evidence of partial utilization. Specifically, 10 out of 16 regions are currently referencing RAFIPs in their DA Annual Work Plans, namely: Region I, Region III, Region IV-B, Region V, Region VI, Region VII, Region VIII, Region XI, Region XII and Region XIII.

In 2025, all 16 RAFIPs were successfully developed and approved by the respective DA Regional Executive Directors, establishing a complete set of regional investment planning instruments. The issuance of the February 25, 2026 Memorandum adopting RAFIP as a reference for planning and budget preparation further institutionalized its role within DA systems. These developments indicate that the foundational conditions for integration are already in place.

The ongoing preparation of the FY 2027 Annual Budget Proposal (ABP) provides an important transition point for full institutionalization. While final confirmation of RAFIP utilization will depend on the approval of the General Appropriations Act (GAA) at the end of the year, current evidence shows that DA regular systems are already actively referencing RAFIPs in planning and budgeting processes, signaling a shift from informal to formal utilization.

The observed partial utilization reflects improvements in the alignment of investment decisions with value chain priorities across regions. RAFIP-identified commodities continue to receive investments from multiple sources, including PRDP, DA programs, LGUs, and other stakeholders, reinforcing the role of RAFIPs as practical decision-support tools even prior to full formalization.

The remaining gap is largely attributable to timing and procedural factors, particularly the misalignment between RAFIP completion and earlier planning and budgeting cycles, as well as the ongoing transition to the FY 2027 planning cycle. These factors indicate that the current status should be interpreted not as a lack of utilization, but as part of a phased institutionalization process.

Overall, the indicator is best assessed as Partially Achieved (On Track), reflecting strong progress toward full integration, with clear evidence that RAFIPs are already being used as reference tools in DA planning and budgeting, and are expected to be fully institutionalized in upcoming cycles.

3.4.1.2 Indicator 3. Percent of DA and LGU participants with improved knowledge in investment planning

At the time of assessment, the status of this indicator remains reported in official component monitoring as "no achievement yet." Based on validation with the I-PLAN team, this status is consistent with the current implementation phase of the component, particularly the sequencing of the ladderized capacity development strategy.

As clarified during the March 27, 2026 meeting, the measurement of this indicator is contingent upon the full delivery of the three-laddered training program to DA and LGU participants, which has not yet been completed. As such, the absence of reported achievement does not indicate a limitation in the M&E system but rather reflects that the conditions required to measure this outcome-level indicator have not yet been fully met.

Available documentation indicates that capacity development efforts to date have primarily focused on internal capacitation within the I-PLAN component and partner DA units. Beginning in 2024, these efforts have included training on investment planning concepts, spatial analysis tools such as QGIS and the Investment Dashboard, and enhanced methodologies for regional investment planning. These activities are intended to prepare I-PLAN personnel at the national, PSO, and RPCO levels to serve as trainers in subsequent rollout phases targeting LGUs and broader stakeholders.

The ladderized training program for DA and LGU participants remains ongoing, with full implementation expected in 2026. Consequently, the formal target population of this indicator has not yet been reached at scale, and outcome-level measurement has not yet been undertaken within the official reporting system.

While the Governance and Institutional Development Specialist's independent assessment, including surveys, governance diagnostics, and field validation, suggests early indications of improved awareness and application of planning tools, these observations are not used to override or substitute the official indicator reporting. Instead, they are interpreted as preliminary signals of capacity development progress that remain to be formally validated through the component's prescribed M&E processes.

Overall, the current reporting status of "no achievement yet" is therefore appropriate and aligned with the implementation timeline and measurement requirements of the indicator.

3.4.1.3 Evidence from LGUs

Survey responses from LGUs indicate that the planning tools introduced under the I-PLAN component are widely recognized and generally considered relevant to local agricultural planning processes. These tools include the PCIP, VCA, Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA), Expanded Vulnerability and Suitability Assessment (EVSA), Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Investment Portfolio (RAFIP), and the SIDLAN monitoring system. Across responses, the PCIP emerged as the most consistently cited planning instrument, suggesting that it has become the primary entry point through which LGUs engage with the PRDP planning framework. Other tools, such as VCA, CRVA, and EVSA, were also frequently identified alongside PCIP, indicating growing awareness of the broader analytical architecture that supports agricultural investment planning.

LGU responses further suggest early indications of functional understanding and application of these tools. In the evaluation dataset, 80.6 percent of provincial respondents reported that PRDP planning tools influence investment decisions, while 66.7 percent of city respondents reported similar influence. In addition, 58.1 percent of provincial LGUs and 66.7 percent of city LGUs reported that planning decisions are evidence-based or planning-informed. PCIPs are consulted frequently or always by 54.8 percent of provincial respondents and 33.3 percent of city respondents. These findings indicate that LGU planners are beginning to use planning tools as reference points in planning discussions, commodity prioritization, and investment consideration. However, these results are based on self-reported survey data and validation exercises and are therefore interpreted as indicative evidence of early-stage capacity development, rather than as formal measures of improved knowledge under the results framework.

The institutionalization scores for LGUs further supports this interpretation. Mean Stage Scores ranging from 2.6 to 2.7 place LGU respondents between the Compliance and Utilization stages of institutionalization. This means that the tools have moved beyond awareness and are already being applied in practice, even if they have not yet reached full routinization within formal budgeting cycles, policy mandates, or internal planning templates. From the standpoint of this indicator, that is a meaningful sign of improved knowledge: LGU participants are increasingly capable of understanding, navigating, and applying structured planning tools introduced under I-PLAN, even if the depth of technical mastery still varies across local governments.

3.4.1.4 Evidence from DA Regional Field Units (RFU)

Complementary findings from DA Regional Field Units confirm that similar improvements are occurring within the DA system. As part of the rapid survey on institutionalization, responses were gathered from 15 RFU representatives involved in PRDP implementation and planning, including RPCO component heads, planning officers, technical specialists, and project evaluation officers. Because RFUs play a critical role in translating I-PLAN tools into regional planning, proposal review, PCIP support, and coordination with LGUs, these findings provide an important view of whether knowledge gains are being operationalized within the DA bureaucracy.

The RFU data show that 68.75 percent of respondents reported that planning and investment decisions are evidence-based or planning-informed, 50 percent reported that planning tools influence their job deliverables, and 50 percent reported frequent or consistent consultation of PCIPs. In addition, the Composite Institutionalization Index of 73.44 suggests that these tools are already strongly integrated into a number of RFU workflows, including planning coordination, technical review of LGU proposals, project screening, and the assessment of value chain priorities.

The RFU Mean Stage Score of 2.46 places the tools between the Compliance and Utilization stages, indicating that RFUs have progressed beyond basic awareness and are beginning to apply planning tools in practice. These observations provide indicative evidence of emerging analytical capacity and application of planning tools, particularly in relation to commodity prioritization, proposal screening, and evidence-informed planning discussions.

At the same time, these findings should be interpreted within the context of ongoing implementation. While planning tools are operational and increasingly influential, they are not yet fully routinized within formal DA procedures such as standardized planning protocols, approval criteria, or institutional mandates. As such, these results reflect transitional gains in capacity development, which remain to be formally validated through the completion of the ladderized training program and the application of the official measurement framework for Indicator 3.

3.4.1.5 I-PLAN Implementation Overall Progress

Overall, the midterm evidence indicates that the I-PLAN component has made substantial but uneven progress toward its intended results. The strongest performance is observed in Indicator 1, where the significant increase in agri-fishery investments aligned with PCIPs demonstrates that value chain–based planning is already influencing actual investment flows across both PRDP and non-PRDP sources. This suggests that PCIPs are functioning not merely as documentary outputs, but as practical reference tools that help mobilize and align investments from DA programs, LGUs, and other national stakeholders. The scale of the increase further indicates that I-PLAN has generated a leverage effect beyond direct project financing.

For Indicator 2, the evidence shows that institutional integration into DA planning and budgeting systems is already underway, albeit not yet fully completed. While all 16 RAFIPs have been developed and approved, 10 out of 15 regions are already referencing RAFIPs in their DA Annual Work Plans, indicating substantive progress toward formal utilization. This suggests that RAFIPs are transitioning from planning instruments into operational decision-support tools within DA regular systems. The remaining gap is largely attributable to timing and procedural factors, particularly the alignment with the FY 2027 planning and budgeting cycle and the final confirmation through the General Appropriations Act (GAA). As such, the indicator is best understood as partially achieved and on track toward full institutionalization, rather than reflecting delayed or weak implementation.

For Indicator 3, the findings point to a clear distinction between early-stage capacity development and formal outcome measurement. Officially, the indicator remains recorded as “not achievement yet” which is consistent with the implementation sequencing of the ladderized capacity development program. The measurement of this outcome-level indicator is contingent upon the full rollout of training to DA and LGU participants, which is still ongoing. At the same time, evaluation evidence from surveys, governance diagnostics, and validation exercises indicates early signals of improved awareness and application of planning tools among both RFUs and LGUs.

These findings, however, are interpreted as indicative and are not used to substitute official reporting, in line with the prescribed M&E framework.

Taken together, these results suggest that I-PLAN is already contributing meaningfully to the PDO by strengthening the planning basis for agricultural investment, improving coordination across actors, and building the foundational capacities required for evidence-based planning. However, its midterm performance is best characterized as strong in operational influence and coordination, with ongoing progress toward full institutional embedding.

The next phase of implementation will therefore be critical. Sustaining and deepening these gains will require:

a) the continued integration of PCIPs and RAFIPs into DA planning, budgeting, and monitoring systems;

b) the transition from reference-based use to fully mandated and routinized application across units

c) more consistent regional performance in applying planning tools; and

d) the full implementation of the capacity development program and corresponding measurement of knowledge outcomes.

In this sense, I-PLAN has already established the foundations of a more evidence-based and value chain–oriented planning system. The key challenge moving forward is to ensure that these gains are consolidated into routine, enforceable, and system-wide institutional practice, aligned with formal processes and measurable results.

3.4.2 I-BUILD

The process of developing I-BUILD sub-projects encompasses five (5) key stages:

- **Stage 1: Sub-project identification and prioritization** – This begins with the identification of priority infrastructure (e.g., farm-to-market roads, bridges, irrigation support) based on the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP), followed by LGU endorsement and initial screening by the Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO).
- **Stage 2: Preparation of feasibility study (FS) and detailed engineering design (DED**) – This stage covers the conduct of feasibility studies, including technical, economic, environmental, and social assessments, and the preparation of detailed engineering designs, which are then subjected to technical review and validation by the RPCO and concerned national agencies.
- **Stage 3: RPAB approval and issuance of No Objection Letter (NOL1)** – Upon completion of technical requirements, the sub-project is presented to the Regional Project Advisory Board (RPAB) for deliberation and approval. Comments from the board must be addressed prior to approval, after which the subproject proceeds to the preparation of financing and implementation agreements and issuance of NOL1.
- **Stage 4: Procurement and implementation of civil** works – Following fund release, the LGU undertakes procurement of contractors and supervision of civil works construction. This includes contract management, quality assurance, and compliance with safeguards, culminating in the completion and turnover of the infrastructure sub-project.
- **Stage 5: Operation, maintenance, and monitoring** – Completed infrastructure sub-projects are turned over to the LGU and/or beneficiaries for operation and maintenance, with continuous monitoring and evaluation conducted over the project lifecycle to ensure sustainability and service delivery outcomes.

There are sixteen (16) completed sub-projects, and a further 129 that are under construction, and procurement[1].

[1] SIDLAN source as of March 26, 2026.

The process of developing I-BUILD sub-projects has been complex and resource-intensive – particularly for Local Government Units (LGUs) acting as proponents. While LGUs generally have prior experience in infrastructure implementation, many have limited exposure to the level of technical rigor, safeguards compliance, and documentation required under PRDP. Most LGUs identified the preparation of feasibility studies (FS) and detailed engineering designs (DED) as the most challenging phase, often requiring substantial time, technical support, and coordination with multiple stakeholders.

Feedback from LGUs regarding bottlenecks in the sub-project cycle is consistent with observed timelines relative to service standards. On average, it takes more than a year (12–18 months) from sub-project identification to RPAB approval, largely due to delays in FS and DED preparation and review. Progression to No Objection Letter 1 (NOL1) typically takes around 18–24 months, with some complex infrastructure sub-projects (e.g., long FMRs, bridges, or climate-resilient structures) extending beyond this period.

The factors driving the pace of implementation, particularly in relation to preparation and review of technical documents, include the following:

- **Complexity of feasibility studies and engineering design requirements** – Unlike standard LGU infrastructure projects, PRDP I-BUILD requires comprehensive FS and DED covering economic viability, climate resilience, geotechnical analysis, and detailed cost estimates. Many LGUs lack in-house capacity to produce these, necessitating the hiring of external consultants, which introduces procurement delays and variability in quality.
- **Multiple layers of technical review and iterative revisions** – FS and DED outputs undergo rigorous review by RPCO, Project Support Office (PSO), and, in some cases, national technical agencies. Comments from different specialists (engineering, safeguards, procurement) often result in several rounds of revisions, contributing to extended processing time. This reflects the due diligence standards applied to internationally funded infrastructure investments.
- **Right-of-way (ROW), land acquisition, and permitting challenges** – Securing ROW clearances, land titles, and necessary permits (e.g., environmental compliance certificates, tree-cutting permits) has been a major source of delay. These processes involve multiple agencies and stakeholders, and are often constrained by legal disputes, incomplete documentation, or social acceptability issues. In practice, these requirements take significantly longer than prescribed timelines due to procedural and institutional complexities.
- **Procurement-related delays for consulting and civil works** – The need to procure consulting services for FS/DED preparation and contractors for civil works in accordance with PRDP and government procurement guidelines adds another layer of time. Failed biddings, limited qualified bidders, and compliance issues further prolong the timeline.
- **Variability in LGU technical and institutional capacity** – While some provinces and municipalities have strong engineering offices, others face limitations in staffing, experience, and project management capacity. LGUs with weaker capacity require more time to comply with technical requirements and respond to review comments. Additionally, coordination across LGU offices (planning, engineering, accounting) can affect the pace of document preparation and approval.
- **Safeguards compliance and integration (environmental and social) –** The integration of environmental and social safeguards into project design, including mitigation measures and stakeholder consultations, adds to preparation time but is critical to ensuring sustainability and compliance. Many LGUs initially underestimated these requirements, resulting in delays when gaps were identified during review.

Overall, while these challenges have contributed to extended preparation timelines, they also reflect the institutional strengthening and capacity-building objectives of I-BUILD, ensuring that infrastructure investments are technically sound, economically viable, and socially and environmentally sustainable.

3.4.3 I-REAP

The process of developing I-REAP sub-projects encompasses five (5) key stages:

- **Stage 1: Sub-project identification and selection of the project proponent** – This starts off with the proponent's submission of the Letter of Intent and other requirements to the LGU for evaluation, through to assessment and endorsement of the Validation Report by the RPCO.
- **Stage 2: Confirmation, preparation of business plan (BP), technical review and clearance** – This stage covers all the steps leading to the preparation of the business plan, its technical review by the RCPO, followed by the Joint Technical Review.
- **Stage 3: RPAB approval and issuance of No Objection Letter (NOL1)** – Following the deliberation by RPAB, if there are comments to the business plan, the project proponent must comply or respond to these comments before the approval of the sub-project is issued. This is then followed by the preparation of the Implementation Management Agreement (IMA) and issuance of the first No Objection Letter (NOL1).
- **Stage 4: Implementation of approved subprojects** – After funds are released to the project proponent, the procurement of goods and construction of civil works (of the approved sub-project) then ensues. Once all the goods have been procured and all construction work has been completed, the completed subproject is then officially turned over to the project proponent. It is therefore only at the end of Stage 4 do we see completed sub-projects.
- **Stage 5: Evaluation and monitoring of sub-projects** – Completed sub-projects are monitored for a period of ten (10) years from completion.

There are nine (9) sub-projects at implementation stage, and a further 39 that are in the pipeline (under development, at various stages of development prior to the issuance of NOL1).[2] The table below provides a disaggregation of all these sub-projects:

Table 7. Overview of I-REAP Sub-projects (SPs): Approved and in the Pipeline

Cluster	Approved (With NOL 1)		Pipeline						Total	
			Under Technical Review / For RPAB Approval		BP Preparation		For Confirmation			
	No.	Cost	No.	Cost	No.	Cost	No.	Cost	No.	Cost
North Luzon	4	405.86	3	867.33	5	325.00	1	40.00	13	1,638.19
South Luzon	2	162.96	5	671.47	2	300.40	1	140.94	10	1,275.77
Visayas	1	237.48	5	403.21	1	110.00	3	222.00	10	972.69
Mindanao	2	327.21	7	1,067.18	3	634.57	3	185.64	15	2,214.60
Total	9	1,133.51	20	3,009.18	11	1,369.97	8	588.58	48	6,101.25

Source: Regular I-REAP SU Updates, as of 10 March 2026. Costs expressed in millions PhP.

The process of developing I-REAP sub-projects has been quite challenging – not least for FCA-proponents. Most, if not all of them, have never gone through a rigorous process of developing an investment project, much less projects of the size funded by PRDP I-REAP. All FCAs have pointed out that the preparation of the business plan is where they struggled the most and needed a long time to complete.

[2] The study covered seven (7) approved subprojects 32 proposals under process in the pipeline stage as of March 10, 2026.

The feedback from FCAs regarding the challenges they faced in the sub-project cycle is consistent with information on how sub-projects performed vis-à-vis service standards. It takes more than a year (14 months), on average, from the time a sub-project is confirmed to the sub-project getting RPAB approval. On average, to reach NOL1 status, approximately 20 months has been needed. This can go up to 25-26 months for some sub-projects.

The factors driving the pace of implementation, especially with respect to the amount of time that has been needed to prepare the business plan and its review are as follows:

- **Lack of good data** – FCAs needed to collect data, where possible, from secondary sources, which feed into estimates made in the business plan. In some cases, there is no reliable, updated data from secondary sources, which required primary data-collection activities that required even more time to complete and have been costly to implement.
- **Multiple reviews and back-and forth comments on the business plan** – It is important to note that the business plan also includes technical details and design of the proposed infrastructure and equipment. As such, the reviews of the business plan involve different specialists (at RPCO and PSO levels). This essentially constitutes the due-diligence process that is also standard practice in other investment projects in the private sector.
- **Required documentation (e.g. for titling, land conversion) takes a long time to complete** – These are legally required documentation that the project must comply with. The experience during the first half of the Scale-Up phase indicates that this is an area that was largely unfamiliar to many, if not all, of the FCAs, as well as the I-REAP Business Development Officers (BDO) who were supporting them. In some cases, the requirement to process certain certifications, clearances or other documentation were not foreseen and these were therefore addressed much later. Notwithstanding the improvements to the process that might be introduced on account of these lessons, it is crucial to acknowledge that what was experienced in I-REAP is not unique. Even for other investment projects or enterprises, the processes for securing the required legal documentation (as applicable) are quite lengthy and rely on multiple agencies. For example, land conversion, which changes agricultural land to non-agricultural use, is officially described as requiring only 30 days for processing. However, in practice, this process has historically taken much longer – often exceeding 24 months – due to extensive documentation, inspections, and inter-agency approvals.
- **Capacity of FCAs: there is a significant amount of learning as the FCAs go through the sub-project cycle** – For all of these FCAs, it is their first time to prepare a business plan. This explains, in part, the slow pace. FCAs that have relatively more severe organizational challenges – e.g. those constrained to put forward dedicated staff for the business plan preparation – will require even more time to carry out and complete certain tasks. The length of time required for business plan preparation also reflects the complexity of some of the proposed sub-projects. For example, some large, more mature FCAs may be able to complete the business planning process at a much shorter time for smaller projects, such as simple storage facilities or warehouses. However, for more complex, innovative projects – such as cold storage or mechanised drying facilities – a much longer time (than envisaged) has been needed to carry out all the necessary research into making these facilities.

The lesson-learning from the first half of the Scale-Up phase also points to a number of good practices that can inform future programming:

- **A good relationship with the (municipal) LGUs is key.** Some FCAs encountered challenges from the onset, experiencing struggles (which consequently translated into delays) securing the endorsement of their respective LGUs. In some cases, this was attributed to some LGUs not being aware of PRDP or IREAP, which required PRDP staff to hold meetings with the LGUs to present information on or explain PRDP. In contrast, some FCAs breezed through the process of validation as these FCAs maintained very good relationships with their LGUs, given a long history of engagement. FCAs point out that having a *champion* at the LGU is crucial, not only to ensure that the endorsement process is smooth. In some FCAs' experience, a good relationship with the LGU also means that they have a *partner* supporting

them through every step in the process of developing the sub-project – especially in terms of locating data to inform the business plan, securing required documentation, through to preparing the business plan itself.

- **Hiring an external consultant to help prepare the business plan has been helpful**. Some FCAs – especially those whose proposals entail large investments and more innovative projects – benefited from hiring external consultants who can focus on the preparation of the business plan.[3] In most cases, external specialist input has been necessary, given the technical requirements (designs and specifications) of the proposed facilities and equipment. However, hiring an external consultant can be expensive, something which smaller, less mature FCAs may not be able to afford. In this respect, some FCAs have been able to leverage existing relationships they have with local universities, from whose faculties they were able to secure consultants, in a way that does not end up being too costly for the FCA.
- **Maintaining a centralised monitoring form to keep track of and manage technical reviews of business plans** – Some PSOs, in cooperation with RPCOs, have created a centralised monitoring form to better manage the technical reviews of business plans. This is to address issues concerning the multiple iterations and back-and-forth comments and corrections being made.
- **More fluid coordination among different I-REAP staff at the RPCO and PSO levels throughout the project cycle** – In some clusters, notably in Mindanao, the relationship between RPCOs and the PSO has been observed to be more fluid (than in others), where roles are clear between the different teams and the support that is provided to BDOs (at the RPCO level) is well defined (and not merely ad-hoc in nature). In practice, this has meant that both RPCO and PSO are fully aware of and understand the nature of the sub-projects as they develop and resources can be deployed in a coordinated manner.

3.5 Implementation Results

3.5.1 I-PLAN

The midterm progress of the **I-PLAN** component is presented in **Table 8.** The project has already surpassed its end target for agri-fishery investments in Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs) supporting priority value chains. Against a goal of **30%**, the project has achieved **47.1%**, signalling a robust institutional commitment to value-chain-oriented planning.

Regarding the capacity-building objective—measured by the percentage of DA and LGU participants with improved knowledge in investment planning—the project maintains a rigorous End-of-Project (EOP) target of 90%. At this midterm stage, this indicator is designated as "Not achievement yet," as the National Project Coordination Office (NPCO) is currently undergoing a technical review to refine the evaluation methodology and competency assessment tools. This effort ensures that the reported intermediate results will accurately capture the qualitative shift in institutional expertise across the participating agencies and local government units.

Table 8. Progress of I-PLAN Component Indicators Against End-of-Project Targets

Indicators	Baseline	End Target	Status
1. Percent increase in the amount of agri-fishery investments in PCIPs supporting priority value chains (%)	0	30%	47.1% Achieved (Exceeded Target)
2. Number of RAFIPs utilized in the DA Annual Work Plan	0	16[4]	10[5]

[3] This has been particularly helpful when considering FCAs with already on-going enterprise activities, and whose management and staff are already fully occupied carrying out day-to-day functions in relation to these on-going activities.

[5] 10 out of 16 regions are currently referencing RAFIPs in their DA Annual Work Plans, namely: Region I, Region III, Region IV-B, Region V, Region VI, Region VII, Region VIII, Region XI, Region XII, and Region XIII.

			Partially Achieved (Timing Constraint; On Track)
3. Percent of DA and LGU participants with improved knowledge in investment planning (%)	0	90%	No achievement yet

3.5.2 I-BUILD

The I-BUILD intermediate results are presented in Table 9. In Table 9, the I-BUILD component shows a dual-track performance: while transport efficiency metrics (i.e. reduction of traveling time and kilometres of road constructed) are meeting or exceeding midterm expectations, the physical delivery of value-chain and irrigation facilities is facing significant operational lags.

The project has demonstrated high efficacy in improving rural mobility. The **reduction in travel time** reached **50.21%**, successfully surpassing the 40% EOP target based on the conducted household survey. This indicates that completed road segments are already providing immediate functionality.

Conversely, the **reduction in transport costs** stands at **15.38%**, trailing the midterm target of 30%. This may suggest that while roads are faster, the reduction in per-unit transport costs is being tempered by regional inflationary pressures (e.g., fuel and maintenance) or the transition period required for local logistics providers to adjust their tariff structures to the improved road conditions.

In addition, **23.64 km** of roads have been completed. While this is a modest fraction of the **1,174 km EOP target**, the pipeline is robust, with **741.4 km** currently in various stages of subproject implementation. Meanwhile, both **cropping intensity** and **area served** remain at **0%**.

Table 9. I-BUILD Intermediate Results at Midterm versus EOP.

Indicators	Values		Results and comments (as of March 2026)
	Actual Accomplishment at Midterm	End of project	
Percent reduction in transport costs in roads linking production areas to markets (Number)	3.72%[6]	51.3%	Midterm target of 30% was not yet achieved based on the household survey (238 HH)
Percent reduction in travel time of farmer/ fisherfolk from farm to market (Number)	54.95%	40%	Target achieved; additional roads to be constructed in the pipeline (340 HH)
Kilometers of road constructed (Kilometers)	23.64 km	1174 km	741.4 km additional from SPs

[4] Originally 15, with an additional RAFIP developed for Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

[6] This value represents an increase in transportation cost at midterm (ref. Table 1).

Number of value chain infrastructure facilities constructed as designed (Number)		6	62	8% of EOP target, value chain infrastructure facilities (2,539 square meters) worth Php90.18 million constructed (warehouse, solar dryer, ice plant and cold storage, fish landing) PRDP will not achieve the EOP target as there are only 30 VCRI subprojects approved so far (Php 2.54 billion) and with only six (6) subprojects in the pipeline (Php 287.58 million).
Percent of completed climate-smart value chain infrastructure facilities operating as designed (Percentage)		44%	100%	Seven (7) out of 16 completed rural infrastructures are found not yet operating as designed. These include: (i) three warehouse with solar dryer subprojects designed to cater commodities that are not yet into harvest or processing periods as of the period the midterm survey was conducted in February 2026, and (ii) four PWS level 2 subprojects not yet operating due to pending acceptance by the proponent barangay LGUs and O&M requirements not yet in place e.g. establishments of Barangay Water Supply and Sanitation Associations (BWSSA's), ordinance on fees / tariff for access to services, others.
Cropping intensity in areas served with new/ improved irrigation or drainage services (Percentage)	0%		170%	None – no completed Irrigation SP; 2 CIS approved, 3 in the pipeline
Area served with new/ rehabilitated irrigation system (Hectares)	0		2570	None – no completed Irrigation SP; 2 CIS approved, 3 in the pipeline

3.5.3 I-REAP

There are no completed I-REAP sub-projects as yet. As such, achievement of the intermediate results (IR) (outcomes) cannot be definitively measured. However, given what can be gleaned from the seven (7) sub-projects currently in implementation, meeting the targets set against the other IR indicators are largely

deemed achievable, with results likely to surpass the targets set for the end of the project. This is presented in the table below.

Table 10 I-REAP Intermediate Results

Indicators	Targets		Results and comments (as of March 2026)
	Mid-term	End of project	
Number of agri-fishery enterprises (sub-projects completed)	33	110	Target not achieved. There are nine (9) sub-projects (with NOL1, in implementation), and 39 sub-projects in the pipeline (under development).
Percent of agri-fishery enterprises engaged in post-production segments of value chains	20%	60%	Most of the FCA-enterprises (sub-project proponents) are *already* engaged in post-production activities beyond consolidation (even before I-REAP's interventions). This suggests a high likelihood of achieving the target (at EOP), but this result is not (entirely) attributable to PRDP. For example, 6 of the 7 active subprojects studied (under this evaluation) are already engaged in post-production activities.
Percent increase in profitability of participating agri-fishery enterprises	13%	40%	*To be determined, after sub-projects have reached completion*
Percent of agri-fishery enterprise clusters reached by business development support including credit and insurance	17%	50%	Proponent FCAs tend to have *previously* accessed technical and business development support services from providers and institutions (other than PRDP). FCAs with relatively larger asset volumes also tend to have *previously* accessed credit from development finance institutions. Thus, similar to other previous indicators used, while achievement of this target (by EOP) is deemed highly likely, the result may not necessarily be (entirely) attributed to I-REAP interventions.
Percent of agri-fishery enterprise clusters with partnership agreement with institutional buyers	17%	50%	As standard practice, all sub-projects are encouraged (in some cases, required) to secure partnership agreements with (institutional) buyers, as part of the application process. Moreover, in 6 of the 7 active sub-projects studied, FCA-enterprises already have pre-existing relationships with institutional buyers. As such, there is a high likelihood of achieving the target set against this indicator, without accounting for attribution.[7]

[7] In Section 8 (Recommendations), proposals are put forward to introduce improvements to some of the indicators being tracked (in the IR) for I-REAP – including for this particular indicator.

Indicators	Targets		Results and comments (as of March 2026)
	Mid-term	End of project	
Percent of women directly participating in clustered enterprises		50%	Target not achieved (yet), pending measurement once sub-projects have been completed and enterprise activities are fully operational. Note: Almost 57% of the member-beneficiaries of FCA-proponents of the 7 sub-projects studied are women.[8]

[8] Simply counting how many FCA members are female presupposes that *all* FCA members are able to participate directly and equitably in the sub-project/s. As outlined in the PRDP Results Framework, the indicator is measured as the proportion of women participating in the project – and more specifically, measures the degree to which women participate actively – and benefit from – targeted value chain segments at the enterprise level. As such, FGDs with producer groups will be carried out in order to capture and understand changes in the role of women in the operations (e.g. looking at whether they are becoming decision-makers, etc.).

4 Evaluation Findings

4.1 I-PLAN

4.1.1 Relevance

The I-PLAN component remains highly relevant to the objectives of the PRDP Scale-Up and to the broader mandate of the DA in advancing value chain–based agricultural investment planning. Its core tools, particularly the VCA, PCIP and RAFIP are strongly aligned with national development frameworks and sectoral strategies. These tools provide a structured and evidence-based approach for identifying commodity priorities, diagnosing value chain constraints, and defining strategic investment interventions across multiple governance levels.

Empirical evidence confirms that the relevance of I-PLAN extends beyond design alignment and is reflected in actual system responses. The observed 47.1 percent increase in agri-fishery investments aligned with PCIP priorities, equivalent to Php 70.08 billion, demonstrates that planning tools are actively shaping investment behavior across the Department of Agriculture, local government units, and other national government agencies. Notably, approximately 69 percent of these investments are sourced from non-PRDP funds, indicating that PCIPs are functioning as coordination and signaling mechanisms that influence resource allocation decisions beyond the direct scope of project financing.

At the subnational level, I-PLAN tools are recognized as highly relevant in structuring participatory and multi-stakeholder planning processes. Evidence from LGU engagement shows that PCIPs serve as integrative platforms linking local development priorities with regional and national agricultural strategies. They support more systematic commodity prioritization, improve the technical quality of project proposals, and enable cross-sectoral coordination among planning, agriculture, engineering, and budgeting units. This reflects a shift toward more structured, evidence-based, and value chain–oriented planning practices.

However, the relevance of I-PLAN tools is not uniform across regions and governance levels. Variations in institutional capacity, coordination mechanisms, and levels of ownership result in uneven application and depth of use. High-performing regions (Region I, Region II, CAR, Region IV-A, and BARMM) demonstrate strong alignment of investments across PRDP and non-PRDP sources, suggesting that planning tools are beginning to function as practical instruments for coordinating investments. In contrast, lower-performing regions (Region III, Region IV-B, Region VI, Region VII, Region XII, and Region XI) remain more dependent on project-driven processes, with limited evidence of broader system alignment. Moderately performing regions (Region IX, NIR, Region X, Region VIII, Region V, and Region XIII) show moderate increases in investment levels, with growth driven partly by PRDP and partly by emerging non-PRDP contributions. While there is evidence of alignment, it remains uneven, and investments continue to be influenced significantly by project-supported activities. These regions are best characterized as being in a transition stage, where PCIPs are being utilized but have not yet been fully embedded in routine planning and budgeting processes.

In addition, while I-PLAN tools are highly relevant in guiding public sector investments, their relevance in catalyzing private sector participation remains limited. The negligible contribution of private investments indicates that value chain deepening, particularly in areas such as processing, logistics, and market integration, has not yet been fully realized.

Overall, the I-PLAN component demonstrates strong strategic and operational relevance, supported by clear evidence of influence on planning practices and investment alignment. However, this relevance remains partly constrained by uneven institutional capacity, limited private sector engagement, and incomplete integration into formal planning and budgeting systems. Strengthening these areas will be critical to ensuring that the relevance of I-PLAN tools is sustained and translated into fully institutionalized governance practices.

4.1.2 Effectiveness

The I-PLAN component demonstrates substantial effectiveness in influencing planning processes, investment identification, and proposal development across the PRDP Scale-Up system. However, its effectiveness in

shaping final investment outcomes remains partial, reflecting structural constraints within the broader governance and decision-making environment.

Evidence across multiple data sources confirms that I-PLAN tools are actively utilized and exert significant influence at various stages of the investment cycle. At the local level, 79.41% of LGUs reported that I-PLAN tools have influenced at least one investment decision within the past two years, particularly in areas such as commodity prioritization, project proposal development, and alignment of investments with value chain constraints. At the coordination level, 100% of Project Support Offices (PSOs) confirmed that planning tools are systematically used in investment discussions, technical review, and validation processes. Similarly, 93.75% of implementing components reported that project proposals are aligned with PCIP and VCA priorities, indicating that planning frameworks are effectively shaping the structure and content of the investment pipeline.

In operational terms, I-PLAN tools are consistently applied in key stages of the investment decision chain, including:

a. investment identification and sourcing,
b. project proposal development and refinement,
c. technical screening and validation, and
d. commodity prioritization and value chain alignment.

