

January to March 2017

ACCESS

The Official Magazine of the Agricultural Training Institute



LOLA MILA

Championing
Urban Agriculture

at 84 -p.4



What's *inside*

A **treat** for
women p.3

**The Beckon of Urban Gardening
a success story of Jorge Fat Trinidad** p.10

contents

1 NEWS

A treat for women: ATI holds free seminars on agri technologies

2 NEWS

DA USec. Cayanan to ATI: 'Keep on publishing'

4 COVER STORY

Lola Mila: Championing Urban Agriculture at 84

10 FEATURE

The Beckon of Urban Gardening a success story of Jorge Fat Trinidad

13 INSIGHTS



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Published by the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Printed in the Republic of the Philippines

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ISSN 2546-0315

A treat for women

ATI holds free seminars on agri technologies

by Iseult Kyllie T. Capacio

To welcome the Women's Month, the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) conducted six free seminars last March 2, 2017 at the Rural Development Education Center in Quezon City.

Some successful women farmers from all over the country served as speakers in these seminars that focused on different farming and fishing technologies including Virgin Coconut Oil Processing; Vegetable and Fruit Puree Production; Honey Bee Production and Processing; Making Bags and Accessories out of Water Lily; Seaweed Processing; and Herbal Soap Making.

With the theme "Honoring Trailblazing Women in Agricultural Enterprise", the ATI's Women's Month Celebration also gave way for an expository tour at Duran Farm in Bulacan on March 3.

Speaking to over 50 participants from various Rural Improvement Clubs nationwide, Desiree Duran shared how she started farming, further inspiring other women



Farmer-entrepreneur Marie Grace Halibas (left) demonstrates the process in making mango-squash puree.

farmers to reach their full potentials in agriculture.

"I appreciate her [Duran's] efforts, especially because we are both women farmers. *Sana ay mas maraming ma-inspire na magsimulang venture sa agrikultura* because there's really money in agriculture," said Irene Maria Binahon of Binahon Agroforestry Farm, an ATI Learning Site in Mindanao.

The Duran Farm is an agri-tourism site that started as a one-hectare,

family-owned land. Establishing the farm didn't only help Duran to finance her children's education, it also became a way for her to provide livelihood to women in Bulacan.

Apart from the free seminars and farm tour, a symposium on Magna Carta on Women and a discussion on the importance of women in agriculture were held as part of the Institute's three-day celebration of Women's Month.

More Nutrition, Less Hunger through Edible Landscaping

by Erika Z. Vizcarra

In its advocacy to promote backyard farming in rural and urban areas, the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) held a free seminar on Edible Landscaping at its Central Office on January 31, 2017.

Interested private individuals and agriculture enthusiasts from Metro Manila, Laguna, and Rizal, among others, attended the activity. Agriculturist Mark Nello Alvarez of ATI's Partnership and Accreditation Division provided an introduction to edible landscaping, including its purposes, processes,

elements, principles, and things to consider in designing one's landscape. He likewise highlighted the importance of ensuring food security and sustainability, particularly the eradication of hunger and malnutrition in the country.

DA USec. Cayanan to ATI:

'Keep on publishing'

by Erika Z. Vizcarra



DA Undersecretary for Operations Ariel Cayanan commends the ATI's launch of six new publications.

In the opening ceremony of its 30th anniversary celebration, Department of Agriculture Undersecretary for Operations Ariel Cayanan strongly urged the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) to ensure the continuous transfer of information and technology from generation to generation through publications.

"Please do not keep whatever useful and ingenious knowledge you have. Keep on publishing. By writing learning modules, we are multiplying ourselves. In doing so, we are converting knowledge into materials that will go places, touch, and change lives," he said as he spoke to the assembly of ATI employees from the central and regional offices.

USec. Cayanan also spoke of the power of extension work,

“By writing learning modules, we are multiplying ourselves. In doing so, we are converting knowledge into materials that will go places, touch, and change lives.”

underscoring how extension workers can transform the minds of farmers and fishers in the adoption of effective technologies and practices.

"Allow me to emphasize your role here. While we make the plans and directives, your primary mandate is going to the grassroots and, at the end of the day, our real stakeholders are at the grassroots.

