

CABAGO IA stands tall despite the CHALLENGES

by Khristalyn E. Marasigan

During the interview with CABAGO IA President Mr. Macario P. Diego in Calumpit, Bulacan, he recalls the time when there was no Irrigation and farmers couldn't do anything but to wait for the rain to fall.

"Hindi po namin matamnan lahat ang aming bukid ng palay, pira-piraso lang po dahil sa nag-aabang lang kami ng patak ng ulan. Ang pangkaniwang tanim po namin ay mais at tubo kasi wala pa kaming patubig noon.", the 76 years old IA President said.

Mr. Diego narrated the beginnings and struggles of their group that led them to where they are now.

CABAGO IA was organized and operated in 1956 inaugurated and pioneered by Former President Ramon Magsaysay. Big time land owners profit from the irrigation as it become operable. In 1972, lands were awarded to the farmers made possible by Land Reform Program. As time passes by, farmers cultivate and develop their lands but gradually encountered problems with the operation of the irrigation facility. The year 1989 became remarkable for the farmers as they once again re-organized and established the CABAGO IA. This time, they took over the overall operation of the facility with the help and guidance of NIA.

"Sa pamamagitan po ng NIA, kami po ay tinulungan para kami na ang magpatakbo ng aming patubig at doon na po nabuo ang CABAGO, nagkaroon nga po kami ng samahan at nagsimula ang pangalang ito mula sa tatlong Baranggay: ang Calizon, Balungao at Gugo na pinarehistro namin sa SEC noong 1989.", he added.

When asked what are the biggest challenges they encountered and how was it overcome, he proudly answered:

"Ang malaking problema na aming kinakaharap ay ang pagdating ng mga kalamidad kung saan nasisira ang aming pananim tulad ng bagyo at baha. Halos nagkakautang kami at di nakakabayad ngunit nalalagpasan po naming lahat sa pamamagitan ng pagtutulongan naming mga magsasaka at ng mga ahensya na aming nalalapitan tulad ng LGU, DAR at NIA."

CABAGO IA was one of the badly affected areas of Typhoon Pedring and Quiel last 2011 causing heavy damage and loss to lives, crops and properties. They were recipient of relief goods and aid conducted by NIAEASP District III, NIA REGION 3 Multipurpose Cooperative (Formerly AMRIS KBPI) and NIA Reservist on that fatal year.

CABAGO IA with the service area of 150 hectares and 128 members remains standing tall despite the challenges and continually sustained high rating in IA Functionality Survey for CY 2013. The IA got 98.39 average score considering the criteria of Operation and Maintenance, Organization, Financial Performance and Organizational Discipline. This led them to receive the recognition from NIA Region 3 from among the other IAs during the celebration of the agency's 51st Anniversary. CABAGO IA receives the Plaque of Recognition for being the Regional Outstanding IA for CY 2013 under Communal Irrigation Systems Category. In 2012, they also received a Special Award from the NIA Central Office under the same category for National level.

Mr. Diego expresses his deepest gratitude to NIA Region 3 and staff for continuous support and guidance.

"Sa awa po ng Poong Maykapal at mga taong tumutulong sa amin, kami po ay nabubuhay ng maayos at nakakaraos sa mga pangangailangan, taos puso po kaming nagpapasalamat sa inyo."

Congratulations to CABAGO IA!!! You did a great job!!!



Mr. Macario P. Diego, CABAGO IA President shares their IAs experiences during the interview.



The CABAGO IA officials and members at their office.



CABAGO IA Office