These findings demonstrate that I-PLAN has successfully institutionalized an analytical planning framework that enhances the technical quality, strategic coherence, and evidence base of agri-fishery investment planning. The tools have contributed to a broader shift toward evidence-based planning practices, where investment decisions are increasingly informed by value chain diagnostics, commodity suitability analysis, and structured planning processes. This is further reinforced by improvements in technical capacity among LGU and DA personnel, as well as the institutionalization of participatory planning platforms such as the PCIP.

Moreover, the effectiveness of I-PLAN is evident in its ability to influence investment alignment beyond PRDP-funded activities. The 47.1% increase in PCIP-aligned investments, equivalent to Php 70.08 billion, including substantial contributions from non-PRDP sources, indicates that planning tools are functioning as coordination and signaling mechanisms across multiple actors within the agricultural sector.

Despite these gains, the effectiveness of I-PLAN remains constrained by a fundamental institutional limitation. Planning tools function primarily as decision-support mechanisms rather than decision-control mechanisms. While they shape how investments are identified, justified, and technically evaluated, they do not consistently determine which investments are ultimately funded.

Survey evidence clearly illustrates this limitation. Only 11.76% of respondents identified PCIP as the primary determinant of investment approval, while the majority pointed to formal budgeting instruments such as the Annual Investment Program (AIP) and Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), as well as political priorities and funding availability, as the dominant drivers of decision-making. This indicates that planning tools, while influential, are not yet embedded within the formal rules governing budget allocation and investment approval. This results in a persistent planning–investment conversion gap, characterized by the divergence between:

a. planning outputs, which define evidence-based priorities, and
b. investment outcomes, which are ultimately determined by fiscal, political, and institutional considerations.

At the local level, this gap is particularly pronounced. While LGUs actively use I-PLAN tools in proposal preparation and planning discussions, final investment decisions remain subject to political leadership, budget constraints, and competing development priorities. As a result, planning tools help define what should be prioritized but do not consistently determine what gets funded.

The effectiveness of I-PLAN also varies across governance levels, following a clear institutional gradient:

a. High effectiveness at the PSO level, where tools are fully integrated into technical workflows, coordination mechanisms, and investment validation processes;
b. Moderate effectiveness at the RFU level, where tools are operational but not yet fully standardized or routinized across all units;
c. Variable and constrained effectiveness at the LGU level, where decision-making authority over budgets limits the influence of planning tools on final investment outcomes.

This gradient reflects the interaction between technical capacity and decision-making authority. Where planning tools are embedded within technical and coordination functions, their influence is strong and consistent. However, as decision-making shifts toward actors with control over financial resources and approvals, the influence of these tools becomes more contingent and variable.

In addition, several structural constraints limit the full effectiveness of I-PLAN:
a. weak integration between planning outputs and formal budgeting systems,
b. uneven technical capacity across LGUs,
c. continued reliance on PRDP-supported technical assistance, and
d. incomplete integration across PRDP components, particularly in translating planning outputs into coordinated infrastructure and enterprise investments.

These findings indicate that the I-PLAN component has been highly effective in strengthening planning systems, improving analytical rigor, and shaping investment discussions across governance levels. However, its effectiveness in influencing final investment decisions remains partial due to systemic governance constraints.

Overall, I-PLAN can be assessed as substantially effective at the level of planning processes and investment alignment, but only partially effective at the level of outcome realization, as planning tools have not yet achieved full institutional integration into budgeting, approval, and decision-making systems. The central challenge moving forward is therefore to transition from influence to institutional control, ensuring that planning tools are not only used but become decisive in shaping agricultural investment outcomes.

4.1.3 Efficiency

The I-PLAN component demonstrates functional efficiency in establishing planning systems, coordination mechanisms, and investment pipelines that support value chain–based investment programming. Structured processes such as planning workshops, stakeholder consultations, proposal calls, technical reviews, and inter-agency coordination platforms enable the systematic generation and refinement of PCIP-aligned investments.

At the pipeline level, I-PLAN tools contribute to a relatively efficient pre-appraisal and screening system. Evidence indicates that approximately 70% of subprojects entering the pipeline are already aligned with PCIP priorities prior to formal appraisal, reflecting the effectiveness of planning tools in guiding early-stage investment identification and proposal development. In addition, around 90% of respondents report that screening mechanisms effectively filter out non-aligned proposals, demonstrating that I-PLAN tools function as an important governance checkpoint in maintaining alignment with value chain priorities.

These findings suggest that the investment pipeline is structurally sound and capable of ensuring coherence between planning outputs and proposed investments. The presence of clear screening criteria and validation processes further enhances procedural efficiency by reducing the likelihood of misaligned projects progressing through the system. However, despite these strengths, efficiency is significantly constrained by operational, institutional, and capacity-related factors that affect the speed, cost, and sustainability of implementation processes.

First, proposal development remains resource-intensive and iterative. Approximately 60% of project proposals are incomplete upon initial submission, requiring multiple revisions before proceeding to appraisal. This reflects both the technical complexity of PRDP requirements and the limited capacity of LGUs to independently prepare investment-ready proposals.

Second, complex documentary and regulatory requirements introduce delays in processing. Compliance with permitting, certification, and inter-agency requirements extends the project cycle and reduces procedural efficiency, particularly in contexts where coordination across agencies is required.

Third, the system remains highly dependent on PRDP technical assistance. LGUs rely extensively on RPCOs and other project-supported mechanisms for feasibility studies, business planning, and technical documentation. Only a small proportion of LGUs demonstrate full independent capacity to apply planning tools and develop proposals, indicating that efficiency gains are currently supported by external facilitation rather than embedded institutional capacity.

Fourth, capacity constraints at the LGU level continue to slow down both planning and pipeline development. Limited technical personnel, uneven analytical capability, and dependence on consultants or external support contribute to delays and inconsistencies in proposal preparation.

Fifth, the presence of parallel planning and budgeting systems (e.g., AIP, CDP, and other local frameworks) creates duplication and fragmentation, further reducing system efficiency. I-PLAN tools are not yet fully integrated into these existing systems, resulting in additional transaction costs and coordination burdens.

These constraints indicate that while the I-PLAN system is functionally effective, it is not yet optimized for streamlined, autonomous, and system-driven operation. The current model relies on multiple layers of coordination, technical support, and procedural compliance, making it resource-intensive, process-heavy, and dependent on project-based facilitation mechanisms.

From an evaluation perspective, efficiency can therefore be assessed as moderate. Strong systems and processes are in place to guide investment alignment and pipeline development; however, their operational performance is constrained by capacity limitations, procedural complexity, and incomplete institutional integration. Improving efficiency in the remaining implementation period will require a shift toward system simplification, capacity internalization, and integration of I-PLAN tools into regular DA and LGU planning, budgeting, and approval processes.

4.1.4 Coherence

At the design level, the I-PLAN component demonstrates strong internal coherence within the PRDP Scale-Up results chain, anchored on a value chain–based development framework that logically links planning, infrastructure, enterprise development, and program support functions:

Component	Function
I-PLAN	Defines commodity priorities and investment logic (VCA, PCIP, RAFIP)
I-BUILD	Provides infrastructure to support production and logistics
I-REAP	Supports enterprise development and market participation
I-SUPPORT	Enables coordination, management, and stakeholder engagement

This design reflects a theoretically-sound and well-articulated results chain, where planning outputs are expected to systematically guide downstream investments, ensuring that infrastructure and enterprise interventions respond to identified value chain constraints.

However, evaluation findings indicate that while conceptual coherence is strong, operational coherence remains partial, uneven, and largely facilitative rather than system-enforced.

First, the intended investment sequencing—VCA → PCIP → RAFIP → I-BUILD/I-REAP investments, is not yet fully institutionalized as a binding governance mechanism. While planning tools clearly influence project identification, proposal development, and technical screening, they do not consistently function as enforceable decision rules in investment approval and budgeting processes. As a result, alignment across components is often achieved through coordination and technical guidance rather than through formal system integration.

Second, coordination across PRDP components is present but largely dependent on facilitation mechanisms such as meetings, consultations, investment forums, and "leveling-off" discussions. Implementing components (I-BUILD and I-REAP) actively encourage alignment with PCIP priorities and use planning tools as reference frameworks in proposal development and validation. However, this coordination remains process-driven rather than system-driven, with limited evidence of fully integrated programming, budgeting, or approval systems that automatically enforce alignment across components.

Third, coherence is further affected by the coexistence of parallel planning and budgeting systems, particularly at the LGU level. Instruments such as the Annual Investment Program (AIP), Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), and other local planning frameworks operate alongside PRDP tools, often without full integration. This creates a fragmented planning environment where PRDP tools function as influential but non-binding frameworks, rather than as central organizing mechanisms for investment decisions.

Fourth, the interface between DA-led planning systems and LGU-led implementation introduces an additional layer of complexity. While I-PLAN defines planning standards and priorities, LGUs retain authority over investment programming and execution. This creates a structural disconnect between planning and implementation, where coherence depends on voluntary alignment rather than institutional enforcement. As a result, PRDP tools influence LGU behavior through coordination, technical assistance, and compliance mechanisms, but do not fully determine investment outcomes.

Fifth, regional variation further underscores the unevenness of operational coherence. High-performing regions demonstrate stronger alignment across components and funding sources, suggesting that coherence improves where there is strong provincial ownership, effective coordination mechanisms, and higher institutional capacity. In contrast, lower-performing regions exhibit more fragmented implementation, where planning tools remain project-driven and less integrated into routine systems.

Taken together, these findings indicate that:

a. Coherence is strong at the conceptual and design level, with a clear and logical results chain anchored on value chain development principles;
b. Coherence is moderate at the operational level, where alignment is achieved through facilitation, coordination, and technical processes;
c. Coherence is weak at the institutional level, where planning tools are not yet embedded in formal decision-making systems that enforce integration across components.

From a governance perspective, the PRDP system currently operates as a programmatically aligned but not yet governance-enforced system, where components share a common framework and language but are not fully integrated through binding rules, unified systems, or synchronized planning and budgeting processes. This creates a risk that the PRDP results chain functions as an aspirational or facilitative model, rather than as a fully operationalized investment system where planning outputs systematically determine infrastructure and enterprise investments.

Strengthening coherence in the remaining implementation period will therefore require moving beyond coordination-based alignment toward institutional integration, particularly through:

a. embedding planning tools into budgeting and approval systems,
b. strengthening horizontal integration across components, and
c. ensuring that value chain priorities are consistently translated into coordinated, multi-component investments.

4.1.5 Impact

The I-PLAN component has generated clear and measurable intermediate impacts, particularly in strengthening investment alignment, improving planning quality, and influencing broader system behavior beyond project boundaries.

At the aggregate level, the most significant impact is the 47.1 percent increase in total agri-fishery investments aligned with PCIP priorities, equivalent to approximately Php 70.08 billion mobilized during the implementation period. This exceeds the end-of-project target of 30 percent and provides strong evidence that I-PLAN tools are not merely technical outputs but are actively shaping investment patterns across the sector.

Importantly, this increase reflects not only an expansion in financial resources but also a qualitative shift in how investments are aligned, with growing adherence to value chain priorities identified through PCIP and VCA processes. Investments are increasingly directed toward addressing systemic constraints in production, processing, logistics, and market access, indicating improved strategic coherence in agricultural development programming.

A critical dimension of impact is the leverage effect beyond PRDP financing. Approximately 69 percent of total aligned investments originate from non-PRDP sources, including DA regular programs, other national government agencies, and LGUs. This indicates that I-PLAN tools are functioning as coordination and signalling mechanisms, influencing how multiple actors allocate resources even outside the direct scope of the project. The observed 45 percent increase in DA investments outside PRDP further suggests early evidence of mainstreaming within regular government systems, although this remains partial and uneven.

At the institutional level, I-PLAN has contributed to a shift toward evidence-based planning practices across DA and LGUs. Planning processes are increasingly grounded in value chain diagnostics, commodity prioritization, and climate-informed analysis, moving away from ad hoc or purely politically driven investment identification. This is reflected in improved technical quality of proposals, stronger cross-sectoral coordination, and enhanced use of analytical tools in planning discussions.

The component has also generated capacity-related impacts, particularly among LGU and DA personnel. Survey evidence indicates substantial improvements in competencies related to investment planning, project design, and value chain analysis. These gains have enabled LGUs to better conceptualize and structure agricultural investments, although their ability to independently sustain these practices remains uneven.

However, despite these positive impacts, outcomes remain uneven, incomplete, and structurally constrained.

First, impact is geographically uneven. High-performing regions[9] such as Region I, Region II, CAR, Region IV-A, and BARMM demonstrate strong increases in both PRDP and non-PRDP investments, indicating deeper integration of PCIP into planning and resource allocation. In contrast, several regions exhibit limited investment growth and weaker alignment, reflecting disparities in capacity, coordination, and institutional ownership.

Second, vertical integration across LGU levels remains incomplete. While provincial LGUs play a central role in investment mobilization and demonstrate strong ownership of PCIPs, the participation of city and municipal LGUs is more limited. This indicates that the institutional reach of I-PLAN tools has not yet been fully cascaded across all levels of local governance, constraining system-wide impact.

Third, impact remains constrained by a persistent planning–investment conversion gap. While planning tools strongly influence investment identification and proposal development, they do not consistently determine final funding decisions. Investments continue to be shaped by budget availability, political priorities, and existing planning instruments such as AIP and CDP. As a result, well-identified priorities do not always translate into implemented projects.

Fourth, institutionalization and mainstreaming remains partial, limiting the depth and sustainability of impact. Planning tools are widely used and recognized but are not yet fully embedded in formal planning, budgeting, and approval systems. Their influence therefore remains conditional and dependent on facilitation, technical assistance, and institutional context.

[9] *High-performing regions are defined based on the proportion of PRDP Scale-Up funds mobilized/leveraged relative to the total PRDP portfolio (Original Loan, AF1, AF2, and Scale-Up). Regions classified as high-performing exhibit shares ranging from 36.1% to 54.4%, indicating stronger leveraging of Scale-Up resources and deeper integration of PCIP priorities into investment planning and resource allocation.*

These findings indicate that the impact of I-PLAN follows a clear pattern:

a. Strong at the planning and coordination level, where tools have transformed how investments are identified, prioritized, and discussed;
b. Moderate at the system alignment level, where investments are increasingly aligned with value chain priorities across multiple actors;
c. Limited at the institutional and governance level, where planning tools are not yet fully embedded as binding determinants of investment decisions.

From an evaluation perspective, I-PLAN has generated substantial intermediate and systemic impacts, particularly in improving investment alignment and strengthening evidence-based planning. It has also demonstrated early signs of influencing broader government programming beyond PRDP. However, it has not yet achieved full system-wide transformation of agricultural investment governance. The transition from influencing investment behavior to institutionally determining investment outcomes remains incomplete and represents the central challenge for the remaining implementation period.

4.1.6 Sustainability

The sustainability of the I-PLAN component remains transitional, uneven, and contingent on further institutional embedding. While there is strong evidence that planning tools are widely adopted and functionally operational, the transition from project-supported use to fully institutionalized governance systems has not yet been completed.

On the positive side, several indicators suggest that the foundations for sustainability are already in place. Planning tools such as the PCIP and VCA are widely recognized and actively used across DA and LGU systems, particularly in investment identification, proposal development, and participatory planning processes. The institutionalization of multi-stakeholder planning platforms, including consultation workshops and validation mechanisms, indicates that I-PLAN has successfully established a functional planning architecture that is embedded in routine planning practices at least at the process level.

In addition, the component has contributed to significant capacity development among LGUs and DA personnel, with many respondents reporting improvements in investment planning, value chain analysis, and project preparation. These gains provide an important basis for sustaining planning functions beyond the life of the project. Furthermore, the increasing alignment of non-PRDP investments with PCIP priorities suggests that I-PLAN tools are beginning to influence regular government programming, which is a critical precondition for long-term sustainability.

However, these gains are offset by a set of structural and institutional constraints that limit the sustainability of outcomes.

1. Partial Institutionalization

Despite widespread use, I-PLAN tools are not yet fully embedded in formal governance systems. Only 8.82 percent of LGUs report full integration of tools into routine planning and budgeting processes, while the majority remain at the compliance or early utilization stages. This indicates that tool use is still largely conditional and non-routinized, rather than governed by formal mandates, standardized procedures, or institutional requirements. In many cases, planning tools are applied selectively or in response to PRDP processes rather than as integral components of regular planning systems.

2. Continued Dependence on PRDP Technical Support

Sustainability is further constrained by the continued reliance on PRDP technical assistance, particularly from RPCOs and PSOs. Only 13.24 percent of LGUs are able to use I-PLAN tools independently, while the majority require ongoing support in areas such as feasibility study preparation, business planning, and technical documentation.

Capacity gaps are especially pronounced for more complex tools such as VCA, where only a very small proportion of LGUs (5.88%) can conduct analysis independently. This dependence indicates that while capacities have improved, they have not yet been fully institutionalized within LGU systems, raising concerns about the sustainability of tool use once project support is withdrawn.

3. Weak Integration Between Planning and Budgeting Systems

A critical limitation to sustainability is the lack of formal linkage between planning outputs and budgeting processes. PCIPs and VCAs are not systematically integrated into key decision-making instruments such as the Annual Investment Program (AIP) or budget allocation frameworks. As a result, planning outputs remain advisory rather than binding, influencing investment discussions but not consistently determining resource allocation. This disconnect undermines sustainability by preventing planning tools from functioning as enforceable governance mechanisms that shape long-term investment behavior.

4. Governance and Political Economy Constraints
The decentralized nature of investment decision-making introduces additional constraints. While I-PLAN has strengthened technical planning capacity, decision authority remains with LGUs, where investment outcomes are influenced by political priorities, fiscal constraints, and competing development needs.

This creates a capability–authority divide, where technically sound and strategically aligned plans do not necessarily translate into funded investments. As long as planning tools are not embedded within formal approval and budgeting rules, their sustainability will remain contingent on the discretionary use of decision-makers.

5. Institutional Discontinuity and Human Resource Constraints

Sustainability is also affected by institutional discontinuity, particularly in relation to staffing. Frequent turnover of trained personnel disrupts institutional memory and reduces the continuity of tool application. In many LGUs, tool use remains person-dependent rather than system-dependent, meaning that knowledge and practices are not fully embedded within organizational structures.

This lack of institutional anchoring increases the risk that gains in planning capacity may not be sustained over time.

6. Fragmented Planning Environment and Parallel Systems

I-PLAN tools operate within a fragmented planning ecosystem, where multiple planning instruments coexist, including AIP, CDP, provincial development plans, and other sectoral frameworks. Approximately one-third of LGUs report the presence of parallel planning systems, while many others are uncertain about integration across frameworks. This coexistence results in partial integration and potential duplication, limiting the extent to which PRDP tools are institutionalized as standard planning instruments. In many cases, PCIPs function alongside rather than within existing planning systems, reducing their influence on formal decision-making processes.

7. Uneven Regional Institutionalization and Sustainability Risks

Sustainability outcomes also vary significantly across regions. High-performing regions demonstrate stronger integration of PCIPs into planning and investment processes, with evidence of alignment across multiple funding sources. In contrast, lower-performing regions remain more project-dependent, with limited evidence of broader system adoption. This unevenness suggests that sustainability is not uniform but is instead shaped by regional capacity, governance quality, and institutional ownership. Without targeted support, there is a risk that gains will remain concentrated in a subset of regions rather than achieving system-wide sustainability.

Overall Sustainability Assessment

These findings indicate that I-PLAN tools are widely adopted, operationally functional, and influential in planning processes, but not yet fully institutionalized within governance systems.

Sustainability at midterm is therefore best characterized as transitional, with strong foundations in place but significant gaps in institutional embedding.
The central transition required is from:

a. Project-supported use → system-integrated use
b. Technical adoption → enforceable governance mechanisms
c. Facilitated application → routinized institutional practice

Achieving sustainability will depend on the ability of the program to embed I-PLAN tools within formal planning, budgeting, approval, and performance management systems, while strengthening LGU capacity, reducing dependence on external technical assistance, and ensuring that planning outputs are consistently translated into funded and implemented investments. Without these shifts, I-PLAN risks remaining a technically robust but institutionally peripheral system, rather than becoming a durable and self-sustaining component of agricultural investment governance.

Overall, across the OECD-DAC criteria, the I-PLAN component demonstrates high relevance and strong coherence at the design level, coupled with substantial effectiveness and moderate efficiency in shaping planning processes and structuring investment pipelines. The component has contributed to measurable intermediate impacts, including a 47.1 percent increase in PCIP-aligned investments, with approximately 69 percent of these investments originating from non-PRDP sources, indicating a broader system-level influence beyond project financing.

However, these gains are tempered by persistent structural constraints that limit full outcome realization. Effectiveness remains partial, as planning tools primarily function as decision-support rather than decision-control mechanisms, with investment decisions still driven by budgeting systems, political priorities, and funding availability. Efficiency is similarly constrained by capacity gaps, procedural complexity, and continued reliance on PRDP technical assistance. Coherence, while strong in conceptual design, is not yet fully operationalized through enforceable decision rules across components, and impact remains uneven across regions and governance levels.

From a sustainability perspective, the component is best characterized as transitional. While I-PLAN has successfully established a credible and widely utilized planning architecture and influenced investment alignment, institutionalization remains incomplete. Tools are not yet fully embedded in formal planning, budgeting, and approval systems, and their sustained use remains dependent on external facilitation and variable local capacity.

At midterm, I-PLAN tools function as influential but non-binding instruments within the agricultural investment system. The central challenge moving forward is to transition from analytical influence to institutional control by embedding these tools within enforceable governance mechanisms, strengthening planning–budgeting integration, and ensuring routinized application across DA and LGU systems to achieve full system-level transformation.

4.2 I-BUILD

4.2.1 Relevance

I-BUILD remains relevant in addressing critical rural infrastructure constraints faced by Local Government Units (LGUs), Farmers and Fisherfolk Cooperatives/Associations (FCAs), and rural communities. The current challenges include inadequate farm-to-market roads (FMRs), limited access to reliable water systems, and lack of post-harvest and production support facilities. These constraints continue to impede market access, increase transaction costs, and reduce productivity, particularly in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

Most respondents who received the subproject reported that the benefits are attributable to the intervention. A majority rated the level of attribution as moderate to high, particularly for outcomes such as reduced travel time and improved market access. However, some respondents indicated only slight attribution, especially in areas where infrastructure is not yet fully operational such in projects involving warehouse with solar dryer facilities and potable water systems. This variation reflects differences in project completion status and functionality. Overall, the subprojects are perceived to have a meaningful but not yet fully maximized impact.

I-BUILD interventions are appropriately designed to respond to these challenges by financing strategic, climate-resilient, and production-oriented infrastructure. For instance, the Barangay Water System Development Project in Baybay City demonstrates strong alignment with local needs by improving potable water access and reducing household vulnerability, while the Bangus Breeding and Hatchery Project in Bolinao highlights persistent gaps in aligning infrastructure delivery with readiness and local absorptive capacity.

Alignment with planning frameworks is generally strong. Subprojects are integrated into LGU development instruments such as Local Development Plans (LDPs), Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs), and Annual Investment Programs (AIPs). However, in some cases, prioritization appears supply-driven rather than demand-driven, particularly where political considerations influence project selection.

From the perspective of FCAs and beneficiary communities, I-BUILD investments are broadly aligned with needs related to access, cost reduction, and productivity enhancement. Nonetheless, mismatches remain in some projects where technical designs do not fully reflect local conditions or operational realities (e.g., scale, site suitability, or market linkage readiness).

The appropriateness of technical designs and standards is generally consistent with national guidelines; however, implementation experience suggests the need for greater contextualization. In the Bolinao hatchery case, repeated bidding failures and design-related issues point to gaps in project preparation and feasibility assessment.

4.2.2 Effectiveness

The Theory of Change (ToC) for the I-BUILD component of the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) is anchored on the premise that strategic rural infrastructure investments, when properly identified, designed, and implemented, will enhance connectivity, productivity, and market access, ultimately contributing to increased rural incomes and reduced poverty.

At its core, I-BUILD operates within a nested Theory of Change, wherein outcomes are achieved through a sequence of interlinked processes at multiple levels: (i) strategic planning and prioritization, (ii) technical preparation and validation, (iii) investment approval and financing, (iv) efficient procurement and implementation, and (v) sustained operation and maintenance (O&M). Each layer of this nested system reinforces the others, and breakdowns at any stage propagate inefficiencies across the entire subproject lifecycle.

Figure 5. Operational Theory of Change for I-BUILD

Results Chain of I-BUILD

The I-BUILD ToC follows a standard results chain:

- Inputs: Public investments, technical assistance, institutional support (NPCO, PSO, RPCO, LGUs), and planning instruments such as the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP)
- Activities: Identification, validation, design, appraisal, procurement, construction, and O&M of infrastructure subprojects
- Outputs: Completed, climate-resilient, and standards-compliant rural infrastructure (e.g., farm-to-market roads, irrigation systems, post-harvest facilities)
- Outcomes: Improved access to markets, reduced logistics costs, enhanced productivity of value chains
- Impact: Increased farmer and fisher incomes, inclusive rural development, and strengthened local economies

Nested Structure Through the Validated Subproject Cycle

The validated I-BUILD Subproject (SP) Development Process operationalizes this ToC through:

1. SP Identification and Prioritization (1 month) - This stage establishes the strategic entry point of the ToC, ensuring alignment of infrastructure investments with the PCIP and local development priorities. Outputs such as geo-tagged SP expected to reflect value chain needs.
   However, excessive rigidity in PCIP alignment and political influences constrain optimal prioritization.

2. SP Validation (1 month) - This stage filters proposed subprojects through technical and economic lenses, ensuring feasibility and relevance. It serves as a quality control gateway before resource-intensive preparation begins.

3. FS, DED, and Safeguards Preparation (5–10 months) - This is the most resource- and time intensive stage, translating concepts into bankable projects through feasibility studies, detailed engineering design, and environmental and social safeguards compliance.
   Observed bottlenecks—such as excessive documentation requirements, piecemeal submissions, and outdated cost assumptions (e.g., inflation not reflected in POW) undermine efficiency and timeliness.

4. SP Appraisal, Review, and Approval (3 months) - This stage ensures that only technically sound, economically viable, and safeguards-compliant projects proceed to implementation. It represents the decision node of the ToC.
   However, fragmented review processes and procedural lapses (e.g., incomplete submissions, premature scheduling of approvals) weaken the efficiency of this stage.

5. Procurement (4 months) - Procurement translates approved designs into contractual obligations. It is critical for ensuring value for money and contractor quality.
   Delays (e.g., repeated failed biddings such as the Bolinao Hatchery case), prolonged bid evaluation, and participation of unqualified bidders disrupt the ToC and delay downstream benefits.

6. SP Implementation (6–36 months) - This stage delivers the tangible outputs of the ToC—completed infrastructure. It relies heavily on effective supervision, quality assurance, and safeguards compliance.
   Implementation risks include unauthorized subcontracting, political interference, substandard materials, and weak reporting systems.

7. SP Operation and Maintenance (10 years) - This stage is critical for sustaining outcomes and achieving long-term impacts. Functional infrastructure depends on adequate O&M systems, funding, and technical capacity.
   The absence of dedicated O&M financing, weak monitoring, and lack of technical personnel represent a major break in the ToC, risking asset deterioration and loss of benefits.

Operational Aspect of the Project Cycle	LGUs					
	Region II	Region VIII	Region XII		Region XIII	BARMM
	Santiago City	City of Baybay	Municipality of Tantangan	Municipality of Isulan	Municipality of Placer	Municipality of Tandubas
	FMR	WSD	FMR	PWS	VCI:Ice Plant	VCI: Fish Landing
PCIP Alignment- Verification that the subproject is identified in the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan.						
Site Validation- Physical inspection and geotyping of the proposed road or facility location.						
Feasibility Study (FS) / Business Plan (BP) Development- Preparation of technical, financial, and economic viability documents.						
Detailed Engineering Design (DED)- (For I-BUILD) Preparation of plans, cross-sections, and program of works.						
Value Chain Analysis (VCA)- Ensuring the subproject addresses specific gaps in the commodity value chain.						
RPCO/PSO/NPCO Review- The process of obtaining the No Objection Letter 1 (NOL 1).						
Inter-agency Coordination- Consultations with other agencies (e.g., DENR, NCIP) for necessary clearances.						
Bidding Process- Preparation of bid documents, advertisement, and the conduct of pre-bid conferences.						
Bid Evaluation and Award- Detailed examination of bids, procurement and issuance of the Notice of Award (NOA) and NOL 2.						

Operational Aspect of the Project Cycle	LGUs					
	Region II	Region VIII	Region XII		Region XIII	BARMM
	Santiago City	City of Baybay	Municipality of Tantangan	Municipality of Isulan	Municipality of Placer	Municipality of Tandubas
Project Supervision: Quality control and quality assurance, safety, sustainability, and construction						
Variation Orders / Change Orders: Management of technical adjustments during construction.						
Progress Billing: Preparation of disbursement vouchers for work accomplished.						
Final Inspection and Turnover: Issuance of the Certificate of Completion and handover to the LGU/FCA.						
Operations and Maintenance (O&M): Establishment of the O&M group and budget appropriation for upkeep.						

Figure 6. LGU Perception Mapping of Subproject Execution and Operational Bottlenecks

Figure 7. Validated Subproject Cycle and Heat Map Matrix of I-BUILD Subprojects

Salient Points

Successes

- Established coordination mechanisms among RPCO, PLGU, and LGU units to support project implementation.
- Ongoing efforts to standardize processes (e.g., templates, documentation systems) to improve efficiency.
- Increased awareness of bottlenecks across subproject cycle stages (FS, DED, procurement).
- Initiatives toward digital systems (e.g., geotagged photo management) to strengthen monitoring and documentation.
- Active engagement of multiple stakeholders in identifying and addressing implementation gaps.

Challenges

- Significant delays in securing No Objection Letter (NOL 1) largely due to incomplete or delayed FS and DED preparation.
- Lengthy processing of permits and inter-agency clearances (e.g., tenurial instruments, conversion orders).
- Inconsistent or evolving guidelines across agencies, especially with changes in leadership.
- Delays in procurement processes and approval of variation/change orders.
- Weak documentation practices, particularly in consolidation and submission of geotagged reports.

Ways Forward

- Strengthen pre-implementation readiness by ensuring complete and compliant submission of FS, DED, and required permits.
- Institutionalize standardized guidelines and templates across agencies to reduce inconsistencies.
- Promote parallel processing of requirements and joint technical reviews to shorten approval timelines.
- Enhance coordination through regular inter-agency meetings and dedicated technical teams.
- Improve monitoring systems, including stricter compliance with documentation (e.g., real-time geotagging and reporting).

Systemic Insights

The validated subproject cycle reveals that the I-BUILD ToC is highly sequential and compliance-driven, with strong upstream controls but relatively weaker downstream sustainability mechanisms. Three key systemic characteristics emerge:

- Front-loaded complexity: Significant delays occur in design and appraisal due to heavy documentation and fragmented review processes.
- Procurement fragility: Repeated bidding failures and weak contractor screening disrupt implementation timelines.
- O&M gap: The weakest link in the ToC lies in post-construction sustainability, where insufficient institutional and financial mechanisms undermine long-term outcomes.

4.2.3 Efficiency

Table 11. Process analysis of the I-BUILD Subproject (SP) cycle

VALIDATED I-BUILD SUBPROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS						
1. SP Identification and Prioritization	**2. SP Validation**	**3. FS, DED, and Safeguards Preparation**	**4. SP Appraisal, Review, and Approval**	**5. Procurement**	**6. SP Implementation**	**7. SP Operation and Maintenance**
1 month	1 month	5-10 months	3 months	4 months	6-36 months	10 years
Activities and Bottlenecks						
• Identification of infrastructure gaps • Alignment with Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) • Prioritization of candidate subprojects	• Technical screening • Value chain alignment validation • Preliminary site inspection	• Feasibility Study (FS) preparation • Detailed Engineering Design (DED) • Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) compliance • Cost estimates and design plans	• Technical review • Economic and financial analysis • Safeguards review • Endorsement and approval by appropriate authorities	• Preparation of bidding documents • Bid posting and evaluation • Contract award	• Construct activities • Engineering supervision • Quality assurance and safeguarc compliance • Progress monitoring	• Turnover of completed infrastructure • Implementation of O&M plans • Monitoring of infrastructure utilization
Remarks						

1. Too strict that only consider commodity at the PCIP 2. The value chain alignment is not being validated, before a SP will be proposed to IBUILD. it shall already be aligned to PCIP 3. Submission of unnecessary irrelevant documents of SP 4. Political challenges are evident		1. Too many documents in SES and piecemeal submission causing unnecessary delays 2. POW did not consider inflation rates	1. Scheduling SPAR with lacking documents 2. Conduct of RPAB without clearance 3. Piecemeal comments, feedbacking, and submission	1. Prolonged review duration of BER 2. Stop sub-contracting without permission from the RPCO and LGU proponet 3. Unqualified bidders are allowed to enter 4. Case analysis: Bolinao Hatchery, 2 year delay in bidding having 5 failed bidding cycle	1. Unauthorized subcontracting 2. Political interference 3. Late and incomplete regular monthly reports 4. Use of substandard materials 5. Dishonest testing centers showing falsified results	1. No actual funding and reporting for Operation and Maintenance 2. Lacking of technical personnel for actual Operation and Maintenance

Table 12. Validated Subproject Cycle Output and Responsibility Matrix.