So, no matter how good our plans are, being able to reach out to our stakeholders heart to heart is much more important. I hope that you recognize that the trust of the people is in you," he added.

Recalling how ATI was able to undertake some of the Department's projects and programs, USec. Cayanan commended the Institute for its capacity to provide excellent service. "ATI just keeps getting better every year; I am very much excited for what is in store for this Institute in terms of information and technology," he said.

The opening ceremony for the ATI's 30th anniversary celebration was held at the Institute's Central Office in Quezon City on January 23.

Of Giving One's Self to Extension Work

Erika Z. Vizcarra

The contributions of the men and women in extension services are front and center during the celebration of the 30th founding year of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI).

Recognizing human resources as the lifeblood of ATI since its establishment — after the merging of then Bureau of Agricultural Extension, Philippine Agricultural Training Council, and Philippine Training Centers for Rural Development.



Some 64 ATI employees from the Central Office and training centers received loyalty awards for their 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, and 40th years in service.

OIC-Director Luz Taposok and Deputy Director Afredo Aton handed the plaques to the loyalty awardees who also served as inspiration to other ATI employees in dedicating themselves to serving more farmers and fishers in years ahead.

The awarding ceremony was held last January 26, 2017 at the ATI Compound.

DA, ATI Aim for Climate Resilient Agriculture and Fisheries Communities

Angelica Marie T. Umali

Facing the challenge of transferring climate information as extension messages to the most vulnerable sectors of the community, the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) recently conducted the "National Workshop on Planning and Targeting Climate Resilient Agriculture (CRA) Livelihoods and Communities Focused on Vulnerability Assessment."

About 37 Climate Change focal persons of ATI's network of training centers and the Department of Agriculture's Regional Field Offices (DA-RFOs) participated in the workshop. The three-day training consisted of a lecture-type discussion and a series workshops for them to have a sense of ownership in developing baseline profiles, criteria for selection of livelihood beneficiaries, and formulation of monitoring tools and action plans.

Hence, these aim to ensure that the farming and fishing households can maintain a certain degree of livelihood that can withstand intense heat and typhoons, contributing to a climate-smart community.

The said training was graced by Magnolia Rosimo, Rene Vidallo, Vicente Dayanghirang, Jr., Franklin Bel Isip, Bernard James Tandang and Dr. Esteban Godilano who served as resource persons.

They talked about Understanding the Participatory Vulnerability Assessment (PVA); Conducting the PVA; Assessment of Agriculture and Fishery Resource Management for Determining the Baseline Indicators' Characterization; Criteria for Selection of Livelihood Beneficiaries; A HILING Project Experience of ATI-RTC IVA; Purpose and Use of Monitoring Tools; and Access and Use of

the Department of Agriculture's National Color Coded Maps, respectively.

Through this workshop, the convergence among the stakeholders is encouraged for an effective planning and targeting of CRA livelihoods and communities which includes training and livelihood kits. The consolidated workshop outputs will serve as a standard tool in conducting PVAs.

This national workshop was conducted to operationalize the program, "Integrating Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction in AF Extension Policies, Programs and Projects" of ATI.

Spearheaded by ATI's Policy and Planning Division, the activity was held last March 6-8, 2017 at the Rural Development Education Center of the ATI Central Office.

Lola Mila: Championing Urban Agriculture @



by Iseult Kyllie T. Capacio

At 84, Lola Mila's advocacy for agriculture has lens still afresh. Joining one of the Agricultural Training Institute's street caravan, she emphasized how it granted her desire to share agriculture with her community.

Tucked in a quaint space at the Brgy. Krus Na Ligas, Quezon City, a Rural Improvement Club-Children Center (RIC-CC) has been a noticeable establishment for years now. Among its pillars were women who spearheaded its programs and development, one of which is smiling grandmother Milagros Notario, also known as Lola Mila.

As the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), through its Partnerships and Accreditation Division (PAD), went around the Metro to share about Urban Farming, the RIC-CC came to be one of the first few centers that welcomed the caravan. In fact, it was one of the first communities to invite the Institute to come over this 2017.

January 31 was when, together with her grandchild, Lola Mila particularly eased by to learn about what the ATI had to share.

Urban farming: its definition, its practice, its benefits, its demonstration. Urbano listened throughout the activity, even allowing her grandson to try planting small seeds on a soil which was placed inside a used, cut water bottle.

