

# Rural Development in Philippines



**M**ABUHAY!  
It is a distinct honor to share this message through Agriculture World, a widely respected publication that champions integrated rural development—especially as we celebrate World Rural Development Day and the Foundation Day of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP).

At the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), we stand in full solidarity with the global rural development community in commemorating these significant milestones. These occasions remind us of our shared commitment to uplifting the lives of rural people, and to building communities that are empowered, self-reliant, and just.

Let me share with you the Philippines' strides toward this shared goal.

Since President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. assumed office on July 1, 2022, DAR has accelerated land distribution to our agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs). As of April 2025, we have distributed 204,108 Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs), covering 248,090 hectares of farmland to 198,651

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beneficiaries. Each title handed over is not just a piece of paper but a symbol of justice, empowerment, and hope.

Equitable land ownership is the foundation of rural development. Without it, there can be no meaningful progress, and we are not stopping there.



Historically, our beneficiaries have struggled with annual land amortization payments. Many could not meet these obligations, affecting their productivity and burdening them with debt. Recognizing this, President Marcos Jr. championed the idea of condoning unpaid obligations. This vision culminated in the passage of Republic Act No. 11953, the New Agrarian Emancipation Act, which has freed over 213,000 ARBs from ₱11.6 billion in debt across 283,040 hectares—with more to follow.

This transformative law allows our farmers to redirect their resources toward improving their farms and exploring sustainable livelihoods. It has given them not



only economic relief but also renewed dignity.

We are also pressing forward with the Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titling (SPLIT) Project, which empowers ARBs by providing clear, secure, and individually titled land ownership—enabling easier access to credit, investment, and market opportunities.

These programs reflect a more profound truth: rural development is not just about land. It is about people—about equipping our farmers with the tools, freedom, and opportunities to thrive.

As we mark this twin celebration with CIRDAP, we proudly share our story with fellow member countries. Through mutual learning, collaboration, and solidarity, we can raise rural development standards across Asia and the Pacific.

Let this day renew our shared commitment to putting our farmers at the heart of development, ending rural poverty, and building an inclusive, abundant, and strong countryside.

Mabuhay ang mga magsasaka! Mabuhay ang repormang agraryo! Mabuhay ang CIRDAP!