VALIDATED I-BUILD SUBPROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS						
1. SP Identification and Prioritization	**2. SP Validation**	**3. FS, DED, and Safeguards Preparation**	**4. SP Appraisal, Review, and Approval**	**5. Procurement**	**6. SP Implementation**	**7. SP Operation and Maintenance**
1 month	1 month	5-10 months	3 months	4 months	6-36 months	10 years
Output						
•Geo-tagged SP list	• I-BUILD requirements • GGU requirements • Initial Economic Analysis • SP Preliminary Screening Checklist	• Feasibility Study • DED (Design Analysis, Plans, POW, O&M Plan) • SES Documents • Bidding Documents	• Signed IMA • CAF Issued • SP Approved by RPAB • NOL 1	• Procurement Process • NOL 2 • Contract Awarding • NTP	• Construction Phase • QA/ QC / Safety • Completion Report	• Operation and Maintenance Audit • Functional SPs
Responsibility Matrix						
• LGU • RPCO	• LGU • RPCO • PSO	• LGU • RPCO • PSO • NPCO	• LGU • RPCO • PSO • NPCO • RPAB	• LGU • RPCO • PSO • NPCO	• LGU • RPCO • PSO • NPCO	• LGU • ROMAT

The efficiency is constrained by persistent bottlenecks across the Subproject (SP) cycle, particularly in procurement and early-stage implementation.

Process analysis indicates that while identification and validation stages are relatively robust, delays are concentrated in procurement and implementation phases. Heatmap analysis highlights recurring issues such as repeated rebidding due to technical disqualifications, prolonged document revisions, and delays in securing approvals.

Procurement inefficiencies are a major concern. Common issues include:

- Multiple failed biddings due to technical errors and non-responsive bids
- Limited competition among contractors, particularly in specialized infrastructure (e.g., hatcheries)

Institutional coordination challenges further affect efficiency. Variations in the interpretation of guidelines among Regional Project Coordination Offices (RPCOs), LGUs, and oversight bodies contribute to delays and inconsistencies. Weak coordination between LGUs and contractors also leads to implementation inefficiencies, including inadequate monitoring of manpower and unauthorized subcontracting.

External disruptions such as extreme weather events, right-of-way issues, and politically motivated interventions—further slowdown project timelines.

Resource constraints are also evident. While RPCOs generally demonstrate adequate technical capacity, many LGUs face limitations in staffing, procurement expertise, and project management capabilities. Existing tools, such as standard designs and procurement manuals, are useful but inconsistently applied. Monitoring systems are in place but require strengthening to ensure real-time issue resolution.

4.2.4 Coherence

Alignment with national and sectoral frameworks

The proposed interventions demonstrate strong alignment with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) by directly contributing to inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and improved rural accessibility through strategic infrastructure investments under the I-BUILD. Consistent with the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan (AFMP), the subprojects enhance productivity and market competitiveness by reducing transport costs and post-harvest losses for agri-fishery stakeholders. The interventions are further anchored on the Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) Network Plan, ensuring that road investments are strategically prioritized to connect production areas to key markets and logistics hubs. Moreover, complementarities with other Department of Agriculture (DA) programs reinforce a value chain approach, integrating infrastructure support with enterprise and institutional development. Overall, these alignments reflect a coherent framework wherein I-BUILD investments serve as critical enablers of rural economic transformation and sectoral modernization.

Integration with PRDP components:

Salient Points	Remarks
PCIP serves as the primary anchor for inter-component coherence.	The Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) effectively links value chain analysis (I-PLAN) with infrastructure investments (I-BUILD) and enterprise development initiatives (I-REAP). When infrastructure proposals are clearly derived from PCIPs, coordination across components becomes more systematic.
Infrastructure investments are most effective when directly tied to value chain requirements.	Coherence improves when I-BUILD subprojects, such as farm-to-market roads, irrigation, or trading facilities are designed to support the logistics and production needs of priority commodities identified by I-PLAN and targeted by I-REAP enterprises.
Early involvement of I-REAP during infrastructure planning strengthens investment relevance.	Engaging I-REAP during the identification and validation stages of infrastructure projects helps ensure that facilities support existing or planned agribusiness enterprises rather than being developed as stand-alone infrastructure.
Joint validation mechanisms strengthen cross-component alignment.	The participation of I-PLAN and I-REAP in the validation of I-BUILD subprojects enhances the alignment of infrastructure with commodity priorities and enterprise development strategies. This process reduces the risk of misaligned investments.
Synchronization of implementation timelines remains a challenge.	While planning coherence is generally strong, the timing of infrastructure completion and enterprise development support is not always synchronized, sometimes delaying the realization of value chain outcomes.
Inter-component coordination platforms improve information sharing.	Regular coordination meetings, joint technical reviews, and shared monitoring systems facilitate information exchange among I-PLAN, I-BUILD, and I-REAP, enabling more responsive and coordinated implementation.
Integrated monitoring of value chain outcomes strengthens program impact.	Monitoring systems that track not only infrastructure outputs but also enterprise performance and value chain improvements help demonstrate the combined impact of I-PLAN, I-BUILD, and I-REAP interventions.

Figure 8. Coherence of I-BUILD, I-PLAN, and I-REAP.

4.2.5 Impact

Implications for Long-term Impacts

The nested ToC highlights that achieving intended outcomes is not solely dependent on infrastructure delivery, but on the coherence and efficiency of the entire subproject cycle. Breakdowns in earlier stages (e.g., design inefficiencies) cascade into later stages (e.g., delays in procurement and implementation), while weaknesses in O&M compromise the sustainability of completed investments.

Thus, the effectiveness of I-BUILD must be assessed not only in terms of physical outputs, but also in terms of:

- Process efficiency across stages
- Quality and integrity of inter-stage transitions
- Sustainability of outcomes through O&M systems
- Assessment of delivery performance:
    - No. of SPs completed vs. planned (considering current delays and pipeline status)
    - Quality and functionality of completed infrastructure
- Realism of forecasts:
    - Expected completion timelines up to end of project
    - Anticipated improvements in:
        - Accessibility (travel time, logistics cost)
        - Production and market access
- Risks affecting outcomes:
    - Contractor capacity and performance
    - LGU capacity for project management and supervision
    - Delays in procurement and fund disbursement
    - Quality issues (substandard materials, weak supervision)
- Observed local-level effects:
    - Changes in mobility, access to markets, and service delivery
    - Economic activity (e.g., increased trade, reduced transport costs)
    - Productivity gains for farmers and fisherfolk
- Early evidence of income improvements or cost savings
- Spillover effects:
    - Linkages to enterprise development (I-REAP) and production support (I-SUPPORT)
- Potential for scaling or replication of infrastructure models and practices – two other potential Bangus Hatchery Project in Pangasinan (Binmaley and Agno).

4.2.6 Sustainability

Assessment of sustainability measures

The sustainability of investments under the I-BUILD is fundamentally dependent on the effectiveness of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) systems. While O&M plans are typically prepared during the design stage, their implementation remains uneven, often lacking operational detail, enforceability, and linkage to actual resource commitments. Institutional arrangements particularly clear delineation of responsibilities among Local Government Units (LGUs) and the involvement of community-based stakeholders i.e., critical to ensuring ownership and accountability; however, these arrangements are frequently underdeveloped or weakly institutionalized, limiting sustained engagement beyond project completion. Moreover, the absence or insufficiency of dedicated budget allocations for maintenance significantly constrains the ability of LGUs to undertake routine and periodic upkeep, leading to accelerated asset deterioration. Taken together, these gaps indicate that sustainability is not yet fully embedded within the I-BUILD system and other risks include limited technical capacity and probable deterioration of assets due to poor workmanship such in the case of Baybay Water System: Pipes breaks due to high pressure. With that, a hold on release on payment was done unless the pipes were restored and pass series of leak tests. Hence, strengthening O&M planning, institutional ownership, and financing mechanisms is essential to preserving infrastructure functionality and achieving long-term development outcomes.

4.3 I-REAP

1.1.1 Relevance

EQ: How well or to what extent do I-REAP interventions respond to the needs of farmer/fisher groups towards improving farmers' and fisherfolks' access to markets and enable increase in incomes in agri-fishery value chains?
Response: I-REAP interventions address the key constraints faced by farmer/fisher groups. Investments in post-production infrastructure, combined with the provision of business development support (BDS) services, directly respond to constraints identified by FCAs themselves, namely: weaknesses in management capacity, limited marketing capability and poor access to infrastructure for storage and post-harvest facilities. I-REAP interventions may also indirectly respond to the irregular or problematic access to raw materials (i.e. crops, produce) that some FCAs face. As FCAs are able to engage in profitable activities higher up the value chain (such as food processing), FCA members may be encouraged to sell more of their crops to their respective cooperatives or associations (vs. other traders or buyers). This, however, presupposes that severe or persistent production-level issues among member-farmers/fishers are addressed.

There are different farmer/fisher groups (FCAs) operating in the country that face different challenges. Some challenges can be more severe for some FCAs, such as those with relatively less maturity, smaller membership and lower asset sizes. These constraints should be differentiated from those of individual farmers or fisherfolks, although they are interrelated.

The Table below lists the different constraints identified by proponent FCAs.[10] The key constraints identified encompass:

- weaknesses in management capacity;
- lack of infrastructure for storage and post-harvest facilities;
- irregular or problematic access to raw materials (i.e. crops, produce); and
- constrained / underdeveloped marketing capability.

Table 13 Constraints faced by FCAs

Access to raw material remains irregular, inadequate

[10] These are the views of the seven (7) FCAs that are the proponents of I-REAP sub-projects currently at the implementation stage. FGDs with FCAs took place during the Pause and Reflect Forum (March 2026).

• Lack of commitment among farmer-members to fully engage with the cooperative – as such, some members only sell a small proportion of their yield to their FCA[11] • Inability to control / influence some farmers who still choose to sell to other buyers (not the FCA)[12] • Struggling to grow (or even maintain) the volume of raw materials (consolidated by the FCA), as members face production issues
Weaknesses in management capacity
• Limited management capacity – especially to manage rapid expansion of operations • Lack of technical staff – driven by limited availability of qualified/skilled individuals in certain markets or locations; difficulty recruiting especially young people, who are not interested to engage in agriculture-related activities, which also cause problems of succession
Lack of infrastructure for storage and post-harvest facilities
• Storage infrastructure and post-harvest facilities are either absent or difficult to access
Constrained / underdeveloped marketing capability
• Inability to participate or limited access to reliable markets – some FCAs have attempted participating in larger commercial markets, such as government food procurement programs, but fail to meet the standards and requirements in these markets. • Limited marketing capabilities – some FCAs still need technical assistance to (i) approach prospective institutional buyers to market their products, (ii) strategically price their products, and/or (iii) develop better packaging. • Logistical challenges – for some FCAs, the cost of transporting and delivering products to buyers' locations can be high, which affects their products' competitiveness. In some cases, this limits FCAs' ability to sell beyond their immediate catchment areas.

Source: FGD with FCAs, Pause and Reflect Forum, March 2026

I-REAP interventions directly respond to two sets of constraints – i.e. the lack of infrastructure for storage and post-harvest facilities and limited management capacity among FCAs. This is explicit in sub-components 3.1 and 3.2:

- Sub-component 3.1: funding of small to large-scale climate-resilient and climate-smart pre- and post-harvest, processing, logistics, and distribution facilities, equipment and infrastructure.
- Subcomponent 3.2: facilitating the provision of business development support (BDS) services to complement the enterprise support under Sub-component 3.1. This encompasses supporting FCAs where gaps may have been identified in terms of their organizational development, enterprise development and marketing of products.

I-REAP interventions also *indirectly* respond to the two other constraints identified, namely: irregular or problematic access to raw materials (i.e. crops, produce), and constrained / underdeveloped marketing capability.

- By supporting FCAs with investments in post-production facilities, access to raw materials by FCAs might be improved, as excess yields (e.g. in periods of bumper production) can be diverted towards processing and thereby reduce production losses. More importantly, as FCAs are able to engage in

[11] One FCA noted that it used to have more than 1,000 members. However, the vast majority of its members were only *members on paper*; many were inactive or disengaged from the activities of the FCA. Many of these members, reportedly, only joined the FCA when they heard of a government subsidy program that was to be implemented through farmer cooperatives or associations. After going through a painful "culling process", membership was cut down to a little over 300, all of whom are now actively contributing to the FCA.

[12] Other buyers are able to offer slightly higher prices than the FCA. The main driver, however, is the buyer being able to offer cash on-the-spot, whereas some FCAs can only pay the farmer on the next day / several days after.

profitable activities higher up the value chain (such as food processing), FCA members may be encouraged to sell more of their crops to their respective cooperatives or associations (vs. other traders or buyers), especially if the FCA is able to offer more competitive prices and similar payment terms. However, it is important to note that post-production investments alone will not resolve constraints the supply of raw materials. If there are severe, persistent production-level problems among member-farmers/fishers that remain unresolved,[13] then yields or production volumes are likely to remain erratic or below the requirements for FCAs to operate competitively in commercial markets.

- Gaining access to post-harvest infrastructure also helps to strengthen the marketing capability of FCAs, given the strengthened capacity to aggregate and engage in value-added activities such as food processing. This is especially true when looking at the experience of larger, more mature FCAs that are already linked to markets and where the demand for certain commodities or products is still not fully met. Some FCAs, on the other hand, may need further technical assistance to seek commercial opportunities and effectively penetrate new markets, negotiate prices with institutional buyers, and package their products.

1.1.2 Effectiveness

EQ: To what extent do the I-REAP interventions translate to or are likely to achieve the project development objectives (PDOs) and intermediate results (IRs)? What factors drive or bring risk to achieving the desired PDOs and IRs?
Response: There are no completed I-REAP sub-project as yet. (The target for the mid-term was set at 33, while the end-of project target is a total of 110 completed sub-projects). However, there are seven (7) sub-projects at implementation stage, and a further 32 that are in the pipeline (under development), as of 10 March 2026. Considering the diversity in the types of FCAs (proponents of these sub-projects) and the time it takes to complete various stages of the project cycle, not all of the (32) sub-projects in the pipeline are expected to successfully reach completion by the end of PRDP-SU. *Meeting the targets set against the other IR indicators (see Section 3) is achievable, based on what can be gleaned from the seven (7) sub-projects currently in implementation – except for the total number of completed sub-projects.* *The Results Pathway depicts the chain of results from outputs through to outcomes – i.e. how investments in post-production infrastructure, combined with the provision of business development support (BDS) services, leads to increased enterprise income and profitability. The Results Pathway also identifies where and how I-REAP interventions contribute to the achievement of all three (3) PDOs.* *It is however important to note that while I-REAP interventions are expected to contribute to the achievement of PDOs, any changes in production, sales volumes or revenues attributable to investments made will be too early to measure by the end of the project. (These changes would not have yet materialized immediately upon the completion of sub-projects). Moreover, as set out by the assumptions that underpin the Results Pathway, the changes that are currently happening in the broader economic environment (increase in fuel prices and its likely knock-on effect on inflation), given the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, are likely to affect both producers (farmers/fisherfolk) and FCAs, not to mention the cost of investments, and thereby affect the project's results.*

There are nine (9) sub-projects which have been issued NOL 1 and are at implementation stage, and a further 39 that are in the pipeline (under development). The disaggregation of all these sub-projects are as follows:

- Nine (9) sub-projects have been issued NOL 1 and are currently in implementation.

[13] This includes, for example, some farmers lacking inputs to improve yields (such as fertilizers, seeds of high-yield varieties of crops) and continued use of traditional farming practices that degrade soil quality.

- 20 sub-projects are under joint technical review or waiting for RPAB approval.
- 11 sub-projects are still in the process of preparing their business plans.
- The last eight (8) sub-projects are for confirmation (to proceed).

The goal of supporting a total of 110 agri-fishery enterprises (completed sub-projects) by the end of the project will not be met. This target needs to be revised to reflect lessons learned from implementation in the first half of the Scale-Up phase:

- The target of 110 completed sub-projects by EOP presupposes that, on average, sub-projects are medium in size (with an average value of around PhP42 million). Actual implementation experience shows that, on average, I-REAP sub-projects tended to be large (valued over PhP100 million, on average).
- There are currently a total of 48 I-REAP sub-projects at different stages of the sub-project cycle. Adding further sub-projects to this list would be an inefficient use of resources, especially given the complexity and the time required to fully develop I-REAP sub-projects.[14] Requiring project staff to identify and develop more sub-projects (beyond those that are already in the pipeline) risks compromising the quality of work that is expected to bring these sub-projects to fruition.
- Given our understanding of the sub-project cycle and the time required to complete the different stages (discussed in greater detail in the section that follows), even if the project were to (magically) identify additional sub-projects at this point in time, it is highly unlikely that these sub-projects will reach completion by EOP (and thereby contribute to meeting the original target of 110 *completed* sub-projects).

In the interest of ensuring that more sub-projects are able to progress along the project cycle, the I-REAP NPCO, in coordination with I-REAP teams at the PSO and RPCO levels, have identified a number of sub-projects in the pipeline, for which the aim is to reach NOL 1 by the end of the year (2026). At the RPCO level, there are indications of internal target deadlines also being set for these sub-projects, which would provide an early indication of whether the sub-project can realistically meet the NOL 1 milestone by the end of the year. This strategy is helpful in so far as it focuses resources towards 'prioritised sub-projects'. It also serves the purpose of anticipating how many sub-projects are likely to be completed by the EOP and their budget allocations. However, it should, by no means, be used to trigger the creation of 'fast lanes' or unduly rushing the development of sub-projects, which can have adverse effects on the FCA-proponents and the sub-project's performance at latter stages of the sub-project cycle and once completed.

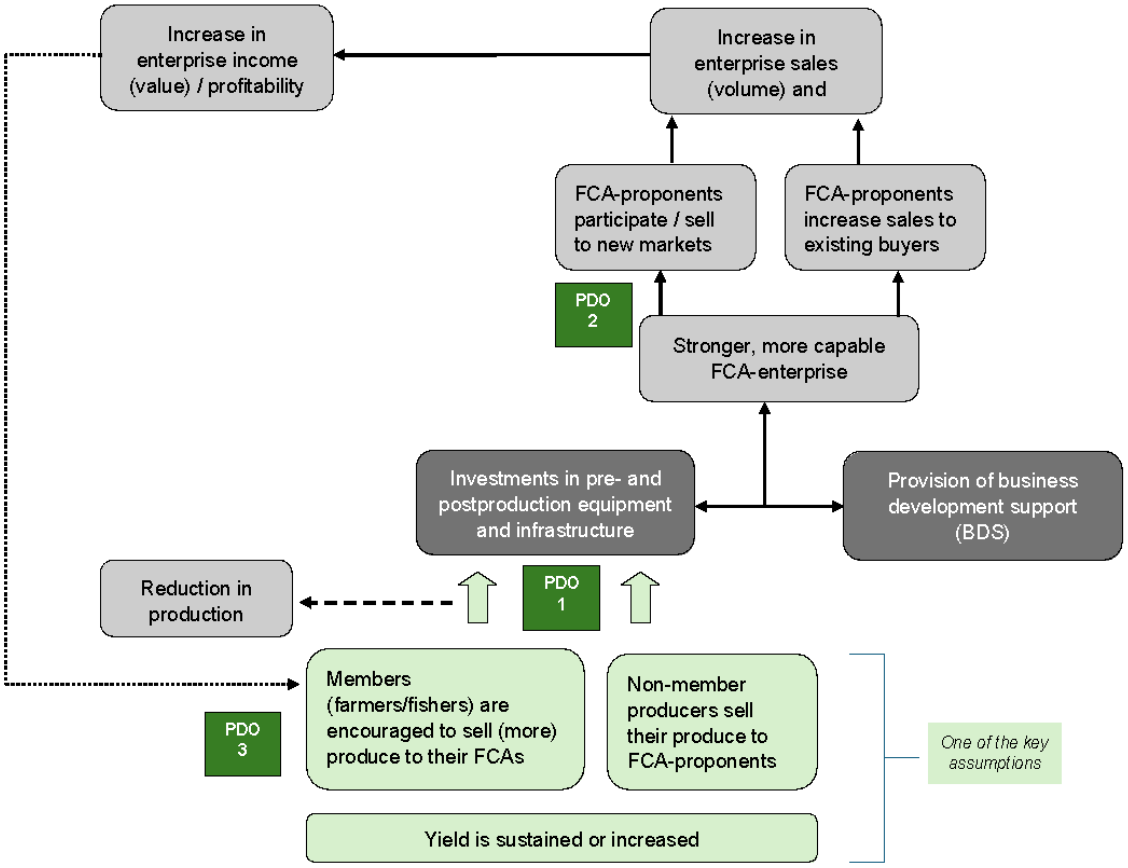
Of the 39 sub-projects that are in the pipeline, 20 sub-projects are deemed to likely reach the NOL 1 milestone by the end of the year. These are the sub-projects that are either for RPAB approval, under joint technical review or still under RPCO technical review. Of those that are still in the process of preparing their business plans (a total of 11 sub-projects), some might be able to progress towards meeting the NOL 1 milestone by the end of the year, depending on how far advance they are in terms of completing their business plans. Those that have just started the process (e.g. in the last three months) are very likely not going to be able to meet the NOL1 milestone by the end of the year. Lastly, the eight (8) sub-projects that are for confirmation are highly unlikely to meet the NOL1 milestone by year-end.

This mid-term review is not in the position to measure the component's contribution to the PDOs, given the status of I-REAP sub-projects. Any changes observed at the outcome or impact levels cannot be attributed to I-REAP interventions as yet. This review, however, explores the chain of results brought about by the project's interventions (activities and inputs) – and in so doing, seeks to identify those aspects of the component's results framework where improvements can be made.

The Figure below depicts the Results Pathway for I-REAP – the chain of results from outputs through to outcomes (i.e. how investments in post-production infrastructure, combined with the provision of business development support (BDS) services, leads to increased enterprise income and profitability).

[14] This point is discussed in more detail in the next section (on Efficiency).

Figure 10 I-REAP Results Pathway



Source: Author's construction

At the IR level, I-REAP interventions – i.e. investments in post-production infrastructure, combined with the provision of business development support (BDS) services – are intended to bring about '*stronger, more capable FCA-enterprises*'. This is however a difficult outcome to measure,[15] not least given the wide range in the types of FCAs and enterprise activities being supported by I-REAP.[16] The FCA-enterprise's ability to sell (more) is, in this case, considered a proxy measure. What would be of interest is the FCA's ability (i) to participate in or sell to new markets or buyers and/or (ii) to increase sales to (already) existing markets or buyers. The FCA's improved capacity – expressed as its ability to market or sell more of what it produces – leads to an increase in sales and revenues.

Increased sales and revenues then lead to an increase in (net) income and profitability – which is one of the IR indicators (percent increase in profitability of participating agri-fishery enterprises). It should be noted, however,

[15] Capacity building outcomes tend to be difficult to measure as they often involve complex, long-term, and intangible shifts in (human) behaviour, organizational culture and practices and power dynamics.

[16] For example, a smaller, less mature cooperative might develop a financial reporting system (that complies with regulatory standards) on account of I-REAP's interventions. This development reflects an improvement in capacity of the said cooperative and, arguably, contributes significantly to its ability to manage and grow its enterprise activities. In larger and more mature cooperatives, on the other hand, 'improved capacity' is likely to be manifested differently – such as the ability to invest in automating its systems or secure industry certifications (e.g. ISO).

that increased sales and revenues does not necessarily lead to an increase in profitability. If the enterprise is unable to adequately price its products or the cost of production is too high, the enterprise might suffer losses despite any observed increase in sales. As such, this is another area where interventions intended to build the capacity of FCA-enterprises play a critical role.

The 'increase in (net) income and profitability of the FCA-enterprise' is key to measuring PDO 3 (increased income of farmers and fisherfolks). I-REAP interventions target FCAs as project proponents, and as such, makes it possible to consider that increases in the FCA-enterprise's net income and profitability can be reflected in changes in incomes among the FCA's members (i.e. the ultimate beneficiaries of PRDP's interventions and investments). This is only possible given the cooperative nature of these supported enterprises, where retained earnings are distributed as dividends or shared between members (as net surplus or patronage refunds).

How I-REAP interventions contribute to the achievement of PDO 1 (increased access to agricultural assets or services) is also relatively straightforward to measure. Once the sub-projects are completed and become operational, the number of individual farmers / fisherfolk (both members and non-members) that avail of the services provided by the facility or equipment (that PRDP invested in) can be monitored.

PDO 2 (improved access to markets), on the other hand, is relatively less straightforward to measure. Firstly, the indicator being measured here is the 'percentage increase in volumes of marketed output' (of farmers/fisherfolk). The assumption here is that by investing in post-production infrastructure and equipment (managed by the FCA), farmers and fisherfolk are given the incentive to produce more, which can be valid. However, as noted in the earlier sections of this report, there may be severe, persistent production-level problems among member-farmers/fishers that FCAs that remain unresolved, which can affect yields or production volumes. In the same light, yields and production volumes may increase, but such increases would not necessarily be attributable to I-REAP interventions.

While I-REAP interventions are expected to contribute to the achievement of the PDOs, measuring any changes in production, sales volumes or revenues attributable to investments made require time to materialize. This should be a key consideration when planning the timing of any impact evaluations when the PRDP-SU phase closes.

Moreover, the key assumptions that underpin the Results Pathway, include the following:

- Production volumes of raw materials (crops, fish) either remain stable or increases.
- The macroeconomic environment remains stable or conducive to doing business.
- The cost of production and prices remain stable.

The changes that are currently taking place in the broader economic environment (increase in fuel prices and its likely knock-on effect on inflation), given the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, are likely to affect both producers (farmers/fisherfolk) and FCAs, not to mention the cost of investments. These are important considerations when assessing the likelihood of achieving results.

1.1.3 Efficiency

EQ: Which parts of the sub-project cycle and related processes tend to encounter delays, and what institutional (policy), procedural (operations manuals / guidelines), or capacity (competence) related factors contribute to this? What factors drive or hinder interventions to progress as planned? *To what extent are planned interventions implemented using the project resources according to the expected or desired timelines?*
Response: Stages 2 and 3 – which cover the preparation of the business plan, its review and approval – are where challenges were most felt and a significantly longer time was required to complete these stages. The feedback from FCAs regarding the challenges they faced in the sub-project cycle is consistent with information collected on how sub-projects performed vis-à-vis service standards. It takes more than a year (14 months), on average, from the time a sub-project is confirmed to the sub-project getting RPAB approval. On average, to reach NOL1 status, approximately 20 months were needed. *The key drivers of the pace of implementation include the following:*

- *Data collection to inform the business case – which requires time to execute, especially when there is no reliable, updated data from secondary sources;*
- *Multiple reviews and back-and forth comments on the business plan;*
- *Required documentation – such as for titling and land conversion – are difficult to secure and take a long time to process;*
- *Capacity of FCAs – most, if not all, of the FCAs have never gone through a rigorous process of developing an investment project, much less projects of the size funded by PRDP I-REAP.*

The key resources used in the implementation of I-REAP interventions are its personnel and the tools developed to enable capacity building among supported FCAs.

In terms of I-REAP's personnel and staffing, the analysis of the sub-project cycle shows the importance of I-REAP personnel at the RPCO and PSO levels in facilitating the development of sub-projects. The key functions consist of: Business Development Officers/Specialists (BDO/S), Enterprise Development and Marketing Specialists (EDMS), and Organizational Development Officers/Specialists.

A high level of effort is required to facilitate the development of sub-projects – both in terms of the man-hours and skills set required. The analysis of caseloads indicates that at the RPCO level, there are, on average, 1-1.5 sub-projects per BDO. These caseloads are considered justifiable, given our analysis of the sub-project cycle and the functions of key I-REAP staff.

The analysis of caseload data does not, however, reflect the number of sub-projects that might go through early-stage processing, but fail to be validated, nor those that get validated but do not progress for whatever reason. Moreover, even though PRDP is in its Scale-Up phase, completed I-REAP sub-projects from OL/AF2 continue to be monitored and constitute a significant part of the workload of I-REAP staff.

The capacity development / BDS tools used are largely adequate; they respond to the needs of most FCAs. There is also evidence of FCAs being linked to other programs or institutions (government/NGO) providing capacity building/training services, to complement I-REAP interventions.

Analysis of the Sub-Project Cycle

The process of developing I-REAP sub-projects encompasses five (5) key stages, depicted in the Figure below:

- **Stage 1: Sub-project identification and selection of the project proponent** – This starts off with the proponent's submission of the Letter of Intent and other requirements to the LGU for evaluation, through to assessment and endorsement of the Validation Report by the RPCO.
- **Stage 2: Confirmation, preparation of business plan (BP), technical review and clearance** – This stage covers all the steps leading to the preparation of the business plan, its technical review by the RCPO, followed by the Joint Technical Review.
- **Stage 3: RPAB approval and issuance of No Objection Letter (NOL1)** – Following the deliberation by RPAB, if there are comments to the business plan, the project proponent must comply or respond to these comments before the approval of the sub-project is issued. This is then followed by the preparation of the Implementation Management Agreement (IMA) and issuance of the first No Objection Letter (NOL1).
- **Stage 4: Implementation of approved subprojects** – After funds are released to the project proponent, the procurement of goods and construction of civil works (of the approved sub-project) then ensues. Once all the goods have been procured and all construction work has been completed, the completed subproject is then officially turned over to the project proponent. It is therefore only at the end of Stage 4 do we see completed sub-projects.
- **Stage 5: Evaluation and monitoring of sub-projects** – Completed sub-projects are monitored for a period of ten (10) years from completion.

Figure 11 I-REAP Sub-Project Cycle

❶ Subproject identification & selection of proponent	❷ Confirmation, preparation of business plan (BP), technical review and clearance	❸ RPAB approval and issuance of No Objection Letter (NOL1)	❹ Implementation of approved subprojects	❺ Evaluation and monitoring of subprojects
● Submission of Letter of Intent and other requirements to the LGU for evaluation ● LGU and FCA/FCA Cluster prepare Business Model ● LGU endorsement ● RPCO conducts assessment and endorses Validation Report and findings to PSO for confirmation of implementing proponent	● PSO confirms implementing proponent and subproject to proceed ● RPCO conducts financing and other assessments, and SP profiling ● RPCO with P/C/MPMIU, and Proponent conducts Strat Planning: (CapDev Plan Prep, DRRM/BCP, Cluster Dev Plan Prep and orientation of PRDP requirements) ● RPCO conducts AECA Training ● Business Plan preparation ● Packaging of Business Plan by the proponent & submission to RPCO ● Technical Review by RCPO, with technical experts and endorsement for Joint Technical Review ● NPCO/PSO/RPCO issues clearance for RPAB deliberation	● RPCO convenes RPAB for approval of proposal ● RPAB issues RPAB Resolution ---or--- ● Project proponent complies with RPAB comments before RPAB Resolution on approval of the subproject is issued ● Preparation of Implementation Management Agreement (IMA) and signing (between PRDP and Proponent) ● NPCO/PSO/RPCO issues No Objection Letter 1 (NOL1)	● Release of funds to the Proponent ● Procurement of goods and construction of civil works (of the approved subproject) ● Geotagging of procured goods/civil works ● Preparation of Enterprise Operations Manual ● Conduct of JIT by RPCO ● Submission of Completion Report by the Proponent ● Turn-over of the completed subproject to the proponent	

The process of developing sub-projects is quite challenging for FCAs. Most, if not all of them, have never gone through a rigorous process of developing an investment project, much less projects of the size funded by PRDP I-REAP. The Table below lays out the reported challenges faced by FCAs under each of the first four stages of the sub-project cycle.

Table 14 Understanding the choke points and challenges faced by FCAs in the Sub-project Cycle

❶ Subproject identification & selection of proponent	❷ Confirmation, preparation of business plan (BP), technical review and clearance
● Some delays in RPCO validation for area of production ● Lack of support from LGU to FCA – in some cases, LGU refused to endorse FCA ● Some LGUs are not aware of PRDP	● Securing cash equity required has been challenging for some FCAs (some have resorted to borrowing from banks) ● Required certifications take time to process – e.g. on land use/conversion, titling ● Other assessments required lead to FCA having to pay for penalties – e.g. for Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) ● Business plan (BP) preparation is difficult for FCAs – they often have to hire an external consultant ● In some cases, data (to inform the BP) is not available, takes a long time / expensive to collect
❸ RPAB approval and issuance of No Objection Letter (NOL1)	❹ Implementation of approved subprojects
● Multiple / too many iterations (back and forth) on the technical review of the BP and financial analysis ● One FCA experienced being asked to meet "other requirements" that were not foreseen (clearances and licenses)	● Some delays in the release of the first tranche of funds, owing to the absence of the signatory (for check payments) ● Failures in bidding process for civil works and goods means that FCAs have had to repeat the process[17] ● Knowing who / which contractors to invite to bid – especially in the case of special/innovative structures ● If the procurement process is delayed, some prices (of goods) can change dramatically, which stalls implementation[18] ● Contractor was not aware of geo-tagging requirement, so execution of the step was delayed

Source: FGD with FCAs, Pause and Reflect Forum, March 2026

While some challenges are specific to one or only some of the FCAs, all FCAs have pointed out that the preparation of the business plan is where they struggled the most and needed a long time to complete. This is depicted in Heatmap below, which maps the perspectives of the FCA-proponents of the seven (7) sub-projects in implementation. Stages 2 and 3 – which cover the preparation of the business plan and its review – took a significantly longer time (as envisaged) to complete.

[17] Some bidders were not able to comply with the specifications – in some cases, all three invited bidders – thus, resulting in a failed bid.

[18] In one case, the price of a moisture meter was originally pegged at PhP37,000 a piece. Upon implementation this price reportedly went up to PhP80,000, prompting negotiations and further search for other suppliers.