**“Napakaganda
po ng ibinahagi
ninyo sa amin.
Wala man kaming
malawak na lupain,
pwede pa rin palang
magtanim.”**

During the late 90's, Lola Mila took over the management of the RIC-CC for three years. However, even after her service as its president, her loyalty to the club did not waver. It grew.

“Napakaganda po ng ibinahagi ninyo sa amin. Wala man kaming malawak na lupain, pwede pa rin palang magtanim,” she mused, noting that all this time it was her desire to share things such as these to her community members.



Kids participate during the caravan team's demonstration.

Delighted, the 84-year-old participant shared that she could now monitor her neighbors' plants, as well as her grandson's. Who could have thought that the learning would not stop with the adults but to the next generation as well?

The value of sharing was understood by Notario, one which the ATI underscores in its own programs and innovations. One of the avenues by which ATI promotes knowledge-sharing is through the ATIng Gulayan Street Caravan.



The caravan team with the RIC members pose for a quick photo.

As the Institute's initiative on urban agriculture, ATIng Gulayan ng DA Street Caravan aims to inform every Filipino in the Metro that food sustainability is not out of reach in the cities. Through its continued caravan in cities, communities, and schools such as the RIC-CC, it is the ATI's hope that more women such as Lola Mila will not lose hope in their desire to share what it means to go green, one neighbor at a time.



Lola Mila shines on stage as she shares her insights after of the ATIng Gulayan ng DA Street Caravan held in their barangay.



Participants huddle for a discussion on the basics of 5S.

ISO Today: Empowering Personnel Thru Learning Opportunity

Angelica Marie T. Umali

A total of 58 participants involved in Quality Management System of Agricultural Training Institute and its network of training centers participate in the Training Workshop on ISO's 5S (Sort, Systematized, Sweep, Sanitize, Self-Discipline) Good Housekeeping and Seminar Workshop on Records Disaster Preparedness and Business Continuity.

Highlighting "engagement of the people" as one of the quality management principles, personnel who handle documented information are vital in an ISO certified agency. In line with this, there is a need to empower them towards good housekeeping practices in conformity to ISO 9001:2015, specifically Clause 7.5—Production and Service Provision.

"Lahat nagsisimula sa isa, tapos susunod na yung iba. 5S should be practiced spontaneously and willingly as a way of life by everyone."

Resource Person Renato G. Liamzon, BSECE-, noted that everyone should develop appreciation on the importance of an effective records management.

The 5S process is originally developed for manufacturing companies in Japan by Hiroyuki Hirano. The principles of 5S translate well to any work environment, may it be corporate or government offices, to achieve total organization, cleanliness, and standardization. This training course aims to provide the said participants a learning opportunity and in-depth discussion on work productivity and quality improvement tools and approaches, employing active and participative learning through lectures, workshops, and structured learning exercises.

The two-day training was held at the Rural Development Education Center, ATI Compound, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City last February 7-8 2017.

ATI to support agri productivity in 22 poor provinces

Erika Z. Vizcarra

Some 22 poorest provinces in the country are set to reap from good agricultural harvests with the new partnership formed between the ATI and local government units (LGUs).

Through the program "Increasing Agricultural Productivity towards Food Security and Poverty Alleviation: Extension Support to the Twenty Two Provinces with Highest Poverty Incidence in the Philippines", the ATI is set to provide technical assistance to different farming and fishing communities to increase their agricultural productivity.

In two ceremonies held separately in Misamis Occidental and Cebu, officials from the ATI, provincial LGUs and local offices of the Department of the Interior and Local Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

The commitment signing was held for representatives from Mindanao last February 15 in Tangub City while the ceremony for the Luzon and Visayas areas was held last February 21 in Cebu City.

Free Seminar on Mushroom Production draws more than 500 guests

by Iseult Kyllie T. Capacio

The Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), as the apex of extension services in the Philippines, is continuously expanding its tent in delivering agriculture-related information to its Filipino clientele.

Last February 10, 2017, the ATI held its second free seminar for the year on mushroom production at the Rural Development and Education Center (RDEC).

More than 500 guests came from the various regions in Luzon, coming from as far as the Cordillera Administrative Region to the Bicol Region. The participants are comprised of businessmen, young professionals, employees from public and private offices, and students.