Figure 12 Heatmap: I-REAP Sub-project Cycle

Stages in the Project Cycle	FCA 1	FCA 2	FCA 3	FCA 4	FCA 5	FCA 6	FCA 7
Stage 1: Subproject identification & selection of implementing proponent							
Stage 2: Confirmation to proceed, preparation of business plan (BP), technical review and clearance							
Stage 3: RPAB approval and issuance of No Objection Letter 1 (NOL1)							
Stage 4: Implementation of approved subprojects							
Release of funds							
Procurement of goods and construction of civil works (of the approved subproject)							
Geotagging of procured goods/civil works							

Source: Survey of FCAs (Proponents of the 7 Sub-Projects with NOL1), Pause and Reflect Forum, March 2026

Legend:

- *Process was smooth*
- *Some delays experienced, but were generally manageable*
- *Moderate delays experienced, required significant intervention.*
- *Process took a significantly longer time (as envisaged) to complete, delays lasted 6+ months*

The factors driving the pace of implementation, especially with respect to the amount of time that has been needed to prepare the business plan and its review are as follows:

- **Lack of good data** – FCAs needed to collect data, where possible, from secondary sources, which feed into estimates made in the business plan. In some cases, there is no reliable, updated data from secondary sources, which required primary data-collection activities that required even more time to complete and have been costly to implement.
- **Multiple reviews and back-and forth comments on the business plan** – It is important to note that the business plan also includes technical details and design of the proposed infrastructure and equipment. As such, the reviews of the business plan involve different specialists (at RPCO and PSO levels). This essentially constitutes the due-diligence process that is also standard practice in other investment projects in the private sector.
- **Required documentation (e.g. for titling, land conversion) takes a long time to complete** – These are legally required documentation that the project must comply with. The experience during the first half of the Scale-Up phase indicates that this is an area that was largely unfamiliar to many, if not all, of the FCAs, as well as the I-REAP Business Development Officers (BDO) who were supporting them. In some cases, the requirement to process certain certifications, clearances or other documentation were not foreseen and these were therefore addressed much later. Notwithstanding the improvements to the process that might be introduced on account of these lessons, it should be acknowledged that the processes for securing the required legal documentation (as applicable) are quite lengthy and rely on other agencies. For example, land conversion, which changes agricultural land to non-agricultural use, is

officially described as requiring only 30 days for processing. However, in practice, this process has historically taken much longer – often exceeding 24 months – due to extensive documentation, inspections, and inter-agency approvals.

- **Capacity of FCAs: there is a significant amount of learning as the FCAs go through the sub-project cycle** – For all of these FCAs, it is their first time to prepare a business plan. This explains, in part, the slow pace. FCAs that have relatively more severe organizational challenges – e.g. those constrained to put forward dedicated staff for the business plan preparation – will require even more time to carry out and complete certain tasks. The length of time required for business plan preparation also reflects the complexity of some of the proposed sub-projects. For example, some large, more mature FCAs may be able to complete the business planning process at a much shorter time for simple, smaller projects, such as simple storage facilities or warehouses. However, for more complex, innovative projects – such as cold storage or mechanised drying facilities – a much longer time (than envisaged) has been needed to carry out all the necessary research into making these facilities.

The feedback from FCAs regarding the challenges they faced in the sub-project cycle is consistent with information collected on how sub-projects performed vis-à-vis service standards. This is shown in Table 5 below. It takes more than a year (14 months), on average, from the time a sub-project is confirmed to the sub-project getting RPAB approval. For three FCAs, the time required is even higher: 19-24 months. On average, to reach NOL1 status, approximately 20 months has been needed. This can go up to 25-26 months for some.

Table 15. Estimated number of months to complete particular stages in the Sub-Project Cycle

Sub-Project Cycle	Estimated no. of months to complete					
	SP 1	SP 2	SP 3	SP 4	SP 6	SP 7
Subproject Confirmed	3	---	---	---	---	9
Business Plan Package for RPCO technical review submitted	7	---	11	4	15	4
RPCO Technical Review of Business Plan conducted	6	2	---	---	---	---
Joint Technical Review (JTR) conducted	2	0	1	1	1	1
SP approved by RPAB	4	4	12	1	5	1
Signing of the IMA	2	4.5	0.5	2	---	2
Subproject Issued with NOL1	---	4	0.5	3	5	1
TOTAL (no. of months to reach NOL 1)	**24**	**15.5**	**25**	**11**	**26**	**18**

Source: SIDLAN: reporting on Enterprise Sub-projects.

Notes: The table does not include estimates for one of the seven sub-projects in implementation (SP 5), as the data recorded for this sub-project needs cleaning. Information regarding the amount of time required to get the sub-project confirmed is also incomplete – i.e. there is no indication of when the Letter of Intent was submitted by the FCA (proponent) on the database. The data available also does not fully capture the actual duration of business plan preparation. For example, SP4 reported that the preparation of its business plan took more than a year to complete. Available information on the database, however, suggests that from the confirmation of the subproject to the Business Plan Package being submitted to RPCO for technical review, a period of only 4 months has lapsed.

It is important to emphasize that the experience thus far with respect to the time required to develop I-REAP sub-projects is very much in line with the what can be observed in other business planning and investment

projects by the private sector covering similar-sized investments. Such activities and projects are often implemented over a timeline of 24-36 months.

Resources used to implement I-REAP

The key resources utilized for the implementation of I-REAP consist of:

- I-REAP staff/personnel (at the NPCO, PSO and RPCO levels), and
- The tools developed and used – especially to support capacity building and business development of FCA-enterprises.

In terms of human resources, the analysis of the I-REAP sub-project cycle shows the importance of I-REAP personnel at the RPCO and PSO levels in facilitating the development of sub-projects. These consist mainly of:

- **Business Development Officers/Specialists (BDO/S)** – who are central to the process of developing sub-projects. BDOs assist FCAs in the preparation of the business plan, including with securing or complying with the required documentation and attachments for the proposed sub-project.
- **Enterprise Development and Marketing Specialists (EDMS)** – who are central to the delivery of *business development support* to FCAs, primarily focusing on: enterprise development and market-oriented support, business planning and facilitating market linkages. EDMS conduct business process reviews and enterprise assessments, following which the technical assistance action plans are prepared. Capacity building services are provided by these personnel and/or they facilitate links between the FCA and other providers of such services (e.g. relevant government agencies or NGOs). They also play a supporting role by participating in the technical review of business plans.
- **Organizational Development Officers/Specialists** – also deliver capacity building support to FCAs, focusing on organizational strengthening, including social preparation, governance and leadership. ODOs conduct social preparation and organizational needs assessments.

There is a high level of effort required to facilitate the development of I-REAP sub-projects – both in terms of the man-hours required to support FCAs, as well as the skills set needed to adequately deliver the support that FCAs need as project proponents.

In the Table below, the number of sub-projects is mapped against staff headcounts, by region. At the RPCO level, average caseloads indicate between 1-1.5 sub-projects per BDO. In some regions (CAR and Region II), the caseloads appear higher (1.7). These caseloads (1-1.5) are considered justifiable, given our analysis of the sub-project cycle and the functions of key I-REAP staff, such as BDOs. It is, however, important to highlight a number of key caveats:

- The caseload data (presented in the Table below) does not capture or reflect (i) the number of sub-projects that might go through early-stage processing, but fail to be validated, nor (ii) those that get validated but do not progress for whatever reason. These are activities that do take place, which form part of the work that BDOs and other I-REAP staff deliver.
- Some RPCOs may benefit from having other '*regular*' (organic) staff available to work on PRDP, which in theory, may help share workloads in facilitating sub-project development. However, by design and in practice, these *regular staff* are mandated to work on PRDP activities only part of the time. In some RPCOs, regular staff reportedly tend to be largely focused on work activities other than PRDP.
- It is also important to consider that even though PRDP is in its Scale-UP phase, completed I-REAP sub-projects from previous phases (OL/AF2) continue to be monitored. These are time-consuming activities and constitute a significant part of the workload of I-REAP staff. Steps have already been taken to turn over monitoring functions to AMAD personnel. However, until this directive is fully cascaded and

implemented,[19] monitoring these other sub-projects will continue to constitute part of the workload of I-REAP staff, especially at the RPCO level.

[19] Departmental budget allocations to enable monitoring work to be effectively transferred to and carried out by AMAD will be available in 2027.

Table 16. Estimated staff caseload: number of sub-projects vs. number of staff, by region

	CAR	I	II	III	IV-A	IV-B	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	BARMM
Number of staff (RPCO), hired																
BDO/S	3	2	3	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	3
EDMS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
ODO/S		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Number of Sub-projects	5	2	5	5	4	5	3	4	2	2	2	3	3	4	3	4
Scale-UP																
Pre-validation		1		2		1			1				1	2		4
Approved	4	1	5	1	3	4	2	4	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	
With NOL1 + on-going procurement					1											
Implementation	1			2			1			1	1				1	
Estimated caseload per BDO	**1.7**	**1.0**	**1.7**	**1.0**	**1.3**	**1.3**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.5**	**0.5**	**1.0**	**1.5**	**1.5**	**1.3**	**1.5**	**1.3**
Estimated caseload (all hired staff)	1.25	0.5	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.8

Source: SIDLAN + Directory of I-REAP staff (as of March 2026)

In terms of the tools used to deliver institutional capacity building and business development support services to FCAs, these tools are deemed largely appropriate and adequate. The tools respond to the needs of most FCAs. There is also some evidence of I-REAP teams being able to take advantage of synergies by being able to link FCAs with other programs or institutions (e.g. government agencies/NGOs) providing relevant capacity building/training services.

There are, however, some important caveats to consider:

- Some FCAs – especially smaller, less mature farmer associations – may need closer mentoring to effectively and meaningfully build their capacity. Close mentoring is a resource-intensive activity, which PRDP might not be in a position to provide. If so, this should form one of the considerations when assessing whether a particular sub-project should proceed.
- The success of capacity building initiatives rests not only on identifying the capacity areas that need strengthening and developing the necessary course materials. The methods used for delivering capacity building support are just as crucial to ensuring that capacity building outcomes are achieved. For example, where FCAs need to establish or strengthen their budgeting / financial monitoring and reporting capacity, learning-on-the-job approaches to capacity building might be more effective (than traditional classroom-based instruction). In such cases, FCA Budget or Finance Officers may be sent to other FCAs with more established budgeting / financial monitoring and reporting systems and capacity – underpinned by the intention of replicating good practices.

1.1.4 Coherence

EQ: How well are interventions aligned with the national programs, plans or policies in promoting agri-fishery growth and development? *What other aspects of interventions does the project have to pay greater attention to be more aligned with the national programs, plans or policies?*
Response: I-REAP interventions are aligned with: ● *The Philippine Agriculture Development Plan (2023–2028), anchored on the Philippine Development Plan (2023-2028),* ● *The National Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization and Industrialization Plan (NAFMIP) (2021-2030), and* ● *The Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2) Strategy.*

I-REAP interventions are aligned with the Philippine Agriculture Development Plan (2023–2028), which aims to modernize the agri-fishery sector, improve food security, and raise farmer incomes. This plan is heavily anchored on the Philippine Development Plan (2023-2028) and the National Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization and Industrialization Plan (NAFMIP) (2021-2030). The key strategies embodied in these plans – which include encouraging the shift to high-value crops, improving post-harvest facilities (cold storage), strengthening local food production systems, fostering public-private partnerships to increase farmers' incomes, and promoting value-chain oriented, market-driven development – are reflected in I-REAP's interventions.

The Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2) Strategy is an initiative of the Department of Agriculture (DA) that merges small-scale farms and fisheries into larger, professionalized clusters. It aims to achieve 'economies of scale', allowing farmers to better access credit, mechanization and establish linkages with markets, thereby boosting income. By supporting FCAs as proponents of sub-projects, I-REAP interventions can bring about a growing number of strong farmer cooperatives that can manage/grow enterprises (on behalf of their members) – thereby supporting the aims of the F2C2 Strategy.

A key area that I-REAP could pay greater attention to in order to be more aligned with the national plans, policies and strategies is in increasing climate resilience in the agricultural sector.[20] While the DA has specific offices or

[20] This is an important point raised by Assistant Secretary for Operations and PRDP Scale-Up National Project Director U-Nichols A. Manalo.

units championing climate initiatives (such as the Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA) Program, led by the DA Climate Resilient Agriculture Office (CRAO)), there are key strategies and focal areas where interventions supporting enterprise development (such as those of I-REAP) can contribute towards, such as in supporting agriculture ventures for women and indigenous peoples in a way that promotes resilient livelihoods.

1.1.5 Impact

EQ: What broader effects has the project brought both for the DA, and partner LGUs, FCAs and other stakeholders, which are crucial to the agri-fishery sector both at national and local (area specific) scales?
Response: The broader effects observed (of relevance to the agri-fishery sector) include: ● *Better / new data made available – to inform policies and future investments;* ● *Better understanding of local opportunities by the relevant stakeholders (provincial and municipal LGUs, other government agencies);* ● *Growing number of farmer/fisher groups that have received TA will hopefully lead to a growing number of strong farmer/fisher cooperatives that can manage/grow enterprises (on behalf of their members);* ● *Created a pool of skills at the regional level that can service FCAs in particular, and small to medium agribusinesses more generally.*

The impact of I-REAP can be seen in several areas:

- In some of the sub-projects that I-REAP is supporting, new data has been generated – that can further inform policies and future investments. Data and information are important to the functioning of markets and often act as a one of the production factors (alongside labour and capital). The data and information generated by I-REAP sub-projects should, at the very least, inform updates to the value chain analyses (developed under I-PLAN), as well as the work of local investment councils and dedicated investment promotion offices within LGUs.
- Related to this, there are interesting stories in the field on how I-REAP interventions are also helping to develop a better understanding of specific local opportunities by the relevant stakeholders (especially of provincial and municipal LGUs, and other government agencies). The challenges and constraints that agribusinesses, in general, face have been highlighted in the experience of developing I-REAP sub-projects. At the same time, however, the experience has also brought to light potential opportunities in terms of service provision and other infrastructure – opportunities which can spur private sector participation or pursued through public-private partnerships. For example, PRDP investments in supporting the marketing of tuna (cold storage facilities) and its basic processing could help spur interest from government and the private sector to invest in other complementary projects – such as the construction of ports, other cold storage facilities leading to destination markets, the provision of logistics services, etc. – all of which could further strengthen the market position of viable FCA-enterprises, and ultimately, their members (fishers, fish market stall vendors, boat operators, etc.).
- I-REAP's key developmental contribution is really in terms of the growing number of farmer/fisher groups that have received TA. The goal is that this will lead to a growing number of strong agri-fishery cooperatives that can manage/grow enterprises (on behalf of their members). This has been an ambitious objective, and arguably, one that entailed a resource-intensive approach, implemented over a number of years. By strengthening these organizations, these FCA-enterprises can sustainably operate amongst the enterprises that form the backbone of the economy – creating jobs and employment, driving modernization, and increasing incomes of producers (by enabling them to share in the benefits reaped by these cooperative-enterprises).
- I-REAP has also created a pool of skills at the regional level that can service FCAs in particular, and small to medium agribusinesses more generally.

1.1.6 Sustainability

EQ: Assess whether or not or to what extent the benefits of the interventions are likely to continue building on the project's design and strategies, technical assistance, as well as the practices or capacity and preparedness demonstrated by the partner implementers (LGUs, FCAs, others) towards sustainability of the outcomes over time.
Response: The intention to ensure sustainability of outcomes is embedded in the project's design: ● *Relationships with FCA-proponents are maintained up to 10 years after sub-project completion.* ● *I-REAP personnel at the RPCO level are integrated into AMAD / within DA, allowing the transfer of know-how and tools (over time). Likewise, I-REAP is also able to capitalize on the approaches, know-how and tools used by AMAD to facilitate access to markets – which is crucial to achieving I-REAP's development objectives.* ● *Efforts to mainstream approaches and tools are being implemented and monitored. This is strengthened by the integration of I-REAP teams within AMAD units, which enables I-REAP to demonstrate the value of its approaches (e.g. the business planning process) and the tools used for capacity development.*

The intention to ensure sustainability of outcomes is embedded in the project's design:

- The relationship between PRDP and the FCA-proponents does not stop on completion and turn-over of the sub-project. The relationship is maintained up to 10 years after sub-project completion. This long-term view not only addresses the need to track the performance of sub-projects, but also signals that PRDP (and the DA, in effect) is seriously invested in the sub-project and the capacity of the FCA to manage/grow its enterprise activities.
- I-REAP personnel, especially at the RPCO level, are integrated into AMAD / within DA, allowing the transfer of know-how and tools (over time), which requires fully-integrated teams. Likewise, I-REAP is also able to capitalize on the approaches, know-how and tools used by AMAD to facilitate access to markets – which is crucial to achieving I-REAP's development objectives. The importance of effectively accessing markets cannot be overemphasized. The investments and interventions made under I-REAP will mean nothing if supported FCA-enterprises are unable to improve sales of the products they develop.

Efforts are being taken to mainstream I-REAP approaches and tools and these are being monitored. This is strengthened by the integration of I-REAP teams within AMAD units, which enables I-REAP to demonstrate the value of its approaches (e.g. the business planning process) and the tools used for capacity development.

1.2 I-SUPPORT

1.2.1 Relevance

The PRDP tools demonstrate strong strategic relevance to the DA's mandate, particularly in advancing value chain–based planning, climate-resilient infrastructure, enterprise development, and governance systems. As shown in the table below, all ten tools are anchored on clear policy and technical foundations, including alignment with national standards, planning frameworks, and sector priorities.

The shift in IDU's approach, from tool prioritization to office-level uptake, further enhances relevance by recognizing the differentiated mandates and operational contexts of DA units. This allows tools to be applied where they are most functionally appropriate.

However, while relevance is strong at the design and policy level, the table shows that this is not yet consistently translated into operational relevance, as most tools remain advisory and are not fully embedded in planning, budgeting, and decision-making systems.

1.2.2 Effectiveness

Table 17 pertaining to the status of PRDP tool Mainstreaming: adoption, drivers, constraints, and priority action indicates that all PRDP tools have achieved moderate to high levels of process adoption, with PCIP demonstrating the most advanced use, particularly in planning and budgeting discussions across regions.

Evidence shows that:

a. Tools are actively used in planning and coordination processes
b. PCIP is widely applied in LGU and DA planning
c. Other tools (e.g., VCA, eVSA, geo-mapping) are used as technical inputs

However, effectiveness remains partial, as reflected in the "Key Constraint" column:

a. Most tools are non-binding
b. Integration into approval and budgeting systems is limited
c. Application is uneven across offices

Thus, while tools are effective in influencing planning behavior, they are not yet consistently shaping investment decisions and institutional outcomes, indicating effectiveness at the process level rather than outcome level.

1.2.3 Efficiency

Implementation of PRDP tools is supported by structured guidelines, training systems, and technical assistance, which have enabled rollout across DA units.

However, the table highlights several efficiency constraints:

a. Continued reliance on training and facilitation mechanisms
b. Limited system integration (e.g., geo-mapping, SIDLAN still evolving)
c. Repetition of capacity-building efforts due to uneven adoption

As a result, while implementation outputs are achieved, the system remains resource-intensive and not yet optimized for streamlined, system-driven operations.

1.2.4 Coherence

At the conceptual level, the PRDP tools form a coherent system linking planning, investment programming, and monitoring functions. The table reflects strong alignment across tools, particularly in how PCIP, VCA, and related instruments support value chain–based planning.

However, coherence remains largely process-driven rather than system-enforced, as evidenced by:

a. Limited integration into formal decision rules and;
b. Weak enforcement of cross-component convergence

Thus, coherence is strong at the design level, but only partially realized at the institutional and operational level.

1.2.5 Impact

The table below provides evidence of emerging impacts, particularly:

a. Increased use of structured planning tools
b. Adoption of value chain–based approaches
c. Improved alignment of investments with PCIP priorities

However, these impacts remain intermediate and procedural, as:

a. Tools are not yet systematically embedded in decision-making systems
b. Institutional changes in budgeting and approval processes are limited
c. Mainstreaming monitoring and tracking framework capture process indicators rather than outcome-level changes

Thus, impact at midterm is observable but not yet systemic, with stronger influence on planning practices than on institutional transformation.

1.2.6 Sustainability

The Table 17 clearly shows that while all tools have achieved process-level adoption, none have yet reached full outcome-level institutionalization.

Key sustainability constraints include:

a. Absence of enforceable decision rules
b. Limited standardization across DA units
c. Mainstreaming monitoring and tracking framework that do not yet capture actual system use and routinization

The shift to an office-based monitoring framework is appropriate and context-sensitive. However, as noted, it currently lacks outcome-level verification mechanisms specifically, the absence of clearly defined criteria for institutionalization, along with corresponding indicators, standardized data sources, and validation protocols. At present, mainstreaming is assessed largely as a nominal (yes/no) condition, with means of verification relying primarily on narrative reports (e.g., MSARs and documentation reports). While these capture process adoption and implementation pathways, they do not yet provide measurable criteria or thresholds to determine whether tools are already embedded in formal systems, routinely applied in decision-making, and sustained beyond project support.

As such, sustainability remains transitional and uneven, with mainstreaming progressing at the level of process adoption and institutional exposure, but not yet achieving full system-level institutionalization.

Table 17. Status of PRDP Tool Mainstreaming: Adoption, Drivers, Constraints, and Priority Actions

PRDP Tools / Innovations	Adoption Level[21]	Evidence of Adoption / Use	Key Drivers	Key Constraint (Outcome-Level Gap)	Priority Action
Tool/Innovation No. 1 Operation Manual for Infrastructure Support in Partnership with LGUs	Moderate	Trainings conducted; applied in selected regions for infrastructure planning	Formal guidelines and structured training platforms (e.g., InfraSync)	Not embedded in approval and implementation systems	Integrate into infrastructure approval processes

[21] Adoption levels are defined based on the degree of integration of PRDP tools into institutional systems, as assessed through document analysis of materials shared by the IDU. Low indicates limited evidence of use beyond awareness or initial orientation. Moderate indicates evidence of process adoption, including training, reference use, and partial operational application, but without consistent or enforced integration into planning, budgeting, or decision-making systems. High indicates strong and widespread use within planning and operational processes, including instances where tools influence budgeting or approval discussions; however, this does not necessarily imply full outcome-level institutionalization, which requires consistent, system-wide embedding and routinized application across all relevant offices.

Tool/Innovation No. 2 Climate-proofed technical planning parameters for rural infrastructure in keeping with DPWH guidelines	Moderate	Applied in infrastructure projects following DPWH/CCC standards	Alignment with national infrastructure and climate standards	Compliance-based use; not system-integrated	Institutionalize as mandatory design standard
Tool/Innovation No. 3 Operation Planning and Budgeting Guidelines on the use of PCIPs as the platform for planning and budgeting technical and program support through a process that links the overall AFMP with the more strategically focused Regional AFMP & LGU	High (Process Use)	Widely used in planning, budgeting discussions, and LGU plans across regions	Strong policy anchoring and relevance to planning processes	Decision-binding in budgeting and approvals	Sustain
Tool/Innovation No. 4 Enhanced Vulnerability & Suitability Analysis (eVSA) as the tool for identifying edaphic & climatic suitability of cropping areas according to commodity	Moderate	Used as reference in planning and suitability assessments	Technical relevance for commodity planning and climate adaptation	Not integrated into decision-making systems	Integrate into planning and investment validation
Tool/Innovation No. 5 VCAs as the tool for identifying the interventions required to strengthen the value chain for commodities confirmed as suitable through eVSAs	Moderate	Used as basis for PCIP and commodity prioritization	Central role in value chain–based planning framework (Used as analytical basis for PCIP development and commodity prioritization)	Remains analytical; not decision-binding	Strengthen direct application of VCA in planning, project selection, and budgeting processes
Tool/Innovation No. 6 Methodology for Business Planning in support to Proponent Group enterprise development	Moderate	Used in enterprise programs (e.g., FCA assessments, business planning tools)	Direct applicability to enterprise and FCA support functions	Not standardized across DA units/regions	Expand and standardize across enterprise programs
Tool/Innovation No. 7 Geo-mapping to enhance monitoring, governance & quality of investments supported by DA	Moderate	Used for geotagging, monitoring, and validation across regions	Alignment with digital agriculture and monitoring systems	Limited integration into centralized systems	Integrate into DA-wide monitoring and planning systems
Tool/Innovation No. 8 Social and	Moderate	Safeguards structures and	Institutional recognition of	Not embedded in approval and	Institutionalize in project

Environmental Safeguards (SES) Manual based on enhanced procedures & experience developed under PRDP		compliance processes established	safeguards and compliance requirements	operational systems	approval processes
Tool/Innovation No. 9 Grievance Redress Mechanism / Citizen Monitoring and Feedback System	Moderate	GRM systems established and used in several regions	Alignment with accountability and citizen feedback mechanisms	Implementation uneven; not standardized	Standardize GRM across DA and LGU systems
Tool/Innovation No. 10 Rural Road Network Strategic Overlay (iROAD – now ABEMIS/GEOAGRI) as the basis for planning, budgeting & construction of the country's rural road network in partnership with LGUs and DPWH	Moderate	Used for infrastructure planning and avoiding duplication of projects	Strong relevance to infrastructure planning and inter-agency coordination	Not yet mandatory in planning and budgeting decisions	Integrate into DA-DPWH planning systems

Across all criteria, the evaluation finds that PRDP tool mainstreaming has achieved substantial progress in process adoption, driven by policy anchoring, technical relevance, and training support. However, adoption remains largely non-binding and uneven, with limited integration into formal planning, budgeting, and decision-making systems. At midterm, mainstreaming is best characterized as process-based rather than outcome-level institutionalization. The critical next phase is to transition from use to enforcement, ensuring that PRDP tools are embedded, routinized, and consistently applied across DA systems.

Recommended Adjustments for the Remaining Implementation Period:

To support the full mainstreaming and institutionalization of all ten PRDP tools, the following priority actions are recommended:

1. The proposed badge-based, office-level monitoring system should be formally documented and operationalized, with clearly defined criteria, thresholds, and evidence requirements. This should ensure consistency in assessment while maintaining alignment with outcome-level indicators of institutionalization.
2. The office-level uptake approach should be complemented, not substituted, by tool-level evidence. Mainstreaming monitoring and tracking framework must be able to clearly demonstrate which tools are being adopted, by which offices, and the extent to which these tools influence planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes.
3. Implementation should approach toward system integration, ensuring that PRDP tools are embedded in core institutional mechanisms, including planning templates, budgeting frameworks, approval workflows, operational manuals, and reporting systems.
4. Priority should be given to strengthening decision-rule enforcement, particularly by requiring the use of key tools (e.g., PCIP, VCA, business planning methodologies) in investment identification, prioritization, and approval processes.
5. Efforts should focus on standardizing application across DA units, reducing variability in adoption and ensuring that tools are consistently applied in line with institutional mandates and functions.
6. Mainstreaming monitoring and tracking framework should capture outcome-level indicators, including evidence of system integration, routinized use, and sustained application beyond project-supported mechanisms.

2 Key Issues and Risks Moving Forward

2.1 I-PLAN

Latent Capacity Constraints at LGU Level

While overall staffing levels within the I-PLAN component are currently adequate relative to the scale of implementation, localized capacity constraints at the LGU level remain persistent and structurally embedded. LGUs face difficulties in allocating dedicated personnel for technically demanding tasks such as PCIP preparation and updating, largely due to competing administrative responsibilities and limited specialization.

Although these constraints are not yet binding due to the phased implementation design, they represent a latent risk to scalability, particularly as the program expands to cover more areas and requires more frequent and complex planning outputs.

Over Extension and Multi-Tasking of Technical Staff

Evidence indicates that PRDP technical personnel, particularly at the cluster and regional levels, are engaged in multi-functional roles and geographic backstopping across multiple provinces. While this adaptive approach has allowed the system to function under current conditions, it creates a risk of:

a. reduced depth of technical engagement

b. delays in support provision

c. uneven quality of planning outputs

As implementation scales, this model may become unsustainable, particularly if workload increases outpace staffing expansion.

Dependence on Project-Based Technical Assistance

The I-PLAN component currently plays a compensatory role, bridging LGU capacity gaps through intensive technical assistance, including PCIP preparation, VCA validation, and Joint Technical Reviews.

While this has enabled timely delivery of outputs, it also reflects a deeper structural issue: LGU systems are not yet fully capable of independently sustaining I-PLAN processes. This creates a significant sustainability risk, as continued reliance on PRDP support may limit the long-term institutionalization of planning functions once project facilitation is reduced or withdrawn.

Future Workload Pressures Linked to Scaling and RAFIP Institutionalization

Current staffing adequacy is phase-dependent. As the program moves toward full implementation, particularly with the operationalization of RAFIPs and expanded LGU engagement, workload demands are expected to increase significantly.

This creates a forward-looking risk that:

a. current staffing levels, while adequate now, may become insufficient

b. technical support requirements will intensify

c. coordination complexity will increase

Without timely adjustments, this may affect both efficiency and quality of implementation

Institutionalization and Mainstreaming Remain Contingent on Capacity Internalization

Mainstreaming and institutionalization remains contingent on two critical conditions:

1. Mainstreaming— effective integration and routinized application of the ten (10) PRDP innovations, in line with DA Memorandum Order No. 75, Series of 2021 on their integration into DA programs; and
2. Institutionalization—strengthening capacities of LGUs to independently apply PRDP tools in planning, budgeting, and implementation processes, thereby reducing long-term dependence on PRDP Scale-Up facilitation

Failure to address these conditions may result in:

1. continued reliance on project-based systems;
2. limited transfer of ownership to DA and LGUs, and
3. incomplete institutionalization of I-PLAN tools

2.2 I-BUILD

Table 18. Key Issues and Moving Forward Summative Points

What did not work?	What can be done for the next three years to address the issue?
From the perspective of PRDP I-BUILD	
Subproject identification is constrained by demand-driven proposals misaligned with planning instruments (RAFIP/PCIP), limited LGU counterpart capacity, weak documentation (e.g., absence of geotagged evidence), and susceptibility to politically driven priorities.	Strengthen alignment and governance by standardizing validation processes (including early I-PLAN validation and validation reports), harmonizing regional guidelines, and adopting more flexible yet accountable mechanisms for assessing LGU counterpart commitments.
Implementation is affected by right-of-way and water rights issues, PAPS relocation concerns, limited LGU technical capacity, political transitions, and procedural inefficiencies between RPCO and NPCO.	Strengthen project delivery by enforcing LGU compliance, providing sustained technical assistance, and enhancing coordination through a more integrated and holistic implementation approach.
Procurement and implementation are affected by repeated rebidding, inconsistent interpretation of guidelines, political interference and bidding irregularities, as well as weak contractor oversight leading to substandard materials, unauthorized subcontracting, and financial and capacity-related issues.	Strengthen governance and quality control through stricter coordination and policy harmonization, enhanced site validation and monitoring, and improved financial safeguards such as requiring bank guarantees to ensure contractor accountability and performance.
No actual fund allocation for O&M and no formatting or actual reporting for O&M.	Fund allocation and maximizing SIDLAN portal for strict monitoring.
From the perspective of LGUs	
Subproject identification and validation processes face challenges related to limited community acceptability and insufficient integration of environmental considerations, potentially affecting project relevance, sustainability, and stakeholder support.	Strengthen participatory stakeholder engagement during subproject identification to ensure community buy-in, and integrate early-stage environmental screening and safeguards planning in line with World Bank standards to enhance sustainability and compliance. Strict compliance to documentation prior

	validation, strengthening technical capacity through targeted training, and adopting responsive mechanisms to assess counterpart measures.
Delays in the approval and updating of the PCIP, coupled with limited capacity to adopt and effectively utilize appropriate digital tools, constrain timely and efficient subproject identification.	Accelerate the review and updating processes for the PCIP while strengthening institutional capacity and readiness to adopt and maximize relevant technologies and software to improve efficiency and decision-making.
Activities constrained by right-of-way and water rights issues, regulatory bottlenecks (e.g., ECC and inter-agency coordination), failed water quality compliance, delays in technical preparation (FS, DED, data collection), and limited technical personnel capacity.	Streamlining of documentary requests and improving implementation efficiency by prioritizing engagement of capable local contractors to expedite project preparation and address capacity and coordination gaps.
Procurement and implementation are constrained by quality assurance and control issues, transportation delays, and weather-related disruptions affecting project timelines and standards.	Improve efficiency and timeliness in PRDP I-BUILD by streamlining and fast-tracking the approval of NOL1 and NOL2 through standardized document checklists, digital submission and tracking systems, and parallel inter-agency reviews, while ensuring the prompt release of advance payments via pre-cleared financing arrangements and stricter processing timelines to enable faster project mobilization and execution.
No budget for O&M and protocols for compliance and perpetuity of the project.	Strengthen the proposal and acceptance of LGU funding for O&M by institutionalizing clear cost-sharing frameworks, requiring approved O&M plans with secured budget allocations prior to subproject approval, and establishing performance-based agreements to ensure sustained financing, accountability, and long-term asset functionality.

Subproject cycle	Start	Stop	Keep
SP Identification	1. Inclusion of projects even outside of PCIP but must ensure if it is considered at M/LGU level 2. Technical trainings to beneficiaries (LGUs, COOP, associations) 3. Submit applicable documents only to SP	Minimize delays in subproject processing by enforcing strict compliance with standardized documentary requirements and rejecting the submission of unnecessary or irrelevant documents such as duplicate permits, outdated feasibility studies, redundant resolutions, excessive photo documentation, and unrelated administrative records through clear checklists, capacity-building for LGUs, and automated document screening systems to ensure faster and more efficient evaluation.	1. Compliance to guidelines 2. PCIP align with RAFIP
SP Validation	1. LGU shall submit complete data prior to validation 2. Fill out screening forms accurately to determine eligibility 3. Familiarity with guidelines on RIA and commodity mapping 4. Fully acquired land acquisition 5. Provide logistics to technical people	Address exemptions and political challenges in PRDP I-BUILD by enforcing transparent, rules-based exemption criteria, strengthening independent technical review and documentation, and instituting accountability and grievance mechanisms to minimize undue political influence while ensuring that only meritorious subprojects are approved and implemented.	1. Keep doing the process of validation 2. Complete core team during validation 3. Needs-based projects

FS / DED / Safeguards	1. Submission of complete SP package to avoid piece-meal comments from review team 2. Thorough due diligence on the status of land and land improvement ownerships to avoid complaints during implementation 3. Streamlining documents for easier over-all process of this cycle 4. Inclusion of personnel complements, equipment, tools, gadgets in POW 5. Incorporate inflation to POW	1. POW without considering inflation 2. Reduce inefficiencies caused by excessive documentation in the SES by rationalizing and consolidating requirements into a streamlined, risk-based checklist, eliminating redundant forms and overlapping data, and adopting digital submission and validation systems to expedite review while maintaining compliance and safeguard standards.	1. Early and continuous capacity building activities for LGUs, FCAs, c/o RPCO 2. Conducting meaning consultation with documentations and reports 3. Refresher course in preparation of FS, DED, etc. 4. Conduct of JTR
SP ARA	Set timeline upon submission to approach RPAB of RPCO	1. Scheduling SPAR with lacking documents 2. Conduct of RPAB without clearance 3. Piecemeal comments / feedbacking / submission	1. Conduct of Full Technical Assistance 2. Complete permits and clearances prior to schedule SPAR 3. RPAB, NOL 1 4. Coaching and mentoring sessions
Procurement	1. Harmonize and common interpretation of Bidding Documents 2. Involving SES to ensure compliance on Code of Conduct and CSHP 3. Capacitate LGUs on the harmonized guidelines thoroughly 4. Lower LGU Equity 5. Prioritize local contractor 6. Revise procurement process	1. Reduce the prolonged review duration of BERs by establishing clear review timelines and service-level standards, adopting parallel and digital evaluation processes, and strengthening reviewer capacity and accountability to ensure faster yet quality-assured subproject appraisal 2. Stop sub-contracting 3. Unqualified bidders	1. Transparency in bidding process 2. Competitive bidding 3. DA-BAC supervision / support to LGU-BAC

SP Implementation	1. Strict compliance to the guidelines2 2. Strict compliance to safety protocols 3. Submission of complete report with attachments for the monthly report and billing documents 4. NPCO to join site inspection and monitoring activities 5. Digital Annexes 6. Start trainings together with contractor 7. Excess fund from the original cost to be utilize in connection with project8. Streamline billing requirements	1. Unauthorized subcontracting 2. Political interference 4. Late and incomplete regular monthly reports 5. Use of materials that easily deteriorate like in the case of broken pipe networks in Baybay Water System Project 6. Approaching testing centers that give unreliable results 7. Defer SES requirements to final billing to encourage monthly billing from contractor	1. Strong coordination between LGU and PRDP 2. Monthly monitoring evaluation 3. Monthly meetings with stakeholders 4. Coaching and mentoring session with PRDP, LGU, Contractor on compliance requirements
O&M	1. Trainings relevant to the O&M must be conducted before the completion of SPs 2. Personnels / associations must be established prior to O&M 3. Harmonization of IMMAS and OMAS 4. Strict enforcement of O&M 5. Ensure sufficient budget for O&M Activities 6. Funding support inclusion 7. O&M reports creation 8. Uniform guidelines to include in IPCR of regular ROMAT members	1. Allowing developments on road shoulders 2. Political factors	1. Hire competent personnels 2. Conduct of OMAS 3. Quarterly monitoring 4. O&M Plans 5. Appropriate ordinances

2.3 I-REAP

The key issues and risks for I-REAP are as follows:

- As discussed in the earlier sections of this report, not all of the I-REAP sub-projects in the pipeline should be expected to reach completion by EOP, which may have implications on budget allocations and the utilization of funds. To address this problem, the I-REAP NPCO, in coordination with I-REAP teams at the PSO and RPCO levels, have already identified a number of sub-projects in the pipeline, for which the aim is to reach NOL 1 by the end of the year (2026). This strategy will help focus resources towards 'prioritised sub-projects' and more realistically forecast how many sub-projects are likely to be completed by the EOP and their budget allocations. It is however important to stress that this approach bears the **risk of unduly rushing the development of sub-projects, which can have adverse effects on the FCA-proponents and the sub-project's performance** at latter stages of the project cycle and once completed. This risk can materialise if the emphasis is placed on simply generating completed sub-projects (for example, in order to meet agreed targets).
- This midterm evaluation has highlighted how the development of I-REAP sub-projects require a high level of effort – both in terms of the man-hours required to support FCAs, as well as the skills set needed to adequately deliver the support that FCAs need as project proponents. As the PRDP Scale-Up draws to a close, there is a **risk of losing staff and the program experiencing high attrition rates**, especially if there is a lack of clarity regarding the employment of PRDP-hired staff or indeed any prospects for further phases of PRDP following Scale-Up. This can be detrimental to the program, especially if skilled personnel leave while I-REAP interventions and sub-projects are still being implemented during the latter half of the Scale-Up phase.
- I-REAP supports FCA-proponents ultimately to achieve enterprise viability. To achieve this, production capacity (raw materials) and member participation are important pre-requisites. If supported FCAs experience **constraints in terms of sourcing adequate and competitive volumes of raw materials (crops, fish)**, this will have implications on their ability to produce and competitively market goods. The emphasis placed on this risk is driven by the changes that are currently taking place in the broader economic environment (i.e. the increase in fuel prices and its likely knock-on effect on inflation) – which are likely to disproportionately affect producers (farmers/fisherfolk), especially in the absence of any safety nets.

2.4 Cross-cutting Issues and Risks

While the PRDP Scale-Up has successfully established a unified planning foundation, the transition from integrated planning to integrated implementation presents opportunities for further optimization

The project effectively utilizes the **Regional Agricultural and Fisheries Investment Portfolio (RAFIP)** and **Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIP)** as the primary mechanisms for integration. These **I-PLAN** tools successfully ensure that **I-BUILD** (infrastructure) and **I-REAP** (enterprise) subprojects are aligned with priority value chains during the initial identification and prioritization phases.

Beyond the initial strategic selection, there is a noted absence of formal mechanisms to facilitate continuous interfacing between infrastructure and enterprise subprojects throughout their respective implementation lifecycles. Once approved, subprojects tend to follow independent execution tracks, which can limit the potential for real-time operational synergies between physical assets and enterprise activities.

Under the Scale-Up framework, the mandatory connectivity between **I-BUILD** and **I-REAP** was transitioned into a non-mandatory criterion for subproject prioritization. While this allows for greater flexibility in addressing urgent localized needs, it has resulted in a trend toward standalone or decentralized interventions. Moving forward, there is a strategic opportunity to re-emphasize "cluster-based" connectivity to ensure that infrastructure investments directly amplify the commercial viability of enterprise-related subprojects.

3 Lessons Learned

3.1 I-PLAN

Based on the assessment of the implementation of the I-PLAN component, the following key lessons emerge:

1. **Planning does not guarantee investment:** Adoption of PCIP/VCA tools is not sufficient; conversion into projects depends on viability, capacity, and compliance with technical and financial requirements.
2. **Institutional embedding is critical**: Formal structures (e.g., PPMIU, executive orders, PDC actions) are necessary to sustain planning processes beyond project cycles and leadership changes.
3. **Coordination mechanisms enable conversion.**: Platforms such as inter-office systems and inter-agency partnerships are essential to link planning outputs with investment pipelines.
4. **Technical capacity is a key bottleneck:** LGUs with stronger capacity in feasibility studies, engineering, and economic analysis are more likely to secure projects.
5. **Political continuity affects outcomes:** Frequent leadership changes disrupt project pipelines; institutional safeguards are needed to ensure continuity.
6. **Compliance requirements create access barriers:** Complex documentation and technical standards limit participation of lower-capacity LGUs.
7. **Inter-agency collaboration strengthens implementation:** Formal partnerships enhance value chain support and resource mobilization.
8. **Investment pipeline activation is the strongest indicator of success:** The clearest evidence of institutionalization is the ability to generate approved and implemented projects.

3.2 I-BUILD

Key lessons learned from the I-BUILD component and rural infrastructure subproject implementation include:

1. **Improve procurement and implementation efficiency.** The implementation of I-BUILD sub-projects is highly sensitive to procurement efficiency and contractor readiness. Delays in bidding, rebidding, and contract awards often stem from weak bid documentation, limited competition, and inadequate contractor capacity. While procedural improvements can streamline timelines, these challenges also reflect broader structural issues in the local construction market and public procurement environment. Adopting e-procurement systems and standardized bidding templates can enhance transparency, shorten processing time, and improve competitiveness in procurement.
2. **Strengthen quality assurance and contractor performance.** The quality of infrastructure outputs is closely linked to the effectiveness of supervision, quality assurance mechanisms, and contractor performance management. Weak enforcement of standards, insufficient materials testing, and reliance on subcontracting arrangements contribute to variability in construction quality. Strengthening third-party audits and enforcing accountability mechanisms are therefore critical to ensuring compliance and durability of investments.
3. **Enhance LGU Capacity and accountability.** LGU capacity remains a central determinant of successful project implementation. Variations in technical, procurement, and project management competencies directly affect the pace and quality of execution. While capacity-building interventions are essential, they should be complemented by institutionalized systems for monitoring, oversight, and accountability to ensure that gains are sustained beyond individual projects.

3.3 I-REAP

The key lessons emerging from this mid-term evaluation with respect to the implementation of I-REAP are as follows:

- **It takes a relatively long time to develop I-REAP sub-projects.** This is, in part, driven by aspects of the sub-project cycle that can be improved – but more so, reflects (i) the requirements for developing investment projects, especially of this size and scale, and (ii) the capacity of FCAs. While some improvements can be made to the project cycle (to minimise some of the delays experienced), the process should be looked upon as a process of capacity development. Moreover, the process entails a series of steps with interdependencies, where pain points are often the very same pain points that other investment projects and enterprises in the private sector face.
- **The process of developing business plans has been a central feature of I-REAP's implementation – and arguably, it forms a crucial part of the capacity-building effort.** Many of the FCAs that have now reached the implementation stage have pointed out that while they struggled with the business planning process, they recognize that this was a necessary step to have gone through. In some cases, FCAs acknowledge how the business planning process enabled them to think critically about their operations and enterprise activities. There are also interesting stories in the field of how the business planning process espoused by I-REAP has given FCAs a reputation for being among the "good ones", given the rigorous process that they have successfully gone through under PRDP.
- **Clearer delineation of roles and the interface between RPCO and PSO teams is vital to ensuring that I-REAP sub-projects go through the project cycle more smoothly.** As noted in the earlier sections of this report, in some clusters, the relationship between RPCOs and the PSO has been observed to be more fluid (than in others), where roles are clear between the different teams and the support that is provided to BDOs (at the RPCO level) is well defined (and not merely ad-hoc in nature). In practice, this has meant that both RPCO and PSO are fully aware of and understand the nature of the sub-projects as they develop and resources can be deployed in a coordinated manner.

4 Conclusion

The midterm evaluation of the DA-PRDP Scale-Up establishes that while the intervention has achieved a technically resilient architectural framework for rural planning and infrastructure, it remains in a gestation phase. Current data indicates that while procedural adoption—characterized by the high utilization of planning tools and infrastructure delivery—is substantial, it has yet to achieve full institutionalization or catalyse statistically significant socio-economic shifts at the household level.

More specifically, the following key conclusions are further derived from the conduct of the evaluation study:

1. **Emerging Physical and Economic Benefits**

- As of March 2026, the project has reached **30, 152 farmers** (6.7% of the end-of-project target) through the completion of 16 rural infrastructure subprojects.
- In treatment areas, beneficiaries report a **373.6 kg increase (14.42%)** in marketed output and a **54.95% reduction** in travel time. High levels of attribution—**75% for marketed volume** and **94.12% for travel time**—confirm that project interventions are the primary drivers of these improvements.
- While nominal increases in income were observed, pooled regression analysis indicates that broader socio-economic impacts (PDO 2 and PDO 3) are **not statistically significant** at midterm. This is largely attributed to the longer gestation periods of infrastructure projects and external economic factors

2. **Component-Specific Performance**

- The component has successfully increased agri-fishery investments aligned with Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs) by **41.1% (Php 70.08 billion)**, far exceeding the 30% target. However, these tools remain **non-binding** and are not yet fully integrated into formal budgeting and decision-making processes.
- Rural infrastructure remains the dominant project component (78% of cost). While technically sound, implementation is slowed by complex regulatory requirements, right-of-way issues, and a heavy reliance on external technical assistance rather than embedded LGU capacity.
- There are no completed enterprise subprojects to date, though 9 are in implementation and 39 are in the development pipeline. The primary bottleneck is the rigorous business planning process, which presents a significant learning curve for Farmer Cooperative and Associations (FCAs).

3. **Institutionalization and Sustainability**

- PRDP tools (e.g., VCA, PCIP, eVSA) have achieved high **process-level adoption** but have not reached **outcome-level institutionalization**. Most tools continue to function as advisory references rather than mandatory determinants of investment.
- Systemic efficiency is hindered by a continued reliance on PRDP-funded facilitation and parallel planning systems that create duplication within DA and LGU workflows.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Strategic Recommendations

5.1.1 I-PLAN Strategic Recommendations

Transition from Planning Outputs to Investment Governance

Consistent with findings that I-PLAN tools are widely used but remain non-binding in decision-making, the next phase of PRDP Scale-Up should shift from strengthening planning outputs toward institutionalizing planning as an enforceable governance mechanism.

Strategically, PRDP must move from:

a. planning as decision-support → decision-control, and
b. tool utilization → system-level enforcement and compliance

This directly addresses the planning–investment conversion gap identified under Effectiveness and Impact, where planning influences proposals but does not consistently determine funded investments.

Institutionalization of Planning–Budgeting Linkages

The evaluation highlights a persistent disconnect between PCIP/RAFIP and budgeting systems (AIP, CDP, AWP). To address this structural constraint, PRDP should support the formal integration of planning tools into budgeting frameworks, ensuring that:

a. all investment proposals are anchored on PCIP/RAFIP priorities, and
b. planning outputs are required inputs in budget allocation and approval processes

This recommendation directly responds to:

a. weak planning–budgeting integration (Effectiveness, Sustainability)
b. non-binding nature of planning tools (Impact)

Strengthening Governance and Accountability for Mainstreaming

Given the finding that institutionalization remains partial and uneven, and monitoring remains process-based, PRDP should strengthen governance mechanisms for mainstreaming. This includes:

a. formalizing the badge-based monitoring system with clear evidence standards
b. linking tool adoption to performance accountability frameworks across DA units and regions

This ensures that mainstreaming is:

a. not only tracked (process),
b. but validated and enforced (outcome-level)

Strengthening Planning-to-Investment Conversion Systems

Findings consistently show that the core constraint is not lack of planning tools, but weak conversion of planning outputs into funded investments.

Strategic focus should therefore shift toward:

a. strengthening investment pipeline systems,
b. improving proposal readiness and completeness, and
c. aligning I-PLAN, I-BUILD, and I-REAP into a sequenced investment system

This directly addresses:

a. incomplete proposals (Efficiency)
b. weak cross-component integration (Coherence)

c. uneven investment realization (Impact)

5.1.2 I-BUILD Strategic Recommendations

The strategic recommendations for the I-BUILD component center on strengthening upstream planning integrity, institutional capacity, and governance systems to ensure that subprojects are both responsive and compliant with program frameworks. Addressing persistent misalignment between demand-driven proposals and planning instruments (e.g., RAFIP/PCIP) requires the institutionalization of standardized validation processes, including earlier and more rigorous I-PLAN engagement, harmonized regional guidelines, and the issuance of formal validation reports. Enhancing LGU readiness is equally critical. This includes targeted capacity building on technical preparation, documentation (e.g., geotagging), and digital tools, alongside more flexible yet accountable mechanisms for assessing counterpart commitments. Embedding participatory approaches and early-stage environmental and social safeguards will further improve subproject relevance, acceptability, and sustainability in line with World Bank standards. Hiring of consultants and specialists in monitoring and evaluation of engineering project development are equally important.

Implementation and procurement reforms should adopt a more strategic, systems-oriented approach that strengthens efficiency, accountability, and quality assurance across the entire project cycle. Addressing recurring delays arising from right-of-way constraints, regulatory bottlenecks, and fragmented inter-agency coordination requires a more integrated delivery framework that aligns enforcement of LGU compliance with sustained technical support and simplified, well-synchronized processes. Procurement risks such as repeated rebidding, inconsistent interpretation of guidelines, and contractor underperformance highlight the need for tighter policy alignment, more robust monitoring mechanisms, and strengthened financial safeguards, including the use of performance-based instruments to ensure accountability.

At the institutional level, improving vertical and horizontal coordination between RPCO and NPCO, accelerating critical approvals such as FS, DED, NOL 1, NOL2, and ensuring predictability in fund flows are essential to enhancing implementation efficiency. These should be complemented by the institutionalization of operations and maintenance through secured LGU budget allocations, clearly defined responsibilities, and the optimized use of digital monitoring platforms such as SIDLAN. Together, these measures reinforce a more resilient and performance-driven implementation environment that safeguards infrastructure quality and ensures the sustainability of project outcomes over the long term.

5.1.3 I-REAP

The table below lists the different Intermediate Results indicators for **I-REAP** and proposed improvements to consider.

Indicators	Comments
Number of agri-fishery enterprises (sub-projects completed)	● Continue use of the indicator, but targets need to be adjusted ● It would be meaningful to add an indicator on the 'value of funding commitments'. This will help contextualise results for the number of enterprises / completed sub-projects.
Percent of agri-fishery enterprises engaged in postproduction segments of value chains	● Many FCA-proponents are already engaged in post-production segments of the value chain. Reporting against this indicator will therefore not (always) reflect the additionality that PRDP/I-REAP interventions bring. PRDP might consider re-framing the indicator as "percent of agri-fishery enterprises engaged in <u>new</u> postproduction segments of value chains".
Percent increase in profitability of participating agri-fishery enterprises	● Continue use of the indicator

Indicators	Comments
Percent of agri-fishery enterprise clusters reached by business development support including credit and insurance	• Continue use of the indicator – however, ensure that only those linkages (with BDS and credit/insurance providers) established after the sub-project was given confirmation to proceed are counted.
Percent of agri-fishery enterprise clusters with partnership agreement with institutional buyers	• Some FCAs already have existing relationships with institutional buyers. Moreover, as a matter of standard practice, all sub-projects are encouraged (in some cases, required) to secure partnership agreements with buyers, as part of the application process. This renders the indicator meaningless. • It is suggested that this indicator be revised into "increase in sales of the agri-fishery enterprise". This measures the percentage change in the value of sales (PhP) of the enterprise, which results from (a) sales made to new markets/buyers, and/or (b) additional sales made to pre-existing markets/buyers.
Percent of women directly participating in clustered enterprises	• The design of I-REAP's interventions does not include strategies that specifically target women/female participants nor aim at improving female economic empowerment. As such, this indicator seems misplaced.

5.2 Operational Recommendations

5.2.1 I-PLAN

Institutionalization of Planning Tools within DA Systems

Mechanism:

a. Integration of PCIP and RAFIP into DA AWP guidelines and planning templates
b. Use of PCIP alignment checklists in proposal screening

Compliance and Enforcement:

a. All PAPs must demonstrate PCIP/RAFIP alignment prior to endorsement
b. Validation by DA-PMS, NPCO, and concerned bureaus
c. Non-compliant proposals to be returned for revision during appraisal

Strengthening Coordination Across PRDP Components

Mechanism:

a. Institutionalization of joint planning and appraisal workflows
b. Strengthen integrated investment pipeline tracking systems
c. Regular cross-component coordination platforms

Compliance and Enforcement:

a. All proposals must demonstrate cross-component alignment
b. Review through RPCO appraisal and DA-PMS budget processes
c. Monitoring through pipeline dashboards and coordination reports

Strengthening LGU Technical Capacity

Mechanism:

a. Institutionalization of PCIP-based planning templates in LGU systems (AIP, LDIP)

b. Implementation of ladderized capacity-building programs
c. Deployment of technical advisory and mentoring systems
d. Alignment of PCIP compliance and I-PLAN tool utilization with performance-based incentive systems such as the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG), to reinforce institutional adoption through objective and rules-based performance criteria.

Compliance and Enforcement:

a. LGU proposals must demonstrate explicit alignment with PCIP priorities, reflected in AIP and LDIP submissions and supported by corresponding planning templates
b. Validation of alignment shall be conducted through RPCO technical review and DA appraisal systems, including the use of standardized PCIP alignment checklists prior to endorsement
c. Compliance shall be reinforced through integration of PCIP alignment indicators into performance-based assessment systems, including the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG), to ensure that adherence to evidence-based planning is externally validated and not solely dependent on internal processes
d. Access to technical assistance, project endorsement, and funding support shall be conditional on demonstrated application of I-PLAN tools and compliance with planning–investment alignment requirements

Strengthening RAFIP Integration and Operationalization

As highlighted in the assessment, RAFIPs are developed but not yet fully embedded in DA systems.

Mechanism:

a. Formal integration of RAFIPs into DA planning, budgeting, and program design processes
b. Linking RAFIPs to monitoring systems (e.g., SIDLAN)
c. Clarifying roles of REDs and RFUs in RAFIP implementation

Compliance and Enforcement:

a. RAFIP alignment required in regional budget proposals and AWP submissions
b. Monitoring of RAFIP utilization through DA reporting systems
c. Accountability assigned to regional offices and DA units

These actions directly respond to identified institutionalization risks and capacity constraints

Strengthening Investment Promotion and Fund Leveraging

Mechanism:

a. Integration of PCIP/RAFIP pipelines into DA investment programming
b. Development of standardized investment promotion packages
c. Establishment of investment matching platforms and PPP mechanisms

Compliance and Enforcement:

a. Funding proposals must demonstrate PCIP/RAFIP alignment
b. Validation during DA-PMS review and approval processes
c. Monitoring of investment conversion rates and leveraged funds

Addressing Governance Constraints in Planning-to-Investment Conversion

The evaluation identifies systemic governance gaps, including:

a. weak planning–budgeting linkage
b. decentralized decision authority
c. uneven LGU capacity
d. political economy constraints

Recommended actions:

a. Formalize decision rules linking planning to budgeting
b. Strengthen institutional continuity mechanisms

c. Enhance DA-LGU coordination frameworks
d. Reduce reliance on facilitation and move toward rule-based systems

Overall, these recommendations are directly anchored on the evaluation findings, particularly the central conclusion that while I-PLAN tools are technically robust and widely adopted, they remain non-binding and not yet fully institutionalized. The recommended actions therefore focus on transitioning from process-based adoption toward enforceable system integration, ensuring that planning tools become determinants of investment decisions rather than advisory inputs within DA and LGU governance systems.

5.2.2 I-BUILD

Operationally, I-BUILD should prioritize improving efficiency and coordination throughout the entire project cycle. This can be achieved by simplifying documentary requirements and minimizing procedural duplication between RPCO and NPCO through clear process mapping, standardized templates, and aligned timelines. Strengthening real-time coordination through regular joint technical working sessions and unified tracking systems will help resolve bottlenecks in approvals, validation, and compliance. At the LGU level, support should focus on hands-on technical assistance in feasibility studies, detailed engineering design, and safeguards compliance, alongside the expanded use of digital tools such as SIDLAN for monitoring, reporting, and documentation. Building the capacity of LGU personnel through targeted and modular training, complemented by mentoring arrangements, remains essential to ensure consistent compliance with program requirements.

For procurement and construction, operational improvements should emphasize timeliness, quality assurance, and effective contractor performance management. This involves strengthening prequalification and due diligence processes, clarifying protocols for contractor supervision, and conducting regular site validation supported by third-party inspections to ensure adherence to standards. Delays can be reduced by accelerating the processing of NOL2, ensuring timely release of advance payments, and adopting more proactive scheduling that considers weather and logistical constraints. Clear and practical guidance for addressing right of way, water rights, and inter-agency coordination issues will further minimize implementation risks. Establishing enforceable operations and maintenance protocols, backed by dedicated LGU funding, defined responsibilities, and regular monitoring, is also necessary to sustain project benefits and prevent asset deterioration over time.

5.2.3 I-REAP

The proposed actions to improve particular aspects in the **I-REAP** sub-project cycle are as follows:

1. Strengthen institutionalization of PCIPs in LGUs to ensure that LGUs are aware of and understand PRDP more generally and I-REAP, in particular. This can be done by holding re-orientation meetings or forums, and for PSOs to execute MOAs with LGUs (at both provincial and municipal levels). These steps are intended to prevent problems which some FCAs experienced with regard to securing the endorsement of their respective LGUs.
2. I-REAP can create a repository of or provide information on consultants who can support FCAs that wish or are in a position to outsource the preparation of the business plan, financial analysis and civil works technical design. In this regard, some FCAs have, for example, benefited from tie-ups with local universities (business faculty).
3. Lack of data and the need to carry out primary data-collection activities can be time-consuming and costly for FCAs. As such, verifying whether the availability of data (to inform the business case) should be done as early as possible. It is recommended to include a data assessment as part of the strategic planning that takes place before the start of business plan preparation.
4. It is acknowledged that securing the required documents, clearances, certifications and licenses – e.g. for land titling or land conversion – takes a long time to process. To help alleviate the impact this has on the length of time needed for sub-project development, the most that I-REAP can do is to clearly identify which

documents, clearances, certifications and licenses are needed by the respective sub-projects. The experience during the first half of the Scale-Up phase have produced practical lessons in this regard and should equip BDOs and other I-REAP staff with information on the processes for securing the required documentation. I-REAP teams are also supported by SES representative on the ground to help identify the required documentation for sub-projects. In some cases, there may be scope to starting the process of securing the required documentation as early as possible – for example, immediately after validation. This might not necessarily apply to all cases, however. For some FCAs, the uncertainty as to whether the sub-project will be approved or not may prevent them from starting the process of land titling or conversion, especially as these processes can be costly.

A further step that might be taken is for RPCOs to facilitate inter-agency forum and coordination meetings to ensure smoother acquisition of required documents for I-REAP sub-projects. This is already being done in some RPCOs.

Additionally, putting I-REAP projects on a 'priority list' – for example, in partnership with other relevant agencies such as DAR and DENR – could be explored. This means that I-REAP sub-projects can be prioritised for scheduling site visits, laboratory testing and other activities that rely on the execution of other agencies.

5. Some PSOs and RPCOs have created a centralised monitoring form to better manage the technical reviews of business plans. This is to address issues concerning the multiple iterations and back-and-forth comments and corrections made. The use of a centralised monitoring form should be considered by all RPCOs and PSOs, given the breadth of individuals and units that are called upon to review business plan drafts.
6. The procurement of goods and civil works in approved sub-projects is rightly delegated to FCAs. For some FCAs, however, the procurement process is new or alien to them. They would therefore benefit from being given technical guidance by the PRDP Procurement Team on the procurement process. This should include receiving guidance on proper canvassing of goods and consideration for potential price increases during implementation. However, this should by no means lead to the Procurement Team being involved or exerting influence on the actual selection of winning bids.
7. Some I-REAP sub-projects that are still at an early stage of development (e.g. those that are verified or are at a very early stage of business plan preparation) are likely not to meet the internal milestones set – such as reaching NOL 1 status by the end of 2026. As such, these sub-projects are also deemed unlikely to be completed by the end of the PRDP Scale-Up phase. Recognizing the high level of effort required (not to mention the costs that some FCAs have to bear) to go through the different stages of the project cycle, I-REAP should ensure that these FCAs are informed not to proceed as early as possible. This is given the assumption that are no further funding phases to expect following Scale-Up.

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Annex A I-PLAN Case Studies on Planning- Investment Linkages: Evidence on Institutionalization, Operationalization and Constraints

A.1 Case Study 1: Evidence on Planning-to-Investment Translation: Institutionalization and Operationalization of the I-PLAN Framework in the Province of Pangasinan

Introduction

As part of the Governance and Institutional Development Review of the PRDP Scale-Up, the evaluation examined how the I-PLAN component's planning instruments, particularly the PCIP and VCA are operationalized within local government systems and whether these planning outputs translate into actual agricultural investments.

To validate survey findings gathered from LGUs, the evaluator requested documentary evidence from selected provinces. The Province of Pangasinan provided extensive documentation supporting the implementation of PRDP planning and investment activities. These materials included executive orders reorganizing PRDP implementation structures, records of stakeholder consultations, documentation of planning meetings, and status reports on completed and ongoing PRDP subprojects. The Pangasinan case provides a useful example of how the I-PLAN planning framework can move beyond technical planning exercises and become embedded within provincial governance systems. From an institutional perspective, the documentation illustrates how planning tools introduced under PRDP, particularly the PCIP, stakeholder consultations, and value chain analysis, can translate into formal institutional arrangements, coordinated planning processes, and concrete agricultural investments.

The evidence gathered from Pangasinan highlights three key governance dimensions of the I-PLAN framework:

a. Institutionalization of planning structures within provincial governance systems
b. Coordination mechanisms that align planning outputs with investment pipelines
c. Translation of planning outputs into actual agricultural infrastructure and enterprise investments

Institutionalization of PRDP Planning Structures in Pangasinan

One of the most significant findings from the Pangasinan case is the extent to which PRDP planning processes have been embedded within formal provincial governance structures rather than operating solely through project-based arrangements.

The province issued two executive orders that institutionalize the organizational structures responsible for PRDP implementation and supervision. Executive Order No. 0008, Series of 2025 reorganized the construction supervision mechanism for PRDP Scale-Up subprojects within the province. Meanwhile, Executive Order No. 0078, Series of 2025 reorganized the Provincial Project Management and Implementing Unit (PPMIU), the body responsible for coordinating PRDP activities across provincial offices. These executive orders are significant because they demonstrate that the provincial government has formally integrated PRDP structures into its administrative framework. Rather than relying on temporary focal persons or ad hoc project teams, the province established a structured implementation mechanism with defined responsibilities for planning coordination, project preparation, and subproject supervision.

From a governance perspective, this indicates a shift from project-based participation toward organizational embedding of PRDP functions within the provincial government. Institutional embedding is a stronger form of institutionalization because it ensures continuity of planning processes beyond the tenure of individual personnel or project cycles.

In addition to the executive orders, the documentation submitted by Pangasinan also demonstrates that commodity prioritization decisions are anchored within formal provincial decision-making structures. The province adopted PDC Executive Committee Resolution No. 01-24, which approved the inclusion of hogs (swine) as a priority commodity in the updated and Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA)-enhanced PCIP.

This resolution indicates that the PCIP is treated as a dynamic planning instrument subject to periodic updating and review by the Provincial Development Council. The ability of the province to formally amend commodity priorities through

the PDC suggests that the PCIP is functioning as an operational planning document rather than merely as a compliance requirement for PRDP participation.

Planning Processes Supporting PCIP Preparation

Discussions with the I-PLAN team provided important insights into the institutional processes through which PCIPs are prepared and updated at the provincial level. According to the I-PLAN team, the preparation of the PCIP is a multi-stage process that involves close collaboration among provincial governments, PRDP regional teams, and various sector stakeholders.

The planning process typically begins with the identification of priority commodities within the province. In most cases, an initial list of commodities, often the top ten agricultural commodities in terms of economic importance, is identified through consultations involving the Provincial Project Management and Implementing Unit (PPMIU), provincial planning and agriculture offices, national government agencies, and sector stakeholders such as farmer groups, industry actors, and technical experts. Following the identification of priority commodities, the next stage involves conducting Value Chain Analysis (VCA) for each selected commodity. The VCA process is highly consultative and involves engagement with producer organizations, market intermediaries, technical experts, and relevant government agencies.

The VCA process identifies constraints and opportunities along the value chain, including production bottlenecks, post-harvest infrastructure gaps, logistics challenges, and market access issues. It also identifies possible interventions that could address these constraints, including infrastructure investments, production support programs, and enterprise development initiatives.

Importantly, the VCA process does not assume that all identified interventions will be funded by PRDP alone. Instead, it identifies potential implementing agencies and funding sources for each intervention. Some interventions may be financed through PRDP infrastructure components, while others may be implemented through programs of other government agencies, development partners, or local government initiatives.

Once the value chain analysis is completed, the provincial government prepares the PCIP by prioritizing and ranking commodities and identifying corresponding investment interventions. These rankings are typically finalized through additional stakeholder consultations and technical discussions with government agencies and sector representatives.

Before the PCIP is finalized, it undergoes several layers of review. These include stakeholder validation consultations to ensure that the identified priorities reflect local development needs. The document is then subjected to technical review by the PRDP Project Support Office (PSO) and national offices to verify alignment with PRDP planning guidelines.

After these reviews are completed, the PCIP is formally endorsed to the Provincial Development Council for approval. According to the I-PLAN team, the PCIP serves as the primary pipeline document for identifying agricultural investment opportunities under PRDP and other agricultural development programs.

Technical Assistance Provided by the I-PLAN Component

The I-PLAN component plays a central role in supporting LGUs throughout the planning process. Technical assistance provided by I-PLAN teams includes facilitating stakeholder consultations during VCA preparation, guiding LGUs in commodity prioritization and ranking, and ensuring that PCIP documents follow the required PRDP analytical framework and planning templates. The I-PLAN team also assists LGUs in interpreting analytical tools such as the Electronic Vulnerability and Suitability Analysis (e-VSA) and other spatial planning tools used in agricultural planning.

In some cases, PRDP staff provide hands-on technical assistance in drafting sections of the PCIP. This is particularly important when LGU personnel are heavily engaged in other administrative responsibilities and may not have sufficient time to complete technical planning documents. Another important form of assistance provided by the I-PLAN component is the Joint Technical Review (JTR) process. During JTR sessions, PRDP staff and technical experts review planning outputs to ensure that PCIP documents comply with PRDP planning guidelines and align with value chain priorities identified through VCA.

The I-PLAN component also conducts regular training and orientation activities for LGUs on VCA and PCIP preparation. These orientations are particularly important when changes in local administration result in the turnover of LGU personnel involved in planning processes. In several instances, LGUs that have successfully completed the PCIP preparation process serve as resource persons during training sessions to share practical experiences with other provinces.

Coordination Mechanisms Supporting Planning-Investment Alignment
The planning and investment process under PRDP is supported by several coordination mechanisms that facilitate alignment between planning outputs and project implementation.

One key coordination platform is the Regional Core Planning Team (RCPT) meeting, which is typically conducted twice a year. These meetings bring together representatives from different PRDP components, including I-PLAN, I-BUILD, I-REAP, and I-SUPPORT, as well as partner government agencies.

During RCPT meetings, participants review project pipelines, discuss updates in planning documents, and coordinate project implementation activities. The meetings also provide an opportunity for the I-PLAN team to ensure that proposed investments align with PCIP commodity priorities and PRDP investment guidelines.

RCPT discussions also serve as a mechanism for reviewing potential overlaps between proposed PRDP projects and existing government programs. By comparing proposed interventions against socio-economic indicators such as poverty incidence and existing agricultural programs, the I-PLAN team helps LGUs avoid duplication of interventions.