Engr. Renato B. Dela Cruz, chief of the ATI-Partnerships and Accreditation Division, announced that there will be more free seminars for the masses to take part in, including the continuation of seminars on mushroom, down to its marketing and packaging.

ATI Deputy Director Alfredo S. Aton as well hoped the participants would learn a lot and enjoy the seminar.



Meanwhile, the program included interactive and participative lectures which was facilitated by Senior Agriculturist and Bureau of Plant Industry's National Focal Person on Mushroom Production, Dr. Mary Ann B. Guerrero.

Her discussion centered on mushroom cultivation, such as its types, its benefits, a step-by-step process in growing mushroom, as well as cultivation technologies used for different kinds of mushroom.

In the afternoon, a technology demonstration on mushroom cultivation and production was held.

Likewise, a sharing about Urban Container Gardening, particularly about a technology called "Enriched Potting Preparation", was facilitated by Eduardo Panimbatan, Jr., a former professor at the University of the Philippines Los Banos and the developer of the technology himself.

Following the seminar on edible landscaping last January 31, the free seminar on mushroom production is part of the monthly free seminars that ATI offers.

For more information about these seminars, visit the Facebook page "ATIng Gulayan ng DA" or call the Farmers' Contact Center at (02) 9822474 or 0920-9462474.



A participant raises a questions during Dr. Guerrero's lecture on Mushroom Cultivation.

Inspiring, Influencing and Achieving Results: A Training Series on Leadership and Management Skills

Angelica Marie T. Umali

“When there is courage and encouragement, the progress is greater. A timely word of encouragement, always motivates, helps and strengthens; it produces the best of benefits.”

– Lead Core Training and Consultancy

The Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) continuously enhances the knowledge and skills of local government units (LGU) extension personnel in becoming effective leaders, managers, and in developing a team that is beneficial to their respective units. A series of “Inspiring, Influencing and Achieving Results: Leadership and Management Skills Training for Extension Managers” is being conducted by the institute’s Career Development and Management Division.

The first two batches were

simultaneously held on February 20-24, 2017 in Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro and Panabo City, Davao del Norte. A total of 61 municipal agriculturists from Regions MIMAROPA and XI participated the said activity.

With the facilitation from technical experts Steve A. Sandoval and Danilo Carreon of the Lead Core Training and Consultancy, the participants were able to gain knowledge on building a team mission and vision, on influence and leadership, and on managerial skills.

Moreover, they also learned the concepts through the Concept-Interaction-Application method of learning where they connected their experiences, both in the present and in the past, to the exercises given to them.

There will be 11 more batches of this training for 2017. The third batch, which is solely intended for municipal agriculturists in CARAGA, is scheduled on March 6-10, 2017 at the Rural Development Education Center, ATI Compound, Diliman, Quezon City.



Participants write the issues they wanted to be addressed during the Leadership and Management Skills Training.



Agriculture Extension Workers: The Leaders and Managers of the AF Sector

Angelica Marie T. Umali

Participants are all smiles as they participate in one of the activities during the Training on Extension Management for Municipal Agriculturists last February 13-17.

The five-day training aims to equip these municipal agriculturists with working knowledge and skills to become effective leaders and extension managers.

The Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) values the role of extension workers as the front-line agents of change in building and maintaining relationships; getting and giving information; influencing people, and decision-making.

Just as the Institute commits to strengthen the competitiveness and capacities of the Agriculture and Fishery (AF) sector, its Career Development and Management Division recently held the first among this year's three batches of Training on Extension Management for Municipal Agriculturists on February 13-17, 2017.

As part of the training, 33 Municipal Agriculturists from Region II participated in the lecture, plenary discussions, and role-playing exercises. The course covered modules on introduction to agricultural extension management, extension worker as professional, and leadership in extension.

The five-day training aims to equip these municipal agriculturists with working knowledge and skills to become effective leaders and extension managers. Specifically, to empower them in adapting to change, overcoming resistance, and adopting innovative and efficient management techniques to remain high performers.

Through the facilitation of resource person Dr. Evelyn Aro-Esquejo, the participants were able to accomplish their individual action plans. These action plans are expected to be implemented within a year after this training.