Evidence of Planning-to-Investment Translation in Pangasinan

The documentation submitted by the Province of Pangasinan provides strong evidence that planning outputs generated through the PCIP framework have translated into actual agricultural investments.

Among the projects documented by the province are the construction of provincial warehouses with multi-purpose drying pavements in San Quintin, Sta. Barbara, and Bugallon. These projects represent major investments in post-harvest infrastructure aimed at improving storage capacity and reducing post-harvest losses. The province also documented the groundbreaking ceremony for the Pangasinan Bangus Breeding and Hatchery, located at the Office of the Provincial Agriculture Field Station in Barangay Arnedo, Bolinao. The hatchery is expected to support aquaculture production and improve the supply of fingerlings for the province's bangus industry.

Another notable investment is the Rehabilitation of the Gonzalez-San Juan Farm-to-Market Road in Umingan, which spans approximately 9.6 kilometers and connects the Rosales-Cuyapo National Highway to six barangays with significant mango production areas.

Before the rehabilitation, the road suffered from poor elevation and inadequate drainage systems, resulting in frequent flooding during heavy rains. Floodwaters often reached up to 30 centimeters, delaying the transportation of agricultural inputs and harvested produce.

Following rehabilitation, transportation conditions improved significantly. Farmers now experience reduced spoilage when transporting produce and have improved access to markets, allowing them to negotiate better prices. The road also improved mobility for residents in the six barangays served by the subproject.

This example illustrates how value chain–oriented planning under the PCIP framework can translate into infrastructure investments that address logistical constraints affecting agricultural production and marketing.

Institutional Drivers of Project Success

According to the I-PLAN team, several institutional factors help explain why provinces such as Pangasinan have been able to secure multiple PRDP projects.

One key factor is the presence of a fully operational Provincial Project Management and Implementing Unit (PPMIU) supported by executive orders. These institutional structures enable the LGU to coordinate planning and project development activities more effectively.

Another factor is the relatively strong technical capacity of provincial planning offices. Provincial planning and development offices typically experience less frequent personnel turnover compared to other government units, which contributes to continuity in planning processes.

Participants also emphasized the importance of political leadership. Strong support from local chief executives, particularly governors, can significantly accelerate project preparation and implementation.

Conversely, changes in political leadership may disrupt previously established planning priorities and delay project development.

Governance Lessons from the Pangasinan Case

Several important governance lessons emerge from the Pangasinan experience.

a. PCIP preparation process is highly consultative and technically structured, involving multiple stakeholders, analytical tools, and institutional review processes.
b. I-PLAN component provides substantial technical assistance to LGUs, including facilitation of consultations, technical review of planning outputs, and capacity-building activities.
c. Institutional structures such as PPMIUs and coordination mechanisms such as RCPT meetings play a critical role in linking planning outputs with investment pipelines.
d. Political commitment from local leaders remains a key determinant of whether planning outputs translate into actual investments.

Overall, the Pangasinan case demonstrates that when institutional structures, technical capacity, and political support are present, the I-PLAN framework can function as an effective governance mechanism for translating agricultural planning priorities into concrete investment projects. This case therefore provides strong evidence that the planning tools introduced under PRDP Scale-Up can move beyond technical planning exercises and become operational mechanisms supporting agricultural development at the provincial level.

Governance Diagnostic Matrix

The governance diagnostic for the Province of Pangasinan shows that the province has developed a relatively advanced institutional and operational base for implementing the PCIP under PRDP Scale-Up. The documentary evidence indicates that Pangasinan has gone beyond one-time preparation of the PCIP and has instead embedded PRDP-related planning and implementation functions within formal provincial structures. This is reflected in executive orders reorganizing the PPMIU and the construction supervision team, in Provincial Development Council action updating commodity priorities, in repeated stakeholder consultations for multiple value chains, and in the actual conversion of commodity priorities into infrastructure and enterprise investments.

At the same time, the Pangasinan case also suggests that institutionalization is strongest in the areas of organizational structuring, project pipeline activation, and inter-office implementation coordination. The available documents provide less direct evidence on whether the PCIP is already fully routinized within annual budgeting instruments such as the AIP and LDIP, although the Provincial Development Council's formal action on commodity updating suggests that planning integration is already substantial. Thus, Pangasinan may be understood as a province where the PCIP is already functioning as a strategic governance instrument, with systemic institutionalization already well underway and in several respects more advanced than in many LGUs.

Table ___: Governance Diagnostic Matrix for I-PLAN Institutionalization and PCIP Implementation: The Case of Pangasinan

Governance Dimension	Diagnostic Question	Evidence from Pangasinan	Assessment	Implications
Institutional Coordination	Are formal structures in place to coordinate PRDP and PCIP implementation?	Executive Order No. 0078, s. 2025 reorganized the PPMIU with component teams for I-PLAN, I-BUILD, I-REAP, safeguards, economics, finance, procurement, MEL, geomapping/ governance, InfoACE, and GAD.	Strong institutional coordination	PRDP functions are embedded in the provincial bureaucracy rather than left to ad hoc arrangements.
Planning Integration	Is the PCIP recognized in formal provincial planning decisions?	PDC ExeCom Resolution No. 01-24 approved the inclusion of hogs (swine) as a priority commodity in the	Strong planning recognition	The PCIP is treated as a living planning instrument subject to

		updated CRVA-enhanced PCIP.		formal provincial review and updating.
Multi-Office Collaboration	Do multiple provincial offices work together in project planning and implementation?	The reorganized PPMIU includes PPDO, Provincial Agriculturist Office, PEO, finance, procurement, safeguards, MEL, and governance units; management meetings also bring together sub-units and contractors.	Strong collaboration	Cross-office coordination strengthens the transition from planning to project execution.
Technical Capacity	Does the province have internal technical teams for proposal preparation and implementation?	EO 0078 and EO 0008 assign personnel for I-PLAN, engineering, safeguards, economics, MEL, geomapping, and construction supervision.	Strong technical-administrative capacity	Pangasinan has a broad internal staffing base to manage the complex requirements of PRDP Scale-Up.
Stakeholder Participation	Are stakeholders involved in commodity consultations and project validation?	Stakeholder consultations were documented for tomato, mungbean, and bangus in 2016; an online VCA consultation for hogs was held in 2022; a public consultation was held for the Bangus Breeding and Hatchery in January 2026.	Strong participatory planning	Commodity prioritization and project development are supported by consultative processes, which strengthen legitimacy and responsiveness.
Evidence-Based and Adaptive Planning	Is the PCIP updated in response to emerging commodity priorities?	Swine was formally added through PDC ExeCom Resolution No. 01-24, showing adaptive updating of the CRVA-enhanced PCIP.	Adaptive and responsive	The PCIP is not static; it can be revised to reflect changing commodity priorities and risks.
Investment Pipeline Development	Do PCIP priorities translate into actual PRDP investments?	Pangasinan documented warehouses in San Quintin, Sta. Barbara, and Bugallon, the Bangus Breeding and Hatchery in Bolinao, and the Gonzales-San Juan FMR in Umingan.	Very strong pipeline activation	Pangasinan demonstrates clear conversion of planning outputs into funded infrastructure and enterprise projects.
Implementation Readiness	Are there systems for monitoring and supervising project implementation?	EO 0008 reorganized the construction supervision team; regular PPMIU management meetings reviewed progress, slippage, corrective actions, and compliance requirements.	High readiness and compliance	Pangasinan has institutional routines for implementation oversight, not just proposal preparation.
Resource Mobilization	Is the province able to mobilize resources and institutional support for multiple subprojects?	Multiple subprojects across infrastructure and enterprise support indicate strong absorptive and coordination capacity; EO 0008 notes the province is a recipient of four approved subprojects under PRDP Scale-Up.	Strong resource mobilization	The province can coordinate staffing, supervision, and implementation across several simultaneous investments.

Policy Continuity and Ownership	Is there evidence of sustained provincial support for PRDP?	Reorganization of PPMIU in 2025, supervision restructuring in 2025, recurring management meetings, and successive project documentation show continuing commitment.	High program ownership	PRDP is being treated as an ongoing provincial development platform, not a one-off external project.

Institutional Coordination

Pangasinan demonstrates strong institutional coordination because PRDP implementation is anchored in clearly defined structures and designated roles, rather than relying on ad hoc or informal focal arrangements. Executive Order No. 0078, series of 2025, reorganized the PPMIU and explicitly assigned sub-units for I-PLAN, I-BUILD, I-REAP, safeguards, economics, finance, procurement, MEL, geomapping and governance, information and advocacy, and GAD. This suggests that PCIP-related work is embedded in a whole-of-province structure rather than concentrated in one office alone.

Planning Integration
There is strong evidence that Pangasinan's PCIP is recognized in formal provincial decision-making. The clearest example is PDC ExeCom Resolution No. 01-24, which adopted and approved the inclusion of hogs or swine as a priority commodity in the updated and CRVA-enhanced PCIP. This matters because it shows the PCIP is not frozen after initial preparation; it is reviewed and formally amended through the Provincial Development Council structure.

Stakeholder Participation
Pangasinan also demonstrates a long consultation history. The province documented commodity stakeholder consultations for tomato, mungbean, and bangus, an online VCA consultation workshop for hogs in September 2022, and a public consultation dialogue for the Bangus Breeding and Hatchery project in January 2026. These materials support the conclusion that commodity planning and project identification are consultative rather than purely technocratic.

Planning-to-Investment Translation
This is the strongest dimension of the Pangasinan case. The province documented multiple concrete investments: provincial warehouses with multi-purpose drying pavements in San Quintin, Sta. Barbara, and Bugallon; the Pangasinan Bangus Breeding and Hatchery in Bolinao; and the Gonzales-San Juan FMR in Umingan. The FMR document is especially useful because it shows an actual completed investment linked to commodity production and improved market access, while the hatchery and warehouses demonstrate that the province has moved into a diversified investment portfolio.

Implementation Readiness
Pangasinan's governance strength does not stop at project approval. The province also issued Executive Order No. 0008, series of 2025 reorganizing the construction supervision team, and it held regular PPMIU management meetings in October 2025 and February 2026 to review accomplishments, slippage, procurement and compliance issues, and next actions. This indicates that the province has operational routines for implementation monitoring and corrective action.

Overall, Pangasinan appears to be a strong case of advanced functional institutionalization under PRDP I-PLAN. Its key strengths lie in formal organizational embedding, adaptive updating of commodity priorities, repeated stakeholder consultations, strong multi-office coordination, and especially the successful activation of an investment pipeline. The only area where caution is needed is that the attachments do not yet directly show explicit routinization of PCIP priorities into annual budget instruments such as the AIP or LDIP. Because of that, one should be careful about claiming full systemic institutionalization without additional budgetary evidence. Still, Pangasinan is clearly beyond compliance and already using the PCIP as an operational governance instrument.

Institutionalization Ladder of the PCIP
To assess the degree to which the PCIP has been embedded within the governance system of Pangasinan. Based on the submitted attachments, Pangasinan has progressed through the foundational stages of awareness, adoption, coordination, and inter-office operationalization, and it has already reached an advanced stage where PCIP-linked priorities are being translated into multiple PRDP investments. The strongest evidence lies in the formal reorganization of

PRDP governance structures, the PDC action updating commodity priorities, the recurring consultation processes for several commodities, and the actual implementation of infrastructure and enterprise projects.

Table __: Institutionalization Ladder

Level	Description	Evidence from Pangasinan	Institutional Status
Level 1 – Awareness	LGU officials are aware of PRDP planning tools such as PCIP and VCA.	Pangasinan documented stakeholder consultations for tomato, mungbean, bangus, and hog VCA, indicating familiarity with PRDP planning processes over time.	Achieved
Level 2 – Adoption	PCIP is prepared and recognized as a provincial planning document.	PDC ExeCom Resolution No. 01-24 formally approved the inclusion of hogs in the updated and CRVA-enhanced PCIP.	Achieved
Level 3 – Coordination	Provincial offices coordinate around PCIP-linked planning and implementation.	EO 0078 reorganized the PPMIU with I-PLAN, I-BUILD, I-REAP, safeguards, economics, MEL, procurement, and related support units.	Achieved
Level 4 – Institutional Integration	PCIP priorities influence regular planning and project development processes.	The province formally updates commodity priorities through the PDC and maintains structured PRDP planning and management systems.	Achieved / strong evidence
Level 5 – Inter-Office Institutionalization	Multiple offices jointly perform the planning, proposal development, monitoring, and implementation functions.	PPMIU and construction supervision structures assign responsibilities across PPDO, OPAg, PEO, finance, procurement, safeguards, MEL, and governance units.	Achieved
Level 6 – Investment Pipeline Activation	PCIP priorities generate approved and implemented projects.	Warehouses in San Quintin, Sta. Barbara, and Bugallon; Bangus Breeding and Hatchery in Bolinao; and Gonzales-San Juan FMR in Umingan.	Achieved
Level 7 – Systemic Institutionalization	PCIP becomes embedded in routine LGU planning, implementation, and development governance systems.	Strong evidence exists for organizational embedding and implementation routines, but direct documentary proof of integration into AIP/LDIP budgeting was not included in the attachments.	Emerging to advanced

Level 1- Awareness
Pangasinan has clearly achieved the awareness stage. The documentary set includes stakeholder consultations for tomato, mungbean, bangus, and hogs across several years, which indicates long-standing familiarity with value chain planning and commodity-based consultations under PRDP. This suggests that awareness is not limited to one office but extends across provincial actors and stakeholders.

Level 2 – Adoption
Adoption is also clearly achieved. PDC ExeCom Resolution No. 01-24 shows that the province treats the PCIP as an official and updateable provincial planning document. The inclusion of swine in the updated CRVA-enhanced PCIP confirms not only adoption but also active use of the PCIP as a planning reference.

Level 3 – Coordination
The coordination stage is strongly evidenced by Executive Order No. 0078, series of 2025, which reorganized the PPMIU and defined the roles of the I-PLAN component and other sub-units. This indicates that the province has a standing internal coordination mechanism for PRDP planning and implementation rather than relying on temporary or fragmented arrangements.

Level 4 – Institutional Integration
Pangasinan appears to have reached institutional integration because the PCIP already influences provincial planning action through formal updating of commodity priorities and structured implementation mechanisms. The evidence is stronger than mere recognition; the province is using the PCIP to justify changes in commodity focus and to sustain an implementation pipeline.

Level 5 – Inter-Office Institutionalization
This level is fully achieved. Pangasinan's PPMIU and construction supervision mechanisms distribute PRDP functions across multiple offices and technical units. The institutional design itself shows that planning, engineering, safeguards, MEL, procurement, finance, and governance are connected through a formal implementation structure.

Level 6 – Investment Pipeline Activation
This is where Pangasinan stands out most clearly. The evidence includes multiple projects across commodity and infrastructure types: post-harvest warehouses, an aquaculture hatchery, and a farm-to-market road. That breadth strongly suggests that the province is not merely preparing plans but is able to convert them into tangible investments.

Level 7 – Systemic Institutionalization
Systemic institutionalization is emerging and may already be advanced, but I would phrase this carefully. The attachments strongly prove formal organizational embedding and recurrent implementation governance. However, they do not yet directly show that the PCIP is systematically anchored in annual budgeting instruments like the AIP and LDIP. So the safest assessment is "emerging to advanced systemic institutionalization" rather than fully achieved.

Overall, the Province of Pangasinan demonstrates a highly developed case of PCIP institutionalization under the PRDP I-PLAN component. The province has moved beyond awareness and document preparation toward formal organizational embedding of PRDP functions through executive orders, dynamic updating of commodity priorities through Provincial Development Council action, repeated stakeholder consultation for multiple value chains, and actual conversion of planning outputs into concrete infrastructure and enterprise investments. The strongest evidence lies in the province's ability to translate commodity-based planning into a diversified portfolio of PRDP-supported projects, including warehouses, a bangus breeding and hatchery facility, and a farm-to-market road. While additional evidence on explicit integration into annual provincial budgeting instruments would further strengthen the claim of full systemic institutionalization, the available documentation already shows that Pangasinan is using the PCIP not merely as a compliance document but as an operational planning and governance platform for agricultural development.

A.2 Institutional Collaboration for PCIP Implementation in the Province of Marinduque: Strengthening the Planning-Investment Link Under PRDP Scale-Up

The Province of Marinduque provides a compelling example of how inter-agency collaboration can strengthen the institutionalization of the PCIP under the PRDP Scale-Up. Recognizing that agricultural development requires coordinated action across multiple agencies, the Provincial Government of Marinduque initiated a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among national government agencies, regional offices, and local institutions to support the implementation of the Province-Led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Program (PAFEP) and the PCIP.

The MOA institutionalized collaboration between the Provincial Local Government Unit (PLGU) of Marinduque and several national government agencies operating in the MIMAROPA region, including:

a. Department of Agriculture – Regional Field Office (DA-RFO MIMAROPA)
b. Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA Region IV)
c. Department of Science and Technology (DOST IV-B MIMAROPA)
d. Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR IV-B MIMAROPA)
e. National Irrigation Administration (NIA MIMAROPA)
f. Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA)
g. Agricultural Training Institute (ATI MIMAROPA)
h. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI MIMAROPA)
i. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR MIMAROPA)
j. Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA MIMAROPA)
k. Marinduque State College (MSC)

Through this partnership, Marinduque created a coordinated governance framework that aligns technical support, research, extension services, infrastructure investments, and enterprise development with the province's priority agricultural commodities. This collaborative structure supports the implementation of the Marinduque Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) 2024–2027, which identifies priority commodities including coconut, arrowroot, and swine, and outlines strategic investments across the value chain.

Institutionalization of the PCIP in Local Planning

One of the notable strengths of Marinduque's approach is the integration of the PCIP into the province's regular planning and budgeting processes. Based on discussions with the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAG) and related provincial offices, the PCIP is used as a guiding framework for agricultural development planning and investment prioritization. The Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) plays a central role in coordinating the alignment of PCIP priorities with the province's broader development plans.

In practice, this institutionalization occurs through:

a. Integration of PCIP priorities into the Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) and the Local Development Investment Program (LDIP)
b. Consideration of PCIP priorities during preparation of the Annual Investment Program (AIP)
c. Coordination among key provincial offices, including the Provincial Agriculturist Office, Provincial Engineering Office, and Planning Office

The provincial government regularly convenes technical working groups composed of these offices to review agricultural priorities and ensure that proposed projects are consistent with the PCIP. However, local officials also noted that while the PCIP is relatively easy to draft, translating it into fully developed programs and investments requires extensive technical work, including data consolidation, value chain analysis, feasibility studies, and program design.

Transition from Planning to Project Proposal Development

In Marinduque, the transition from PCIP planning to project proposal development involves a multi-office coordination process led by the provincial government. Once a commodity or investment priority is identified in the PCIP, the following workflow typically occurs:

1. Project identification and consultation
    a. The Provincial Planning and Development Office convenes meetings with sector offices and municipal stakeholders.
    b. Focus group discussions and consultations with municipalities and barangays help refine the project concept.
2. Technical preparation
    a. The Provincial Engineering Office prepares engineering requirements and preliminary design.
    b. The Provincial Agriculturist Office compiles commodity data and agricultural profiles.
3. Feasibility study preparation
    a. The province gathers data on location, production systems, beneficiary farmers, and commodity potential.
    b. Geographic information and geotagging of project sites are conducted as part of PRDP documentation requirements.
4. External technical support
    a. The province occasionally engages consultants or technical partners, including professionals from neighboring provinces such as Quezon, to assist in preparing feasibility studies and documentation.

The barangays also play an important role in identifying project sites and supporting the preparation of local data required for PRDP proposals. This collaborative approach has enabled Marinduque to prepare proposals for PRDP Scale-Up projects, including farm-to-market roads (FMRs) that support the province's priority commodities.

Inter-Agency Collaboration as an Institutional Innovation

A distinctive feature of Marinduque's approach is the formalized inter-agency collaboration through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The MOA clarifies the roles of participating institutions in supporting the province-led agriculture and fisheries development agenda.

Role of the Provincial Government

The Provincial Local Government Unit commits to:

a. Providing frontline agriculture and fisheries extension services to farmers and fisherfolk
b. Allocating annual budget support for agriculture and fisheries development
c. Coordinating with partner agencies in implementing the province-led extension program
d. Mobilizing rural-based organizations and farmer groups
e. Establishing demonstration farms and training activities

Role of National Government Agencies
Participating national agencies commit to:
a. Supporting the development of programs under the Province-Led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Program (PAFEP)
b. Allocating agency budgets to support provincial agriculture initiatives
c. Providing technical assistance, training, and research support
d. Supporting modernization and industrialization of the agriculture sector

This structure effectively transforms the PCIP from a planning document into a multi-agency investment platform, enabling coordinated interventions across the agriculture value chain.

Factors Affecting PRDP Project Approval
Despite strong institutional collaboration, the province identified several challenges in moving projects from proposal to approval under PRDP.

Key constraints include:
Extensive Documentation Requirements
PRDP project proposals require comprehensive documentation, including:
a. Detailed engineering designs (DED)
b. Program of works
c. feasibility studies
d. economic and financial analysis
e. geotagged project site documentation

These requirements can be resource-intensive for local governments.

Data and Baseline Information Constraints
Local officials reported difficulties in consolidating historical agricultural data and baseline information necessary for project feasibility studies.

Technical Preparation Capacity
While Marinduque has developed internal capacity in planning and engineering, some technical areas such as economic analysis or specialized feasibility studies still require external support.

Technical and Institutional Capacity of the Province
Despite these challenges, Marinduque has developed a relatively strong internal technical team to support PRDP planning and implementation. The province maintains a planning section with IT support and technical staff, including engineers and agricultural specialists responsible for:
a. preparing feasibility studies
b. conducting geotagging and spatial documentation
c. preparing agricultural commodity profiles
d. coordinating project documentation

This technical capacity has allowed the province to sustain its participation in PRDP programs since 2020.

Emerging Outcomes
As a result of this collaborative planning framework, Marinduque has successfully advanced infrastructure investments under PRDP Scale-Up.
One notable project currently under implementation is the:
Improvement and Upgrading of the Botilao Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) in Santa Cruz, Marinduque

Key features of the project include:
a. Total project cost of approximately ₱65.7 million
b. Road length of 1.92 kilometers
c. Direct support for the coconut industry, a priority commodity under the PCIP
d. Expected benefits for approximately 3,000 farmers across 677 households

The project has already received a No Objection Letter (NOL) from PRDP and is currently undergoing procurement.

Lessons Learned
The experience of Marinduque highlights several important lessons for strengthening the PRDP planning-investment linkage.
a. Institutional collaboration strengthens PCIP implementation
b. Formal partnerships among national agencies, provincial governments, and academic institutions enable coordinated support for commodity development
c. Multi-office coordination is essential. Strong coordination among planning, engineering, and agriculture offices is critical in transforming PCIP priorities into implementable projects.
d. Technical capacity determines project readiness. Local governments require specialized technical skills in feasibility studies, engineering design, and economic analysis to meet PRDP requirements.
e. PCIP must be embedded in regular planning systems. Institutionalizing the PCIP within the PDPFP, LDIP, and AIP ensures that agricultural priorities remain integrated in the province's development agenda.

Recommendations

Drawing from the experience of Marinduque, several strategic actions may be undertaken to further strengthen the implementation and sustainability of the PRDP Scale-Up program.

First, there is a need to enhance technical assistance provided to LGUs, particularly in the areas of feasibility study preparation, economic and financial analysis, and geospatial documentation. Strengthening these capacities will enable LGUs to develop more robust, investment-ready project proposals and improve the overall quality of planning and implementation.

Second, strengthening digital systems is essential to support more efficient and transparent program operations. This includes improving e-filing systems for PRDP documentation and enhancing geotagging and spatial data management. These improvements will facilitate better monitoring, data integration, and evidence-based decision-making across different levels of implementation.

Third, expanding capacity-building programs remains critical, particularly in areas such as climate change adaptation planning and disaster risk reduction in agriculture. Given the increasing vulnerability of agricultural systems to climate-related risks, equipping LGUs and stakeholders with these competencies will help ensure that investments are resilient and sustainable.

Finally, ensuring program continuity is vital. Local officials emphasized the importance of sustaining PRDP initiatives, noting that continued investments are necessary to fully realize the benefits of the PCIP. Without sustained support, there is a risk that gains achieved through planning and initial implementation may not translate into long-term development outcomes.

The Province of Marinduque demonstrates how institutional collaboration can transform the PCIP from a planning document into a functioning development platform. Through formal inter-agency agreements, coordinated planning processes, and strengthened technical capacity, the province has created a governance model that supports integrated agricultural development. This experience illustrates how the PRDP I-PLAN component can catalyze institutional partnerships that improve the translation of planning outputs into tangible investments in rural infrastructure and agricultural value chains.

Governance Diagnostic Matrix:
The governance diagnostic for the Province of Marinduque indicates that the province has developed a relatively strong institutional foundation for implementing the Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP), particularly through

inter-agency coordination, multi-office collaboration, and sustained local ownership of the PRDP process. At the same time, the case also reveals important constraints related to data systems, technical specialization, and the continuing burden of documentary compliance. Taken together, these findings suggest that Marinduque is not merely using the PCIP as a stand-alone planning document but is gradually embedding it within a broader provincial governance system for agriculture and fisheries development.

Governance Diagnostic Matrix for I-PLAN Institutionalization and PCIP Implementation: The Case of Marinduque

Governance Dimension	Diagnostic Question	Evidence from Marinduque	Assessment	Implications
Institutional Coordination	Are multiple agencies formally collaborating to support PCIP implementation?	A MoA was signed between the Provincial Government of Marinduque and key national agencies including DA-RFO MIMAROPA, PCA, DOST, BFAR, NIA, PFDA, ATI, DTI, DENR, TESDA, and Marinduque State College.	Strong institutional coordination	Formal inter-agency agreements reduce fragmentation and allow value chain interventions to be coordinated across agencies.
Planning Integration	Is the PCIP integrated into regular provincial planning and budgeting systems?	PCIP priorities are discussed within the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) and linked to provincial planning processes such as development planning and project prioritization discussions.	Moderately institutionalize d	PCIP influences planning discussions, but stronger formal integration with AIP and LDIP processes could further institutionalize the plan.
Multi-Office Collaboration	Do provincial offices collaborate in preparing PRDP project proposals?	The Provincial Agriculturist Office, Provincial Engineering Office, and Planning Office jointly prepare project proposals including feasibility studies and engineering requirements.	Strong collaboration	Inter-office coordination improves the transition from planning to project proposal development.
Technical Capacity	Does the LGU have technical capacity to prepare PRDP proposals?	The province has a planning section with IT staff, engineers, and agricultural specialists responsible for geotagging, feasibility study preparation, and agricultural data analysis.	Moderate capacity with external support	While internal capacity exists, specialized expertise (e.g., economic analysis) sometimes requires external consultants.
Stakeholder Participation	Are municipalities and barangays involved in planning and project identification?	Consultations and focus group discussions with municipalities and barangays are conducted during PCIP	Participatory planning structure	Stakeholder involvement strengthens legitimacy of investment priorities.

		preparation and project identification processes.		
Evidence-Based Planning	Is agricultural data used to support investment decisions?	LGU collects agricultural production data and baseline profiles, although challenges remain in consolidating historical datasets.	Partially evidence-based	Improved data management systems could enhance value chain analysis and project justification.
Investment Pipeline Development	Are PCIP priorities translated into PRDP investment proposals?	Marinduque successfully advanced the Botilao Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) project under PRDP Scale-Up.	Operational investment pipeline	Demonstrates that PCIP priorities can be translated into infrastructure investments.
Resource Mobilization	Are agencies contributing resources to PCIP implementation?	National agencies under the MOA provide technical assistance, extension services, training, and program support.	Shared institutional support	Inter-agency resource pooling strengthens provincial agriculture programs.
Implementation Readiness	Are projects prepared with the required documentation?	The province prepares feasibility studies, program of works, geotagged documentation, and engineering designs for PRDP proposals.	High compliance but resource intensive	Documentation requirements remain a major workload for LGUs.
Policy Continuity	Is there commitment to sustaining PRDP Scale Up initiatives?	Provincial officials expressed strong support for continuing PRDP programs, highlighting their importance for rural development.	High program ownership	Sustained political support increases likelihood of long-term institutionalization.

Institutional Coordination

In terms of institutional coordination, Marinduque demonstrates a high level of formalized collaboration. One of the clearest indicators of this is the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Provincial Government of Marinduque and a wide range of national government agencies and regional institutions, namely the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office–MIMAROPA, Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Science and Technology, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, National Irrigation Administration, Philippine Fisheries Development Authority, Agricultural Training Institute, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and Marinduque State College. The significance of this arrangement is that it creates a structured mechanism through which provincial agricultural priorities can be supported by agencies with complementary technical mandates.

Rather than leaving the PCIP entirely under the responsibility of the Provincial Agriculture Office or the Planning Office alone, the MOA distributes responsibility across institutions that can provide extension services, research, market development, irrigation support, training, environmental regulation, enterprise support, and technical education. This is a notable governance strength because it reduces the tendency for provincial agricultural planning to become fragmented across sectoral offices. Instead, it creates the conditions for value chain interventions to be addressed more holistically. In governance terms, Marinduque's approach reflects a shift from isolated sectoral planning to coordinated territorial planning, where the province serves as the convenor of multiple public institutions around a shared commodity agenda.

The implication of this is substantial. When agricultural priorities are backed by formal inter-agency commitments, the PCIP becomes more than a compliance document for PRDP; it becomes a platform for coordinated implementation. This is particularly important in a program such as PRDP Scale-Up, where the effectiveness of investments depends not only

on infrastructure provision but also on support services, extension, enterprise development, technical capacity, and environmental sustainability.

Planning Integration

With respect to planning integration, the evidence suggests that the PCIP in Marinduque is moderately institutionalized within the province's planning processes. The Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) appears to play a central role in connecting agricultural priorities to broader development planning discussions. Based on the validation discussion, PCIP priorities are taken up in development planning conversations and are linked to project prioritization processes. This shows that the PCIP is not operating in total isolation from the province's regular planning system.

However, the evidence also suggests that there is still room to deepen institutionalization. While PCIP priorities are recognized and discussed, stronger and more explicit integration with the Local Development Investment Program (LDIP) and the Annual Investment Program (AIP) would further solidify its place in the formal provincial budgeting cycle. At present, the PCIP appears to influence planning decisions, but the degree to which it is systematically referenced in annual budget allocation processes is not yet fully demonstrated through the evidence provided.

This distinction is important in governance analysis. A plan may be acknowledged in discussions, but true institutionalization occurs when it becomes a routinized input into budget preparation, program selection, and investment sequencing. Marinduque appears to be moving in that direction, but its current status is best understood as moderately institutionalized rather than fully embedded. The implication is that the province already possesses an enabling platform for institutionalization, but greater procedural anchoring within AIP and LDIP mechanisms would make the planning-investment link more durable and less dependent on individual champions or ad hoc coordination.

Multi-Office Collaboration

A major strength of the Marinduque case lies in the degree of collaboration among provincial offices in preparing PRDP project proposals. The Provincial Agriculturist Office, Provincial Engineering Office, and Planning Office reportedly work together in assembling the technical, documentary, and planning requirements needed to advance proposals. This includes feasibility studies, engineering requirements, location validation, and the consolidation of supporting profiles and data.

This kind of inter-office collaboration is crucial because PRDP project preparation is not a single-office function. The transition from an identified commodity priority in the PCIP to a bankable project proposal involves multiple types of expertise: planning and prioritization, engineering design, spatial validation, agricultural profiling, and documentation. The Marinduque experience shows that these responsibilities are not completely siloed. Rather, the offices appear to coordinate through a convening process led by provincial structures such as the PPDO and the Provincial Agriculture Office.

The governance value of this arrangement is that it shortens the distance between planning and project preparation. In many LGUs, one of the key bottlenecks in PRDP implementation is the weak interface between planning units and technical implementing units. In Marinduque, this interface seems relatively functional. The implication is that inter-office coordination improves the province's ability to transform identified priorities into actual project concepts and proposals. It also suggests that Marinduque's governance system is better able than many other LGUs to handle the complexity of PRDP documentation and proposal requirements.

Technical Capacity

The province also appears to possess a moderate level of internal technical capacity for PRDP proposal preparation. Based on the validation discussion, Marinduque has a planning section with IT personnel, engineers, and agricultural specialists who are involved in geotagging, feasibility study preparation, agricultural data profiling, and other technical requirements. This is a meaningful institutional asset, especially because many LGUs struggle to assign personnel with sufficient time and skill to manage the technical demands of PRDP.

At the same time, Marinduque's capacity should not be overstated. The evidence indicates that while the LGU can perform many tasks internally, it still relies at times on consultants or external support, especially for more specialized work such as economic and financial analysis or complex feasibility study development. There was even mention of technical assistance being sought from consultants, including those connected to Quezon Province and private entities. This suggests that the province has built a workable technical core, but not yet a fully self-sufficient one.

From a governance standpoint, this is best interpreted as moderate capacity with selective dependence on external expertise. The implication is that institutional capacity is present, but uneven across technical domains. The province can manage basic and intermediate requirements, but specialized analytical functions may still exceed the existing in-house capacity. This reinforces the continuing importance of technical assistance under PRDP, particularly in areas such as financial analysis, geospatial systems, climate adaptation planning, and digital documentation systems.

Stakeholder Participation

Another positive governance feature in Marinduque is the participatory character of its planning process. The evidence shows that municipalities and barangays are involved through consultations and focus group discussions during PCIP preparation and project identification. This is consistent with the reported practice of convening local actors to discuss priorities, validate needs, and refine project concepts. Barangays are particularly involved in the context of farm-to-market road projects, where local knowledge is necessary to determine routes, beneficiary areas, and local agricultural relevance.

This participatory structure matters because PRDP investments, especially under I-BUILD and related infrastructure components, must be grounded in local realities if they are to produce development outcomes. Participation from municipalities and barangays helps ensure that proposed projects are not only technically sound but also socially relevant and territorially grounded. It also improves the legitimacy of investment choices by demonstrating that projects emerge from consultation rather than purely top-down decision-making.

The implication is that stakeholder participation in Marinduque strengthens the credibility and local ownership of PCIP priorities. This makes the province's planning process more inclusive and potentially more responsive. At the same time, the report may note that the strength of participation would be even more visible if supported by systematic documentation such as attendance sheets, consultation records, and municipal endorsements, some of which the province has indicated it can provide.

Evidence-Based Planning

On the dimension of evidence-based planning, Marinduque shows partial but still incomplete progress. The LGU gathers agricultural production data, commodity information, location profiles, and other baseline information to support project preparation. There is evidence that feasibility studies and project documentation are informed by agricultural profiles and local data. However, provincial officials also acknowledged challenges in managing historical data and baseline information. The process of data collection and consolidation appears to be labor-intensive, and there are difficulties in organizing datasets in a form that can be readily used for analysis and justification.

This means that while the province is not operating blindly, its planning is only partially evidence-based in a systematic sense. The presence of data does not automatically translate to strong evidence-based governance if the data systems themselves are weak, fragmented, or difficult to update. In the Marinduque case, one can infer that evidence use is present but constrained by the limitations of data management and analytics.

The implication is that improving data systems would strengthen both the PCIP and project preparation processes. Better baseline systems, more consistent digital records, and improved analytical capacity would enhance value chain analysis, improve feasibility study quality, and make project justification more efficient. This is especially important in PRDP, where economic viability, beneficiary profiling, and infrastructure rationale all depend heavily on sound evidence.

Investment Pipeline Development

One of the strongest indicators of governance effectiveness in Marinduque is the fact that PCIP priorities have already translated into an actual PRDP Scale-Up investment. The province has advanced the Botilao Farm-to-Market Road project in Santa Cruz, which is currently under the procurement process after receiving a No Objection Letter. This is a significant achievement because it demonstrates that the planning-investment link is not merely theoretical. The province was able to move from commodity prioritization and planning to proposal preparation, approval, and entry into the implementation pipeline.

This matters greatly in the context of the evaluation. Many provinces may prepare PCIPs, but not all are able to convert these into bankable and approved projects under PRDP. Marinduque's case shows that the PCIP can indeed function as an operational investment platform when supported by institutional coordination, technical preparation, and inter-office collaboration. The Botilao FMR project therefore serves as a concrete manifestation of the province's ability to activate an investment pipeline based on PCIP priorities.

The implication is that Marinduque offers a practical example of how I-PLAN outputs can lead to actual investments under Scale-Up. It also suggests that the province has crossed an important threshold from planning compliance to implementation readiness. This strengthens the argument that the PCIP in Marinduque is functionally relevant, not merely procedurally present.

Resource Mobilization
The Marinduque case also reflects meaningful resource mobilization through inter-agency partnership. Under the MOA, national agencies contribute technical assistance, extension services, training, and program support. While these contributions may not always take the form of direct budget transfers, they nonetheless represent important institutional resources that support commodity development and agriculture-related programming in the province.

This is significant because agricultural development in a province such as Marinduque cannot rely solely on the fiscal capacity of the provincial government. The ability to mobilize support from agencies with specialized mandates expands the province's implementation capacity beyond its own limited resources. For example, agencies may contribute sector expertise, training modules, irrigation support, fisheries services, environmental compliance guidance, or market-related assistance. These forms of support are often essential for making commodity development viable over the medium term.

The implication is that inter-agency resource pooling strengthens the province's agricultural governance system by widening the range of services and interventions available to support PCIP priorities. It also demonstrates that effective implementation under PRDP depends not only on project approval but also on the broader institutional ecosystem that surrounds the project pipeline.

Implementation Readiness
In terms of implementation readiness, Marinduque appears to be highly compliant with PRDP documentary requirements, although this comes with significant transaction costs. The province prepares feasibility studies, program of works, geotagged documentation, engineering designs, and related proposal requirements. This indicates that the LGU has learned how to navigate the procedural expectations of PRDP Scale-Up and can assemble the necessary documents to move proposals forward.

However, provincial officials also emphasized that this process is burdensome. Documentary compliance requires time, technical expertise, and coordination, and it imposes a major workload on LGU staff. This is a critical governance point. The fact that the province is able to comply does not mean that the process is easy or efficient. Rather, it shows that Marinduque is willing to absorb the administrative burden because it sees the potential development gains of PRDP investments.

The implication is twofold. On one hand, Marinduque's high level of compliance is a strength and contributes to its success in advancing projects. On the other hand, the resource intensity of documentation remains a structural issue that could affect the sustainability and scalability of LGU participation. Continued technical support, simplification where possible, and stronger digital systems may help reduce this burden in the future.

Policy Continuity
Finally, Marinduque exhibits strong policy continuity and ownership of the PRDP process. Provincial officials expressed a clear desire for the continuation of PRDP and emphasized its importance for rural development in the province. This expression of support is not trivial. In governance terms, it signals that PRDP is not viewed merely as an externally imposed project but as a valuable development mechanism that the province wants to sustain and build upon.

Policy continuity is especially important in long-gestation investments such as agricultural infrastructure, enterprise development, and value chain upgrading. Without local ownership, plans and proposals may stall when personnel change or when external support becomes uncertain. In Marinduque, the evidence suggests that there is genuine political and institutional buy-in to the continuation of PRDP-supported initiatives.

The implication is that sustained local support increases the likelihood that the PCIP and associated investments will remain relevant beyond a single funding cycle. This also improves the prospects for deeper institutionalization in the future, since policy continuity provides the political backing needed to embed the PCIP more firmly in routine planning, budgeting, and inter-agency coordination systems.

The governance diagnostic suggests that Marinduque represents a relatively strong case of emerging institutionalization under the PRDP I-PLAN component. Its most notable strengths lie in formal inter-agency coordination, functional

collaboration across provincial offices, operational translation of PCIP priorities into a PRDP investment, and high local ownership of the program. These strengths indicate that the province has gone beyond simple compliance and is actively using the PCIP as a strategic instrument for agricultural and fisheries development. At the same time, the case also highlights key areas for strengthening. These include deeper integration of the PCIP into the province's formal budgeting instruments, improved data systems for more robust evidence-based planning, and greater internal technical capacity in specialized areas such as economic analysis and advanced feasibility preparation. Thus, Marinduque may be understood as a province that has already built a strong collaborative foundation, but which still requires continued support to move from functional practice to full institutionalization.

Institutionalization Ladder of PCIP

Marinduque Case (PRDP I-PLAN Institutionalization Framework)

To assess the depth of institutionalization of the PCIP within local governance systems, the evaluation applied an institutionalization ladder framework. This framework examines the progressive stages through which a planning tool evolves from simple awareness among local government actors to full systemic integration within the planning, budgeting, and implementation processes of the LGU. The ladder is particularly useful for evaluating the effectiveness of the PRDP I-PLAN component, which seeks not only to produce planning documents but also to embed value chain–based planning into the regular governance functions of provinces.

The case of the Province of Marinduque demonstrates a relatively advanced stage of PCIP institutionalization compared with many other LGUs. Based on document review, validation discussions with provincial officials, and supporting materials provided by the province, Marinduque appears to have progressed through several stages of institutionalization, reaching a level where PCIP priorities are already influencing investment decisions and project development. However, the analysis also shows that some aspects of systemic integration, particularly the formal linkage between PCIP priorities and routine budgeting instruments, remain in the process of consolidation.

Table ___: Institutionalization Ladder

Level	Description	Evidence from Marinduque	Institutional Status
Level 1 – Awareness	LGU officials are aware of PRDP planning tools such as PCIP and VCA.	Provincial officials and sector offices participated in PCIP preparation supported by DA-MIMAROPA training and tools.	Achieved
Level 2 – Adoption	PCIP is prepared and recognized as a provincial planning document.	The Marinduque PCIP 2024–2027 identifies priority commodities including coconut, arrowroot, and swine.	Achieved
Level 3 – Coordination	Provincial offices collaborate in implementing PCIP priorities.	The Provincial Agriculturist Office, Planning Office, and Engineering Office jointly prepare project proposals and development plans.	Achieved
Level 4 – Institutional Integration	PCIP influences regular planning and investment discussions of the LGU.	PCIP priorities are considered during provincial development planning and project prioritization processes.	Partially achieved
Level 5 – Inter-Agency Institutionalization	Multiple national agencies align their programs with PCIP priorities.	Formal MOA signed with 10 national agencies and one state university, supporting province-led agriculture and fisheries extension programs.	Achieved
Level 6 – Investment Pipeline Activation	PCIP priorities generate funded development projects.	Botilao Farm-to-Market Road project approved under PRDP Scale-Up and currently under procurement.	Achieved
Level 7 – Systemic Institutionalization	PCIP becomes embedded in LGU budgeting, development planning, and sector programs.	PCIP influences planning processes, but stronger formal linkage with LDIP and AIP budgeting mechanisms could further strengthen institutionalization.	Emerging

Level 1 – Awareness

The first stage of institutionalization is awareness, which refers to the basic familiarity of LGU officials and sectoral offices with the planning tools introduced under the PRDP I-PLAN component. In Marinduque, this level has clearly been achieved. Provincial officials and technical staff from sector offices are familiar with the PCIP and with the broader PRDP planning framework, including value chain analysis (VCA). This awareness was developed through capacity-building activities, technical guidance, and training sessions conducted by the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office in MIMAROPA. Through these engagements, provincial staff became familiar with the objectives of the PCIP, the methodologies used to identify commodity priorities, and the technical requirements for preparing investment proposals.

The existence of this awareness is an essential prerequisite for institutionalization. Without a shared understanding of the planning tools, LGUs would be unable to utilize them effectively or integrate them into their governance processes. In the case of Marinduque, awareness is widespread across key provincial offices involved in agricultural development planning.

Level 2 – Adoption
The second stage involves adoption, where the planning tool is formally prepared and recognized as an official provincial planning document. Marinduque has reached this stage through the preparation and approval of the Marinduque Provincial Commodity Investment Plan 2024–2027. The PCIP identifies priority commodities for the province, including coconut, arrowroot, and swine, and outlines strategic investments across different stages of the value chain. These commodities reflect both the province's agricultural strengths and the opportunities for expanding market-oriented agricultural development.

The preparation of the PCIP signifies that the province has adopted the PRDP planning framework as part of its development planning toolkit. At this stage, the PCIP functions as a strategic guide for identifying agricultural investments and aligning provincial programs with broader sector development goals. Adoption also signals that the LGU recognizes the relevance of value chain–based planning as a mechanism for promoting agricultural modernization and improving farmer livelihoods.

Level 3 – Coordination
Institutionalization progresses further when different provincial offices begin coordinating around the implementation of PCIP priorities. In Marinduque, this coordination is clearly evident. Several key provincial offices including the Provincial Agriculturist Office, the Provincial Planning and Development Office, and the Provincial Engineering Office work collaboratively in preparing project proposals and development plans derived from PCIP priorities. Each office contributes specific technical inputs that are necessary for transforming planning priorities into implementable projects.

The Provincial Agriculturist Office typically leads in compiling agricultural production data, beneficiary profiles, and commodity-related information. The Provincial Planning and Development Office coordinates the alignment of these priorities with broader provincial development planning processes. Meanwhile, the Provincial Engineering Office contributes engineering assessments, infrastructure designs, and program of works required for project proposals. This inter-office collaboration reflects an important governance shift: the PCIP is no longer treated as a document owned by a single office but rather as a shared planning platform that requires coordinated action across the provincial bureaucracy.

The achievement of this level indicates that the PCIP is functioning as a practical coordination tool for agricultural investment planning rather than merely a compliance requirement.

Level 4 – Institutional Integration
At the fourth stage, the PCIP begins to influence regular planning and investment discussions within the LGU. In Marinduque, the evaluation found evidence that PCIP priorities are being considered during provincial development planning discussions and project prioritization processes. The Provincial Planning and Development Office plays a central role in ensuring that the priorities identified in the PCIP are reflected in discussions regarding agricultural development programs and potential investments.

However, while the PCIP clearly informs planning discussions, the degree of formal integration with the LGU's routine budgeting mechanisms remains partial. The available evidence indicates that PCIP priorities influence decision-making, but stronger procedural linkage with instruments such as the Local Development Investment Program (LDIP) and the Annual Investment Program (AIP) would further institutionalize the planning framework. Such integration would ensure that PCIP priorities are systematically translated into funded programs rather than being considered primarily at the conceptual or strategic level.

For this reason, Marinduque's institutional integration is assessed as partially achieved. The planning framework already shapes policy discussions, but further formalization within the budgeting cycle would strengthen its institutional anchoring.

Level 5 – Inter-Agency Institutionalization
One of the most distinctive features of the Marinduque case is the high level of inter-agency institutionalization achieved through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement among the provincial government and several national government agencies and institutions. The MOA includes the Department of Agriculture, Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Science and Technology, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, National Irrigation Administration, Philippine Fisheries Development Authority, Agricultural Training Institute, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and Marinduque State College.

This arrangement represents an important governance innovation. Rather than limiting PCIP implementation to the provincial government alone, the MOA creates a formal partnership framework that aligns the mandates and resources of multiple agencies around the province's agricultural development agenda. Through this mechanism, the PCIP becomes a shared platform for coordinating extension services, training programs, research initiatives, enterprise development activities, irrigation support, and environmental management.

The presence of this institutional partnership indicates that Marinduque has achieved a high level of inter-agency institutionalization. It demonstrates that the province has successfully mobilized national agencies and academic institutions to support the implementation of its commodity investment strategy.

Level 6 – Investment Pipeline Activation
Institutionalization reaches a more advanced stage when PCIP priorities are translated into actual development projects. In the case of Marinduque, this stage has been reached through the approval of the Botilao Farm-to-Market Road project in Santa Cruz, which is currently under procurement under the PRDP Scale-Up program. The project directly supports the province's coconut sector and is expected to benefit a large number of farmers by improving market access and reducing transportation constraints.

The approval of this project demonstrates that the PCIP has begun to function as an operational investment pipeline rather than merely a planning instrument. The province was able to move from commodity prioritization to project proposal development, submission, evaluation, and eventual approval under the PRDP Scale-Up program. This progression indicates that the institutional mechanisms necessary to translate planning outputs into investment decisions are already functioning in Marinduque.

Achieving this level is significant in the context of the PRDP I-PLAN component because it confirms that the planning framework can effectively generate concrete investments that contribute to rural development.

Level 7 – Systemic Institutionalization
The final stage of the institutionalization ladder is systemic institutionalization, where the PCIP becomes fully embedded within the governance system of the LGU. At this stage, the plan is routinely used in budgeting, sector programming, and inter-agency coordination, and it serves as a stable reference point for development decision-making across government institutions.

In Marinduque, elements of systemic institutionalization are already emerging. The PCIP influences planning discussions and has generated at least one approved investment project. However, stronger formal linkages with the province's routine budgeting mechanisms, particularly the LDIP and AIP would further strengthen the durability of this integration. Establishing clear procedural requirements for referencing PCIP priorities in annual budget preparation would help ensure that the planning framework remains active beyond the lifespan of specific projects or external support programs.

For this reason, systemic institutionalization in Marinduque is best described as emerging rather than fully achieved.

Overall, the Province of Marinduque demonstrates a relatively advanced level of PCIP institutionalization. The province has successfully progressed through the early stages of awareness and adoption, established strong coordination among provincial offices, and developed formal inter-agency partnerships that support the implementation of agricultural priorities. Most importantly, the PCIP has already generated an investment under the PRDP Scale-Up program, indicating that the planning framework is capable of producing tangible development outcomes.

At the same time, the analysis suggests that further steps are needed to fully embed the PCIP within the routine budgeting and planning systems of the provincial government. Strengthening the linkage between the PCIP and instruments such as the LDIP and AIP would ensure that agricultural priorities identified through the PRDP planning process are systematically translated into funded programs and projects.

The Marinduque case illustrates how the PRDP I-PLAN component can catalyze institutional change within local governments by transforming planning tools into operational governance mechanisms. It also demonstrates that strong inter-agency collaboration and sustained local ownership are critical factors in advancing the institutionalization of value chain–based planning at the provincial level. Its experience demonstrates that institutional collaboration is a critical enabling factor for translating planning tools into actual development investments. The formalized partnership among national agencies and the provincial government created a governance structure that supports coordinated agricultural development, reduces duplication of interventions, and improves the province's readiness to participate in PRDP Scale-Up investments.

A.3 When Planning Does Not Translate into Investment: The Case of Naga City Under PRDP Scale-Up

Introduction

This case study examines why Naga City was not able to secure a PRDP Scale-Up project, despite having used PRDP planning tools and having engaged with the I-PLAN planning process. The purpose is not to attribute blame to any single office or actor, but to understand the institutional, political, technical, and program design factors that prevented planning outputs from converting into approved investments.

From a governance and institutional development perspective, the Naga case is important because it reveals that the problem is not necessarily the absence of planning tools, nor the absence of technical support from the I-PLAN team. Rather, it shows that even when the planning architecture exists, the translation of planning outputs into funded projects can fail when institutional continuity, project viability, local implementation capacity, and program requirements do not align.

This case therefore provides an important counterpoint to stronger cases such as Pangasinan. While Pangasinan illustrates how I-PLAN can work under favorable institutional conditions, Naga City illustrates the constraints and bottlenecks that emerge when those enabling conditions are weak or incomplete.

Background: Naga City's Use of PRDP Planning Tools

The experience of Naga City provides a distinct perspective because, unlike many cities that are simply incorporated into provincial PCIPs, Naga developed its own City Commodity Investment Plan (CCIP) beginning in 2015, when PRDP was first launched. The CCIP followed a process similar to the PCIP methodology used by provinces. It began with commodity prioritization using ranking tools, proceeded to value chain analysis, and culminated in the preparation of a strategic investment plan submitted to the City Development Council.

This is an important starting point because it demonstrates that Naga City was not outside the PRDP planning system. On the contrary, it actively adopted the planning logic promoted by I-PLAN. It engaged in commodity prioritization, used analytical tools, and prepared a city-level strategic planning document.

Participants in the LGU focus group also emphasized that the I-PLAN team provided significant technical support. Tools such as Enhanced Vulnerability and Suitability Assessments (eVSA) and spatial planning instruments were introduced and facilitated by I-PLAN personnel. In Naga's case, these tools were adapted to a more localized planning context. Since only 10 out of the city's 27 barangays are classified as agricultural, the city required a more granular, barangay-level planning approach rather than the broader provincial-scale spatial mapping more commonly used elsewhere. This means that Naga City did not fail because it ignored I-PLAN tools. In fact, it appears to have made substantive use of them. The issue, therefore, lies elsewhere, in the translation of planning outputs into viable and approved subprojects.

The Planning Process from the I-PLAN Perspective

The I-PLAN team described the preparation of the PCIP as a multi-stage and highly consultative process involving provincial governments, regional PRDP teams, technical agencies, and sector stakeholders. The process begins with identifying priority commodities, usually the top ten commodities in the province or LGU, through consultations involving the PPMIU, local offices, relevant agencies, and stakeholders.

After commodity identification, a VCA is conducted for each selected commodity. This stage is intended to identify bottlenecks, market opportunities, infrastructure needs, production support interventions, and possible funding sources. The important point emphasized by the I-PLAN team is that the VCA does not only identify what projects are needed; it also identifies who might implement them and which funding streams may support them. In principle, this means that PRDP is not the only pathway for implementing value chain interventions.

Following the VCA, the local government prepares the PCIP or CCIP by ranking the commodities and identifying the corresponding investment pipeline. The planning document then undergoes stakeholder validation, technical review by the PSO and national offices, and review of consistency with PRDP planning templates. Finally, it is endorsed to the Provincial Development Council or the equivalent planning authority for approval.

The I-PLAN team also explained that it provides technical support throughout this process, including facilitation of consultations, support in commodity prioritization, assistance in interpreting tools such as e-VSA, and hands-on assistance in document preparation when LGU staff are overburdened. Regular orientations are also conducted, especially when LGU personnel change due to administrative turnover.

At the coordination level, the Regional Core Planning Team (RCPT) meeting, usually conducted twice a year, was identified as a key mechanism for aligning proposed investments with PCIP priorities, PRDP guidelines, and broader regional strategies. The I-PLAN team also explained that it helps LGUs avoid duplication by checking proposed projects against existing interventions and socio-economic indicators such as poverty incidence. This suggests that the I-PLAN component has established a relatively robust planning and coordination architecture. Yet, in Naga's case, this architecture did not yield an approved PRDP Scale-Up project.

Why Naga City Did Not Secure a PRDP Scale-Up Project

The case of Naga City suggests that the breakdown occurred at the stage where planning outputs were supposed to become investment-ready and institutionally viable projects. Several distinct but interrelated factors contributed to this outcome.

1. Weak Translation from Commodity Prioritization to Bankable Projects
One of the major issues was that the city's identified priority commodity did not automatically generate a viable investment proposition under PRDP. In Naga's case, one of the key priority commodities was pili, a strategic agricultural product in the Bicol region. The city explored the idea of establishing a Pili Processing Hub as a major intervention to strengthen the value chain and connect local producers to wider markets.

However, this project did not move forward because the local enabling conditions required to support the proposed investment were weak. The city did not have a sufficiently strong proponent group, the cooperative base was limited, and production volumes were not sufficient to sustain an industrial-scale processing facility. In other words, the planning logic was present, but the economic and organizational conditions necessary to support the investment were not. From a governance perspective, this is critical. It shows that identifying a commodity as a priority through CCIP does not automatically mean that an investment linked to that commodity is implementation ready. The planning document can identify strategic opportunities, but the actual project still depends on local organizational capacity, beneficiary readiness, and value chain scale.

2. Project Viability Constraints
A second major factor was the failure of specific proposed projects to meet technical, regulatory, or economic viability requirements.

For example, the proposed abattoir rehabilitation project did not proceed because the existing facility was located in a residential area and could not comply with zoning, sanitation, and land-use regulations. This means that even when a

project appears relevant from a local development perspective, it may still fail because it cannot satisfy regulatory requirements.

Another example involved a proposed dairy cattle production project, which encountered problems because the economics of feed production, particularly silage derived from corn stalks, did not support the financial viability of the investment. Here again, the issue was not the absence of a planning idea, but the inability to demonstrate sufficient economic and financial viability under PRDP standards.

These examples suggest that the I-PLAN planning process can identify broad strategic options, but moving from strategy to approval requires projects to pass much narrower technical, economic, and regulatory filters. In Naga's case, these filters were decisive.

3. Misalignment Between Planning Outputs and PRDP Financing Mechanisms
The discussion also revealed frustration at the LGU level regarding the way some planning outputs, particularly the RAFIP were presented and operationalized.

Participants noted that RAFIP proposals were sometimes introduced as pre-designed investment packages aligned with PRDP Scale-Up financing thresholds, particularly projects worth PHP 50 million and above. Rather than feeling like a bottom-up extension of local planning, these proposals were sometimes experienced as externally introduced project menus that required additional local planning work without guaranteeing access to funding.

This created a governance tension. On one hand, the LGU had already engaged in CCIP preparation and commodity prioritization. On the other hand, it was expected to align with investment packages structured around financing thresholds and PRDP investment criteria. This added planning workload and may have weakened local ownership of the proposed projects. From an institutional perspective, this points to a disconnect between planning frameworks and investment delivery mechanisms. The planning process may be participatory and locally grounded, but if the financing mechanism is perceived as top-down, and threshold-driven, LGUs may become discouraged from pursuing PRDP proposals.

4. Administrative Turnover and Leadership Discontinuity
The I-PLAN team repeatedly emphasized that LGU administrations change every three years, while PRDP project preparation typically takes about one year. This creates a structural mismatch between local political cycles and the program's project development cycle.

In Naga's case, participants noted that administrative transitions and leadership changes can lead newly elected leaders to revisit, modify, or discontinue previously prepared proposals. Even technically sound projects may be delayed or dropped when political priorities shift.

This is one of the most important governance lessons from the case. It suggests that planning continuity under PRDP is vulnerable to local political turnover. The problem is not simply that leaders change, but that the planning and project development cycle is not sufficiently protected from those changes through institutional mechanisms strong enough to preserve continuity. In stronger provinces, this continuity may be supported by fully operational PPMIUs, executive orders, or stronger political backing. In weaker cases such as Naga, continuity appears to be more fragile.

5. Differences in Local Institutional Capacity
The Naga case also reflects differences in staffing structures and institutional capacity across LGUs. The I-PLAN team noted that some provinces have fully operational PPMIUs, while others rely on existing offices with overlapping responsibilities. This difference matters because the PRDP project preparation process is highly technical and document heavy.

Naga representatives reported that LGUs often do not have dedicated staff assigned solely to PRDP project preparation. Instead, the work is handled by personnel from existing offices who must balance PRDP requirements with other government responsibilities. As a result, some LGUs resort to hiring external consultants to prepare feasibility studies and economic analyses, especially the required Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA). Participants observed that consultants tend to have higher success rates in navigating documentary requirements, but this creates an equity problem. Smaller LGUs or cities with limited budgets may not be able to afford this model, which means that access to PRDP may partly depend on the ability to finance technical project preparation.

This reinforces the broader evaluation finding that local capacity gaps, especially in technical staffing and documentation capability, remain a major bottleneck in converting planning outputs into bankable projects.

6. Documentary and Technical Requirements as a Barrier
Participants acknowledged that PRDP provides strong technical support, but they also emphasized that the documentary and technical requirements associated with World Bank-funded projects are highly demanding. Strict approval processes, long implementation timelines, and heavy documentary requirements discourage some LGUs from pursuing PRDP financing, even when they value the planning tools.

This is institutionally important because it shows that the bottleneck is not merely local weakness. It is also embedded in the design of the program itself. A technically rigorous project preparation process may ensure quality and compliance, but it may also reduce accessibility for LGUs with limited internal capacity.

Governance Interpretation of the Naga Case
The Naga case shows that the failure to secure a PRDP Scale-Up project was not due to the absence of planning tools, nor to the absence of technical engagement with I-PLAN. On the contrary, Naga City had adopted the CCIP process, used analytical tools, identified priority commodities, and received technical support from the I-PLAN team.

The problem emerged in the institutional conversion of planning outputs into viable, compliant, and politically supported investments.

In governance terms, the case reveals at least five structural issues:
1. Planning readiness is not the same as project readiness. A commodity may be prioritized in a CCIP, but this does not mean that the LGU has a viable proponent group, adequate production scale, or financially feasible investment model.
2. Technical and regulatory filters are decisive. Projects can fail even when they are locally relevant if they do not pass land-use, sanitation, zoning, or economic viability criteria.
3. Planning tools alone cannot overcome weak institutional continuity. Administrative turnover and changes in local leadership can disrupt project pipelines, especially when project preparation takes longer than political cycles.
4. Capacity differentials across LGUs shape access to PRDP. Those with stronger technical staff, dedicated project units, or the ability to hire consultants are more likely to advance proposals successfully.
5. There is a mismatch between strategic planning and investment delivery mechanisms when local planning outputs must later conform to externally structured financing thresholds and highly demanding approval processes.

Lessons Learned for the I-PLAN Component

The Naga case yields several important lessons for the evaluation of the I-PLAN component.

1. Good planning tools do not guarantee project conversion
The I-PLAN framework can successfully build local planning capacity and produce strategic planning documents, but the conversion of these documents into investments depends on additional factors outside the planning process itself. These include proponent readiness, commodity scale, documentary compliance, regulatory feasibility, and political support.

2. Cities may require differentiated treatment
Naga's experience suggests that chartered cities with smaller agricultural land areas and more urbanized land-use conditions may not fit easily into the same project models and thresholds used for provinces. Different agricultural profiles may require different project types, financing thresholds, or eligibility criteria.

3. Institutional continuity mechanisms matter
The three-year LGU political cycle creates a serious risk for project continuity. If PRDP planning outputs are to survive leadership turnover, they need stronger institutional anchoring through local ordinances, dedicated units, or more stable planning mandates.

4. Technical support is necessary but insufficient
The I-PLAN team appears to have provided substantial technical assistance. However, assistance in planning and consultation is not enough when the deeper bottlenecks are in project viability, documentary compliance, and local implementation capacity.

5. Program design may unintentionally exclude weaker LGUs
Highly demanding documentary requirements and strict viability criteria may favor LGUs with better staffing, more resources, or access to consultants. If PRDP seeks broader inclusiveness, it may need to consider additional preparatory support, differentiated requirements, or pre-investment assistance for weaker LGUs.

Overall Evaluative Significance of the Naga Case
The Naga case is significant because it reveals that the central challenge facing the I-PLAN component is not simply whether planning tools exist or are technically sound. The deeper issue is whether the institutional environment allows those tools to function as effective gateways to investment.

Naga City demonstrates that an LGU can adopt the CCIP process, engage with I-PLAN tools, and still fail to secure PRDP Scale-Up investments if local institutional capacity, project viability, political continuity, and program design requirements are not aligned.

This makes Naga a valuable negative case study for the Midterm Evaluation. It shows that planning tools are necessary, but not sufficient. For I-PLAN to contribute more fully to the Project Development Objective, it must operate within a broader institutional ecosystem that supports not only planning, but also project development, coordination, continuity, and adaptive implementation.

Annex B I-BUILD Case Studies

B.1 Baybay City Barangay Water System Development Project

Background

As part of the Midterm Evaluation Study for PRDP SCALE-UP, selected subprojects are being examined through case analysis to generate deeper insights into implementation performance and development outcomes. The Baybay City Barangay Water System Development Project in Leyte was selected as a case study site to evaluate service delivery improvements in rural water access and the sustainability of community-based infrastructure investments.

Objectives of the Mission

- Assess the implementation performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Barangay Water System Development Project.
- Examine the functionality, utilization, and service coverage of the completed water system infrastructure.
- Evaluate institutional arrangements for operations and maintenance at the local level.
- Assess financial sustainability mechanisms including tariff structures and cost recovery systems.
- Document good practices, operational challenges, and lessons learned relevant to rural water infrastructure implementation.

Methodology

The mission will adopt a qualitative and results-based assessment approach. The evaluation methods include key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions with beneficiaries, document review, and direct physical inspection of infrastructure facilities. The analysis will be guided by the evaluation framework covering project design relevance, implementation processes, technical performance, institutional arrangements, financial sustainability, and development outcomes.

Project Profile

Project Name	Baybay City Barangay Water System Development Project
Location	Southern Barangays of the City of Baybay, Province of Leyte
Infrastructure Type	Community Water Supply System
Implementing Entity	Local Government Unit
Funding Source	PRDP I-BUILD Component
Primary Beneficiaries	Rural households and community institutions
Project Commencement	December 2025

Mission Outcomes

Technical Inspection:

Condition and functionality of water source and pumping facilities

Figure 13 Inspection of the Booster Pump

The booster pump has a separate housing facility and generator set (20 kVA) located at the Magob-ob Bridge with a capacity of 7.5 Hp. This ensures that highly elevated areas shall have water collection in case of electricity interruption in cases of extreme rainfall events.

Structural condition of reservoirs and storage tanks

Figure 14 Review of feasibility study, plans, designs, progress reports, among others

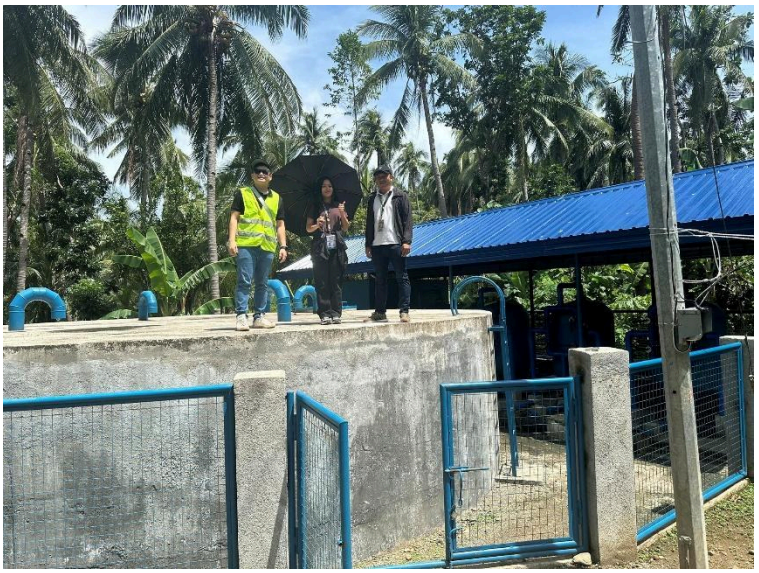

Figure 15 Inspection at the Reservoir of Barangay Punta.

Figure 16 Inspection at the reservoir of Barangay Maslug.

Reservoirs are constructed by adapting to the highest-rated sustainable materials that are climate resilient as verified by the Rural Infrastructure Engineer (RIE). The design incorporates heavy wind loads, climate extremities, and the corrosion that may come from salt water.

Integrity of pipelines and distribution network

Figure 17 Identified tap stand at Barangay Punta Household (Pabahay Community).

It is common finding that pipelines of large distribution systems are prone to manifestation of leaks. It is upon validation of the engineers and contractors that such systems eliminate these field issues to lessen distribution losses. The LGU Engineers and RIEs have validated leak tests that no payment shall be issued to the contractor if there will be presence of any leaks due to poor workmanship. Challenges in distribution were raised by neighboring units whenever one neighbor intend to monopolize the tap stand by connecting it to their household via long hose. This issue will be raised in the upcoming public consultation later this month.

Reliability of water supply and service coverage

Figure 18 Water distribution at Barangay Punta.

Figure 19 Potability inspection at Barangay Plaridel.

In Barangay Plaridel and Barangay Maslug, water is already used for consumption directly from tap stand since February 2026. However, in Barangay Punta, they consume water for everyday usage except for drinking. During the interview, the residents prefer distilled water to avoid any water-related diseases. There are cases of water interruption during heavy rains due to high water pressure and high turbidity of water but as per this Mission, no report of water-related diseases has been declared.

Availability of maintenance tools and spare parts

The Operation and Maintenance Plan covers maintenance tools and spare parts and will have a designated O&M Team for the whole system which has a proposed budget of Php 2,000,000.00 per year.

Risk Assessment Matrix

Risk Category	Potential Issue	Mitigation Considerations
Technical	Infrastructure deterioration due to inadequate maintenance	Strengthen preventive maintenance programs, inclusion of O&M funding
Personal / Institutional	No man-power and technical experts within the LGU	Hiring of consultants for short-term project duration in cases of operation and maintenance
	Limited capacity of operators	Capacity building and technical training
Fiscal	Low tariff collection affecting sustainability	Improve billing systems and community awareness, upcoming public consultation for waterline distribution instead of tap stand water distribution

Staffing Patterns / Role Identification

LGU and PRDP

Staff	Qualifications	Outputs
Mechanical Engineer	At least 1 year relevant experience in mechanical works	Site inspection of machines; supervision of mechanical works
Materials Engineer	DPWH Accredited Materials Engineer for LGU projects	Inspection and testing of construction materials; QA/QC compliance
Civil Engineer	Licensed Civil Engineer with experience in infrastructure projects	Structural inspection; review of plans; supervision of civil works
Electrical Engineer	Licensed Electrical Engineer with experience in public infrastructure	Inspection of electrical installations; compliance with electrical codes
Project Engineer	Licensed Engineer with at least 2 years project supervision experience	Overall project supervision; coordination with contractors and LGU and PRDP
Quantity Surveyor	Degree in Engineering or Construction Management with cost estimation experience	Preparation of cost estimates; bill of quantities; cost monitoring
Environmental Specialist	Degree in Environmental Science or related field with project experience	Environmental compliance monitoring; preparation of environmental reports
Social Development Specialist	Degree in Social Sciences or Community Development with field experience	Community consultation; stakeholder engagement; social impact monitoring
Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	Experience in project monitoring, data analysis, and reporting	Progress monitoring; preparation of M&E reports; evaluation of project outputs
Procurement Specialist	Experience in government procurement and knowledge of procurement law	Preparation of procurement documents; bid evaluation; procurement compliance

Stakeholder Engagement

Figure 20 Courtesy call and presentation of mission outcomes with PRDP Region VIII Deputy Director Engr. Jonas Buhay and RIE Engr. Ryan Tan and Monitoring Officer Ms. Krichelle Escarilla.

Figure 21 Meeting with Contractor's representative (RJIR Enterprise Corporation).

Summary KII with Contractor

What are the challenges you have experienced in terms of the Project?	What are your suggestions so that the work will be less hassle in the future?
A lot of ROW problems	Must be settled before implementation for less hassle, before start of project settled and complete documents necessary for ROW.
Slow decision making of the LGU	Must assign someone who can decide right away.
Billing documents– we are ask to do paperworks that are probably not a contractor's job.	Must be clear if it is really our responsibility or not.

Questions	Answers
Did you experience any challenges in terms of collection of payment? If yes, explain your answer.	Yes, especially about the accounting requirements. It will took 2-3 months and maybe more after our submission of billing documents for them to release the payment.
Are there major variations in the duration of the project? If yes, explain your answer.	No.
What are your suggestions so that project development cycle will be better?	There must be team supervising a certain task, kasi parang isang tao lang sa LGU sumasalo lahat ng concern. Kaya parang loaded sya masyado.
Did you experience any challenges in terms of collection of payment? If yes, explain your answer.	Yes, especially about the accounting requirements. It will took 2-3 months and maybe more after our submission of billing documents for them to release the payment.
Are there major variations in the duration of the project? If yes, explain your answer.	No.

Questions	Answers
What are your suggestions so that project development cycle will be better?	There must be team supervising a certain task, kasi parang isang tao lang sa LGU sumasalo lahat ng concern. Kaya parang loaded sya masyado.

No apparent issue in terms of the collection of payments of contractor and the comparison to the project's physical accomplishment. The only reason for delay in collection is the presence of leaks in certain pipelines that can be attributed to poor workmanship. The RIE and contractors attest that upon completion, all these leaks were repaired.

Figure 22 Household interview with Ms. Angelita Robles.

Figure 23 Household interview with Ms. Lailanie Garguqu.

Summary KII with Households

CHALLENGES	ACHIEVEMENTS	MOVING FORWARD
No water supply in case of rains, turbidity increases	Water supply 24/7	Provision of water support infrastructure in cases of rains and extreme weather events
	Climate resilient program embedded in PRDP	Climate resilient infrastructure to future projects
	No water related diseases, potable water system existing in a span of 1 month	
	Attest during KIIs and HH interview the potability of water	
2 hour per day water collection	Water supply 24/7; Water meter already installed	Awaiting public consultation
Few LGUs involved with PRDP	Baybay City 5-star project for PRDP	Project Proposal and information dissemination for other LGUs and barangays (PSO Visayas)
		LGU Summit that shall invite LGUs to explore PRDP

Efficiency

The project demonstrated relatively efficient implementation due to several enabling factors:

- Strong coordination between the LGU and implementing agencies.
- Adequate technical planning during the project preparation phase.
- Active participation of barangay officials in facilitating community engagement.
- Clear delineation of responsibilities among project stakeholders.

The LGU's capacity in project management and its responsiveness in addressing operational issues contributed to smoother implementation.

Effectiveness

The project has achieved its primary objective of improving access to potable water. Beneficiary households now have more reliable access to safe water through the installed distribution system.

Key outcomes include:

- Reduced time spent by households in fetching water.
- Improved access to clean and safe drinking water.
- Enhanced sanitation and hygiene practices.
- Increased convenience for households, particularly women and children who traditionally collect water.

The infrastructure is currently operational and serving the intended communities.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the project appears promising due to several factors:

Institutional sustainability

- The LGU and barangay leadership remain actively involved in the management of the system.
- Local mechanisms for system operation and maintenance are in place.

Financial sustainability

- Water user fees collected from households contribute to the operation and maintenance of the system.

Community ownership

- Beneficiaries expressed strong appreciation of the project and willingness to support its continued operation.

However, long-term sustainability will depend on continuous maintenance, adequate tariff collection, and technical support from the LGU.

Several factors contributed to the success of the water system. These elements collectively enabled the project to deliver its intended benefits to the community:

- Strong LGU leadership and ownership of the project.
- Effective coordination between national and local stakeholders.
- Community participation during implementation and operation.
- Adequate technical design and planning of the water system.
- Clear operation and maintenance arrangements after project completion.

Lessons Learned

The following lessons are incurred throughout the mission:

- Community involvement strengthens project sustainability. Engaging beneficiaries fosters ownership and encourages proper system use and maintenance.
- Strong LGU capacity improves implementation outcomes. Local government leadership and technical capability significantly influence project success.
- Early planning for operations and maintenance is essential. Infrastructure investments require clear arrangements for long-term system management.

Inputs for Policy and Operational Improvements for the I-BUILD Component

Based on field validation findings, the following policy and operational improvements are recommended for the PRDP I-BUILD component:

Strengthen Post-Completion Monitoring

Regular monitoring of completed infrastructure projects should be institutionalized to ensure that facilities remain operational and properly maintained.

Enhance Capacity Building for LGUs

Capacity development programs should be strengthened to improve LGU competencies in:

- Infrastructure management,
- Financial management of community utilities, and
- Maintenance planning.

Standardize Operation and Maintenance Mechanisms

Clear guidelines for the establishment of local management structures (e.g., water management committees or cooperatives) should be integrated into subproject design.

Improve Sustainability Planning During Project Design

Sustainability mechanisms, including tariff systems, maintenance funds, and technical support arrangements should be embedded at the planning stage.

Promote Community Engagement

Structured mechanisms for community participation should be encouraged to ensure that beneficiary communities remain actively involved in managing infrastructure investments.

Cross-cutting Issues

- Environmental safeguards and compliance were generally observed though continued monitoring is recommended.
- Gender and social inclusion considerations were evident through participation of community members in consultations.
- Climate resilience considerations, particularly for water infrastructure, should be always integrated into long-term planning.

Conclusion

The Baybay City Barangay Water System Development Project represents a good practice example under the PRDP I-BUILD component, demonstrating how strategic rural infrastructure investments can significantly improve community welfare.

The project highlights the importance of strong LGU leadership, community participation, and effective project management in ensuring successful infrastructure delivery. The lessons derived from this case can inform policy and operational improvements to further strengthen the implementation and sustainability of PRDP infrastructure investments.

B.2 Pangasinan Bangus Breeding and Hatchery Project

Background

The Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) is a national government program implemented by the Department of Agriculture with support from World Bank to improve rural infrastructure, enhance agricultural productivity, and strengthen value chains in rural areas. The I-BUILD component focuses on the development of strategic rural infrastructure such as farm-to-market roads, potable water systems, post-harvest facilities, and other community-based infrastructure.

As part of the Midterm Evaluation Study for PRDP SCALE-UP, selected subprojects are being examined through case analysis to generate deeper insights into implementation performance and development outcomes. The Pangasinan Bangus Breeding and Hatchery in Bolinao was selected as a case study site to strengthen local aquaculture by ensuring a reliable supply of high-quality bangus fry, thereby increasing productivity and supporting the livelihoods of fisherfolk in Pangasinan.

Objectives of the Mission

- Assess the implementation performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Bangus Breeding and Hatchery Project in Bolinao, Pangasinan.
- Examine the functionality, utilization, and production capacity of the hatchery facilities once operational.
- Evaluate institutional arrangements for hatchery management, including roles of the LGU and fisherfolk/cooperative organizations.

- Assess financial sustainability mechanisms, including revenue generation from fry production and cost recovery systems.
- Document emerging practices, implementation challenges, and lessons learned relevant to aquaculture infrastructure development.

Methodology

The mission will adopt a qualitative and results-based assessment approach. The evaluation methods include key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions with beneficiaries, document review, and direct physical inspection of infrastructure facilities. The analysis will be guided by the evaluation framework covering project design relevance, implementation processes, technical performance, institutional arrangements, financial sustainability, and development outcomes.

Project Profile

Project Name	Pangasinan Bangus Breeding and Hatchery
Location	Municipality of Bolinao, Pangasinan
Infrastructure Type	Bangus Breeding Hatchery System
Implementing Entity	Provincial Government of Pangasinan
Funding Source	PRDP I-BUILD Component
Primary Beneficiaries	Fisherfolk and fish farmers, Fisherfolk Cooperative Associations (FCAs), Local Government Units (LGUs)
Project Commencement	January 2026

Mission Outcomes

Courtesy Call and Focus Group Discussion

Figure 24 FGD on Successes, Challenges, and Ways Forward of PRDP and LGUs.

Figure 25 Heat Map Matrix.

Figure 26 Heat Map Matrix continuation.

Subproject Salient Points

Successes

- Established coordination mechanisms among RPCO, PLGU, and LGU units to support project implementation.
- Ongoing efforts to standardize processes (e.g., templates, documentation systems) to improve efficiency.
- Increased awareness of bottlenecks across subproject cycle stages (FS, DED, procurement).
- Initiatives toward digital systems (e.g., geotagged photo management) to strengthen monitoring and documentation.
- Active engagement of multiple stakeholders in identifying and addressing implementation gaps.

Challenges

- Significant delays in securing No Objection Letter (NOL 1) largely due to incomplete or delayed FS and DED preparation.
- Lengthy processing of permits and inter-agency clearances (e.g., tenurial instruments, conversion orders).
- Inconsistent or evolving guidelines across agencies, especially with changes in leadership.
- Delays in procurement processes and approval of variation/change orders.
- Weak documentation practices, particularly in consolidation and submission of geotagged reports.

Ways Forward

- Strengthen pre-implementation readiness by ensuring complete and compliant submission of FS, DED, and required permits.
- Institutionalize standardized guidelines and templates across agencies to reduce inconsistencies.
- Promote parallel processing of requirements and joint technical reviews to shorten approval timelines.
- Enhance coordination through regular inter-agency meetings and dedicated technical teams.
- Improve monitoring systems, including stricter compliance with documentation (e.g., real-time geotagging and reporting).

Focus Group Discussions

Figure 27 FGD with Fisherfolk Cooperative Associations.

Summary KII with FCAs

CHALLENGES	SUCCESSES	MOVING FORWARD
Private organizations monopolize the commerce	Inclusive support to FCAs ever since public consultation held in Alaminos, Pangasinan.	Provision of water support infrastructure in cases of rains and extreme weather events
Hardship in transportation	50% Workforce Fisheries; delivery in closer areas	Equity in distribution; Creation of map inventory for future hatchery projects

Figure 28 FGD with Proponent LGUs with their Respective Engineers.

Figure 29 FGD with the Project's Contractor.

Summary KII with LGU Engineers and Contractors

CHALLENGES	SUCCESSES	MOVING FORWARD
Communication line for LGU visa vis Contractors	Jump start the project; Day 1 of sea grass cleaning	Continuous commitment to work and aim the completion by March 2028
No actual presence on site	Identify key roles: (1) Project in Charge, (2) Safety Officer, (3) Materials Engineer, (4) Consultants if necessary	Commitment of personnel for the project
Staffing patterns and role identification		Commitment of personnel for the project

Figure 30 FGD with RPCO, PSO, RIE of PRDP.

CHALLENGES	SUCCESSES	MOVING FORWARD
	No ROW problems	Proper monitor and evaluation as we move to implementation stage
	Provision of trainings before, during, and after the project: CAD Civil 3D, Contracts Review, Material Testing	Upcoming PCO Training (40 hours)
DENR and other clearances; dead corals, presence of sea grass	Identified key problems	Ensure site solution upon implementation

CHALLENGES	SUCCESSES	MOVING FORWARD
	Identified Bolinao as Target Site for good water source, land acquisition, and consultants came from the project	Proper monitor and evaluation as we move to implementation stage; Proposal of additional funding i.e., ISAP obligate salary to province

Staffing Patterns / Role Identification

LGU and PRDP

Staff	Qualifications	Outputs
Materials Engineer	DPWH Accredited Materials Engineer for LGU projects	Inspection and testing of construction materials; QA/QC compliance
Civil Engineer / Resident Engineer	Licensed Civil Engineer with experience in infrastructure projects	Structural inspection; review of plans; supervision of civil works; Overall project supervision; coordination with contractors and LGU and PRDP
Environmental Specialist	Degree in Environmental Science or related field with project experience	Environmental compliance monitoring; preparation of environmental reports
Legal Officer	Juris Doctor or with GPPB Specialization Certificate (Level 3) RA 12009 Expert / Specialist	Clear procurement interpretation
Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	Experience in project monitoring, data analysis, and reporting Graduate of Information Technology, Business Administration or related field	Progress monitoring; preparation of M&E reports; evaluation of project outputs; develop the M&E System
Project Development Associate	Experience in government procurement and knowledge of procurement law	Preparation of procurement documents; bid evaluation; procurement compliance

Efficiency

The project is currently in the early stages of implementation, having commenced in January 2026. Initial observations indicate that foundational activities such as mobilization and preparatory coordination are still underway.

While formal structures for implementation appear to be in place, the pace of physical progress remains limited at the time of the mission. This may be attributed to the transition from planning to execution, which often requires alignment of administrative, technical, and logistical requirements.

Continued strengthening of coordination mechanisms among the Local Government Unit (LGU), implementing agencies, and contractors will be essential to facilitate more efficient project rollout in the succeeding months.

Effectiveness

As of the field mission, the project has not yet reached a stage where intended outputs and outcomes can be observed. Core infrastructure components of the hatchery have yet to be established, and therefore, immediate benefits to beneficiaries are not yet realized.

The project remains aligned with its development objective of improving aquaculture productivity and ensuring a sustainable supply of quality bangus fry. However, the realization of these outcomes will depend on the timely progression of implementation activities.

At this stage, effectiveness is best assessed in terms of readiness and alignment with project goals rather than measurable impacts.

Sustainability

Given the early phase of the project, sustainability mechanisms are still in the process of being established. Initial consultations suggest that institutional arrangements involving the LGU and beneficiary groups, such as fisherfolk associations, are being considered.

Institutional sustainability

- Ongoing coordination between the LGU and relevant stakeholders provides a foundation for future management arrangements.
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities for hatchery operations will be critical moving forward.

Financial sustainability

- Potential revenue mechanisms, such as the sale of bangus fry, are inherent in the project design but have yet to be operationalized.

Community ownership

- There is initial interest among stakeholders; however, sustained engagement will be necessary to build strong ownership as the project progresses.

Long-term sustainability will depend on the timely completion of infrastructure, establishment of management systems, and capacity development of involved stakeholders.

Key Factors driving implementation

These factors are influencing the current status of project implementation:

8. The project is in its initial implementation phase, with preparatory activities still ongoing.
9. Coordination structures are present but require further operational strengthening.
10. Administrative and procedural processes may be contributing to slower mobilization.
11. Stakeholder engagement is at an early stage and continues to evolve.
12. Technical and operational plans provide a clear framework but require effective execution.

Lessons Learned

The following lessons are drawn from the mission:

- Early-stage implementation requires strong mobilization planning. Clear timelines and readiness of resources are essential to transition smoothly from planning to execution.

- Continuous coordination among stakeholders is critical. Regular communication helps address bottlenecks and ensures alignment.
- Proactive stakeholder engagement supports smoother implementation. Early involvement of beneficiary groups can strengthen ownership and participation.

Inputs for Policy and Operational Improvements for the I-BUILD Component

Based on field validation findings, the following policy and operational improvements are recommended for the PRDP I-BUILD component:

Strengthen Early Implementation Support
Additional technical and operational support should be provided during the initial phase of subprojects to ensure timely mobilization and commencement of activities.

Enhance LGU and Contractor Coordination
Mechanisms to improve coordination between LGUs and contractors should be reinforced to address delays and improve implementation efficiency.

Improve Readiness Assessment Prior to Project Start
Stronger pre-implementation checks (e.g., permits, detailed engineering readiness, procurement completion) should be ensured before project commencement.

Institutionalize Monitoring During Early Stages
More frequent monitoring during the first months of implementation can help identify and address issues early.

Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement Frameworks
Structured engagement with beneficiary groups, such as fisherfolk cooperatives, should be established early to build ownership and clarify future roles.

Cross-cutting Issues

- Environmental and social safeguards are expected to be integrated; however, implementation should be closely monitored as physical activities commence.
- Gender and social inclusion considerations are yet to be fully observed at this stage and should be incorporated in subsequent phases.
- Climate resilience considerations, particularly for coastal aquaculture infrastructure, should be embedded in detailed implementation.

Conclusion

The Pangasinan Bangus Breeding and Hatchery Project in Bolinao, Pangasinan is at a critical early stage of implementation under the PRDP I-BUILD component. While physical progress remains limited at the time of the mission, the project retains strong potential to contribute to aquaculture development and livelihood enhancement once implementation gains momentum.

The findings highlight the importance of strengthening early-stage implementation processes, enhancing coordination, and ensuring readiness to translate project plans into tangible outputs. Lessons from this case provide valuable insights for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of infrastructure delivery under the I-BUILD component.

Recommendations

To enhance the performance of the I-BUILD, the following strategic recommendations are proposed:

13. Improve Procurement and Implementation Efficiency

Streamline procurement processes and standardize bid evaluation criteria

Introduce stricter pre-qualification and capacity screening of contractors

Establish clear cost ceilings and improve bid documentation quality

Strengthen early-stage project preparation to reduce rebidding

14. Strengthen Quality Assurance and Contractor Performance

Enforce stricter supervision and third-party quality audits

Penalize non-performing contractors and regulate subcontracting practices

Enhance materials testing and compliance monitoring

15. Enhance LGU Capacity and Accountability

Provide targeted capacity-building on procurement and project management

Strengthen LGU oversight of contractors and project implementation

Institutionalize performance monitoring systems at the LGU level

16. Strengthen Sustainability Mechanisms

Develop standardized and enforceable O&M frameworks

Ensure dedicated budget allocations for maintenance

Promote community participation in asset management

17. Improve Policy and Institutional Coordination

Harmonize guidelines across RPCOs and oversight agencies

Strengthen integration across I-BUILD, I-REAP, and I-SUPPORT

Establish regular coordination platforms for stakeholders

Annex C Case Studies of I-REAP Sub-projects

C.1 Upgrading and Expansion of the Sagada Arabica Coffee Processing with Cupping Laboratory

Background

The FCA-proponent of this project is Sagada Arabica Coffee Growers and Processors Organization (SACGPO), a registered cooperative engaged in the production and marketing of coffee products. SACGPO traces its roots back to 2006, as a parish-level organization that formed the first coffee council in the Cordillera region. At the start, the organization did not carry out any enterprise activities; its focus was solely on policy and advocacy. Over the years, it has steadily grown its membership base. The organization later evolved into an entity registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), carrying out basic coffee processing activities. More recently, it has become a duly recognized cooperative (registered under the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA)), with a total of 107 members, almost 70% of whom are women.[22]

Individual coffee farmers carry out the harvesting, sorting and fermenting of coffee beans. These are then delivered to the SACGPO centre in Sagada, where it is weighed and the moisture content is checked, as part of quality control. If the moisture content is high, then the beans go through a further drying process. The FCA gives farmers the option to wait until the coffee is dried further, before it is weighed and payment is processed. The FCA then processes the stocks of coffee beans following a first-in-first-out principle. The next step – de-hulling – is instigated only when orders are placed. The beans are then roasted, depending on the preference of buyers – whether light, medium, medium to dark or dark roast. Following this, there is a degassing process, after which the coffee beans are grounded and packaged. It takes around three days to a week to complete the process, and two days are typically allocated for shipment.

The products sold by SACGPO cover three types: drench, ground beans and whole beans. Its current buyers include several vendors at the public market, souvenir shops and coffee shops in Sagada.

On average, each member maintains 700 coffee tress, producing 3-4 tons of coffee beans per year. As a member of SACGPO, farmers are entitled to patronage refunds, discounted price on roasting services, and are provided farming implements such as pruning shears, as well as training on coffee farming.

Currently, the organization has total assets amounting to almost PhP 7 million, which includes the current inventory, the existing coffee processing centre, machines and equipment.

Over the years, the organization has benefited from being a partner of several government agencies including the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). It has also worked with non-government organizations, such as ACDI VOCA, where it has received training on quality coffee production and processing. The technical assistance that SACGPO and its members have received over the years has enabled the organization to produce premium Arabica coffee, which it currently markets under the brand, '*Sagada Gold*'.

What does it take to produce good quality coffee?

Good quality coffee is a result of good production techniques – starting from the preparation of seedlings to processing of coffee beans. These techniques encompass proper fertilizer application, pruning and rejuvenation techniques, water management, the handling of pests and diseases, harvesting and post-harvest activities. Production of coffee beans using Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) can result in twice the volume of what is produced using traditional practices. Harvesting is done by intentionally handpicking only the red shiny berries, leaving the immature ones to continue growing. To obtain good quality coffee, the process involves de-pulping berries using a coffee de-pulper intended for Arabica coffee. This needs to be done within 24 hours after picking, to prevent loss of flavour.

[22] Women constitute a significant portion of the labour force in coffee farming, particularly for delicate, time-consuming tasks such as harvesting and sorting cherries, often while managing household and care duties. Women's meticulous attention to detail ensures that high-quality coffee can be produced.

Key challenges and competitive advantages

Challenges	Competitive advantages
• **Competition**: there are several private coffee farms/growers and processors, and a smaller cooperative operating in the same area (Sagada). Their products are similar to that of SACGPO, with very little difference in terms of pricing. • Maintaining a steady **supply of raw materials** is something that SACGPO is concerned about. Most farmers, including their members, do not sell 100% of their yield to the cooperative (for various reasons). Yields could also be improved with the use of fertilizer, which not all farmers use at the moment.[23] The FCA is also aware that members face challenges in terms of increasing costs of inputs and bad weather, which affect yields. • SACGPO has a **succession problem**. More than 70% of its farmer-members are reportedly of late age or senior citizens. Farmers are concerned that they do not have anyone to pass on their farming activities to, including the know-how on good-quality coffee farming practices. This is also reflected in some of the struggles of SACGPO itself to recruit younger staff. Young people tend to be altogether uninterested in farming or agribusinesses.	• SACGPO has a cadre of **dedicated members and good management and staff**. This has been the engine driving the FCA towards growth over the years, allowing SACGPO to build a stable organization and a thriving enterprise. As a cooperative, it is now in the process of fully establishing governance systems within its organization (through the creation of several committees, as mandated by the CDA) – which will serve the organization well as it expands and grows its enterprise activities. The FCA also has a certified quality grader (of coffee) and intends to develop two more from amongst its members. • SACGPO services **regular buyers** from its immediate locality, as well as repeat buyers from other provinces (e.g. Davao, Lingayen). Resellers in Sagada point out how *Sagada Gold* sells fast or is easy to sell, especially to tourists visiting the province. SACGPO also sells to an institutional buyer, St Lukes Hospital in Metro Manila. Even during the COVID pandemic, these buyers continued making orders. Sales to buyers outside Sagada has also been made possible, given the options available for transporting goods (by bus/courier), which make transactions easier to manage for both the seller and buyers. • SACGPO's **revenues have been steadily increasing** over the years, reflecting a steady increase in buyers, as well as the volume of coffee products it is able to sell.

The Proposed I-REAP Sub-project

SACGPO has had a history of working with PRDP and the DA more generally. It has previously received grants that were used to purchase goods and equipment, such as stainless-steel tables and basins and food grade plastics (replacing old materials that did not meet food grade standards). The FCA was keen to submit an application under the AF2 round, but was unable to meet the deadline, owing to the longer-than-planned time needed to complete the civil works design (of its proposed facility).[24] Work on the proposal did not however go to waste: the FCA was able to build on what was already developed during the AF2 round when preparing its proposal under PRDP Scale-Up.

The project proposal is essentially for an improvement and expansion of its processing activities and to further strengthen the FCA-enterprise's capacity to produce good quality coffee, which can fetch a good price in the market. Improving the quality of the coffee processed can be achieved by: (i) providing technical assistance to farmer-members (suppliers of the raw material) through continuous education on product standards and provision of tools that will help them carry out good harvesting and post-harvest practices; (ii) carrying out processing activities in line with good practices and standards; and (iii) providing access to complete processing equipment to other processors or farmers.

[23] As such, SACGPO is considering plans to purchase fertilizer in bulk and then retail it to its members.

[24] The required soil / geotechnical analysis took a long time to process and complete. It should be noted that this also reflects the complexity of building structures in Sagada, a mountainous terrain.

The proponent group is aiming for their facility to be BFAD-compliant in terms of the quality of processes undertaken in the processing centre, and for its end-products to be FDA-registered.[25]

To realize these goals, the I-REAP sub-project will support the construction of an FDA-compliant processing facility, equipped with the necessary coffee processing machines and supplies to produce more than 6,800 kilograms of roasted Arabica coffee (in Year 1), which implies that average annual production can/will increase by 9%. This will be driven by making new product lines available for sale, including drip-bagged coffee and drench coffee. This expansion will also be supported by an additional seven (7) employees (over the course, until Year 10). The increase in the volume of production by the enterprise would then translate into an increase in the income generated by the enterprise by an average of 18.58% (from Year 1 to Year 10), according to the Business Plan – which would ultimately enable an increase in the income of coffee farmers.

Targets set for the Sub-project

At the enterprise level:

- Increase the income of the enterprise by 39% (from PHP 589,194 to PHP819,088) on Year 1 of operation through expansion of market and increase in the volume of production.
- Increase rural employment of the enterprise from 10 to 15 personnel (an increase of 33 %).
- Increase the annual volume of production by 60% (from 6,000 to 10,000 kg) through supply agreements with other coffee growers.
- Increase the number of members of the organization from 90 to 105 after 3 years of operation. (The target is to recruit at least 5 new members annually.)
- To meet standards of FDA and Halal certification

At the coffee farmer level:

- Increase the income of coffee farmers from PHP 23,990 to PHP 39,490 per harvest season.

The investment project consists of (i) the construction of a two-story processing facility, (ii) the supply and delivery of various processing materials and equipment (coffee pulper, grinder, display cabinet (cupping laboratory). hermetic bags, plastic pallet and nets, refractometer, pruning shears and moisture meter); and (iii) procurement of a hauling truck that will enable the FCA to collect raw materials from its members. The total value of the investment amounts to P 21,806,946.

The sub-project is among the first seven sub-projects to reach NOL 1 stage and is currently in implementation. Procurement of goods and civil works has commenced and some of the goods have already been delivered (at the time of this report).

This sub-project benefits from having started in the AF2 round. It would not have likely reached the stage it is at by now, had it not been able to build on some of the business planning work that started under AF2. That said, the experience of developing the sub-project during the Scale-Up phase still underscores challenges encountered during the business planning process – which took the most time to complete. This is partly because of the required structural analysis (for the proposed facility), as well as the challenges presented by the differences in standards between RPCO- and PSO-level engineering teams. This resulted in the design going through six iterations, three of which were in response to slope protection issues, given the location of the proposed building. Furthermore, water potability tests needed to be conducted (a legal requirement) by the DOST, where delays were experienced as the agency could not visit the location to collect the water sample for testing. At the risk of dragging this process even further, the FCA and the BDO working on this sub-project therefore offered to collect the sample themselves and bring this to the DOST facility for testing. This delay alone amounted to an additional 25 days.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the business plan was completed, along with all the documentation and clearances that were required for the sub-project.

The FCA, given its history and experience as having been a recipient of a number of capacity building initiatives over the years, can be counted among those FCAs with a strong base in terms of its organizational and business capacity. It is however important to point out that the goals underpinning the sub-project are ambitious and require an upgrading of the

[25] This is often the step that many micro-enterprise operations fail or struggle to secure. BFAD compliance is a key pre-requisite for participating in a number of trade fairs (for food products) and for selling to larger commercial markets. This is an important point that was also raised by Director Junibert de Sagun (Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS)).

FCA-enterprise's capacity as well. The task of increasing production, increasing sales and increasing incomes – by magnitudes estimated in the Business Plan – is no mean feat. The FCA recognizes this, and so does I-REAP. As such, in parallel to the development of the sub-project, the FCA is provided training and technical assistance on themes such as leadership, digital marketing, risk-reduction management, and bookkeeping. This is also further complemented with the mandatory training of the CDA (on the governance of cooperatives, etc.). These interventions to support capacity development are considered very helpful by SACGPO. The management and members of the FCA also point out how the business planning process – despite all the challenges experienced – has been a critical process that generated learning that will be vital to their operations moving forward.

Establishing linkages to develop capacity and demonstrate good practices

Members of SACGPO joined a three-day exchange visit to the Curve Coffee Farm in Bukidnon and its Roastery and the BCAA Cupping Laboratory in Manila. The visit was intended to provide FCA members with valuable practical insights and best practices to support the growth of their coffee processing enterprise. This was facilitated by Agriterra, a Netherlands-based non-profit that supports farmer organizations in developing countries to enhance business operations, improve access to finance and establish market linkages.

During the visit, the participants learned about various aspects of coffee production, including tackling the critical role of quality control in the areas of coffee cupping and environmental monitoring. At the BCAA Cupping Laboratory, they practiced basic cupping techniques to evaluate flavour profiles, a crucial process in maintaining a consistent quality of the coffee produced. Importantly, the Curve Coffee Farm pays attention to temperature and humidity monitoring, which underline how environmental control during production and processing contributes to preserving bean quality and flavour.

SACGPO aims to implement these practices so that it can produce a more consistent, high-quality product that can compete in both local and international markets. The exchange visit also highlighted how investing in the right equipment and fostering industry connections can drive growth. The use of proper tools in coffee processing can optimize productivity and maintain high standards in production. Lastly, the networking opportunity that this exchange provided has equipped SACGPO with important know-how and relationships that can serve as resources for its future development.

The success of this sub-project ultimately rests on the capacity of SACGPO (i) to secure an increasing volume of raw material (from both its members and non-members); and (ii) to increase the volume of its sales to existing buyers and sell to new buyers/markets. The latter point needs to be the emphasis of capacity building efforts, especially as the FCA is still largely marketing its products domestically (within the immediate vicinity of Sagada). The Business Plan identifies as its target market end-consumers/coffee drinkers who purchase coffee through online platforms and physical stores, as well as retailers or resellers (that trade online or through physical stores). A clearer articulation of the marketing strategy that reflects the level of ambition of the project is necessary.

Background

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C.2 Tuna Consolidation and Marketing with Cold Chain Facilities

[To follow]

Annex D

List of Subproject Covered by the Midterm Evaluation Household Survey by Region and Cohort.

Cluster	Treatment Group			Control Group		
	Region	Name of SP	No. of Respondents	Region	Name of SP	No. of Respondents
Visayas	VII	Baybay City Barangay Water System Development Project	17	VII	Matalom Barangay Water System Development Project	19
North Luzon	I	Construction of San Jose Warehouse with Solar Dryer	10	II	Construction of San Isidro Warehouse with Solar Dryer	10
North Luzon	II	Rehabilitation of Rizal-Abra Farm-to-Market Road	10	II	Rehabilitation of Sinsayon-Cabulay Farm-to-Market Road	10
South Luzon	V	Magsalangi Farm-to-Market Road	13	V	Sitio San Francisco, Brgy Tigbao, Milagros, Masbate (FMR)	11
Mindanao	XII	Concreting of NHW Jct. Crossing Fale-Riverside Farm-to-Market Road	12	XII	Concreting of Polonuling-Simbo Farm-to-Market Road	11
Mindanao	XII	Concreting of NHW Jct-Sitio El Ulit Farm-to-Market Road	15	XII	Concreting of Rang-ay to Lamba FMR	17
Mindanao	XII	Concreting of Sibawan Farm-to-Market Road	14	XII	Concreting of Katipunan-Malinan Farm-to-Market Road	16
Mindanao	XII	Construction of One (1) Unit Brgy. New Panay Warehouse with Solar Dryer	10	X	Construction of Warehouse with Solar Dryer in Brgy. Sto. Nino	10
Mindanao	BARMM	Construction of Brgy. Tapian Fish Landing with Concrete Footbridge	7	X	Construction of Warehouse with Solar Dryer in Brgy. Dalama	13
				BARMM	Construction of Brgy. Baliungan Fish Landing with Concrete Footbridge	7
		TOTAL	108			124