The second batch of the Training on Extension Management for Municipal Agriculturists is scheduled on March 20-24, 2017 in Misamis Oriental, followed by the third batch on April 17-21, 2017 in Pangasinan.

The Beckon of Urban Gardening a success story of Jorge Fat Trinidad

Merrian Piquero Soliva, ATI-RTC VII

The yearning to eat freshly-picked and safe vegetables in the backyard is one of the many reasons why Jorge Fat Trinidad ventured into urban gardening. Aside from that, he considers gardening as a therapy and the best exercise after an eight-hour butt-stressing and eye-and-neck-straining office work with bunch of papers at hand.

He is the Dormitory Manager II of Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center 7 and at the same time the Acting Cashier.

A graduate of Bachelor of Science in Commerce major in Accounting with units in Master in Public Administration, Jorge has served 25 years in the government with two (2) years as casual; one (1) year temporary and 23 years as permanent employee. Through his perseverance and dedication, he rose from emergency labourer to artist Illustrator II to his present position and designation.

A native of Barili, Cebu, Jorge is married to Ma. Socorro Aradillos, a government employee with four (4) children, all professionals. They live in Mabuhay Village, Dao District, Tagbilaran City.

ROAD TO URBAN GARDENING

With the enticing power of the internet and the sharing among resource speakers during training, Mr. Trinidad was motivated to do urban gardening.

For him, "it takes only few seconds to plant a single seedling but the satisfaction can be felt in minutes, hours, days, months and even years. I am grateful for at least I am helping the environment in my own little way." Thus, his 342 square meter house area thrived as his gardening-playground.

Rewind. His love of farming can be traced during his childhood because his uncle, who was

"It takes only few seconds to plant a single seedling but the satisfaction can be felt in minutes, hours, days, months and even years. I am grateful for at least I am helping the environment in my own little way."

an agriculturist, planted a variety of plants together with his farmer-parents and older sisters who were so active and even graduates of

the university-on-the-air/school-on-the-air and they inspired and motivated him in this craft.

As far as his memory served him right, there were times that middle men went to their farm to buy their produce because they have more, even after they set aside for their consumption. Though it's not yet organically grown then, since they were still adhering to the Masagana 99 program.

Fast forward. With such innate inspiration, Jorge as we fondly call him in the office practice urban gardening in their home nestled at one of the old subdivision in the city of Tagbilaran, province of Bohol for the past five (5) years.

Among the containerized vegetables and spices he's growing organically include eggplant, ampalaya, tomato, spring onion, pepper, squash, radish, pechay and lettuce. He recalled that his produce reached as many as 50 kilos in total.

MOTIVATION TO DO MORE

With his harvest, he is more motivated to pursue urban gardening because aside from family consumption, he was able to share his harvest to friends and officemates.

Jorge said, "it's a delight sharing our fruits of labor to friends, even if I only have basic knowledge on

how to grow plants because for me planting as many vegetables, herbs and spices in my little space using organic-inputs such as vermicast and nature farming system is a joy to behold."

Through this practice, their domestic wastes were properly segregated. All that are biodegradable are placed in their compost pile while residual materials were taken by the roving truck that regularly collects garbage in the city. Jorge further stressed that the soil he harvested from his compost are the very soil used in his urban gardening. It is not just cheap and nature-based but safe for our health.

Jorge disclosed by saying, "as long as I can plant, I will continue this activity because as an employee of the Department of Agriculture specifically ATI who trained individuals to do farming, I think I have the responsibility to do this to showcase that it's not good to just do all the talking but doing as well. This little contribution of mine to achieve our vision and mission is already a feat of a lifetime."

He further said that "Today, I wish all my neighbours here in the village will do the same, if this effort will be replicated among the villagers, we can consider this as the first village in the city to grow organic plants in our own landscape."

Moreover, Jorge is very much happy and privileged that ATI-RTC

VII and the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) provided him plenty of seeds and planting materials plus an opportunity to visit organic farms to learn new technologies at the same time exposure trip.

With this experience, Jorge is not just considered as a model employee because he walks the talk but a good citizen who is not solely dependent on what he earned but what he can do to augment their living, and most importantly do something for the environment.

"As long as I can plant, I will continue this activity because as an employee of the Department of Agriculture specifically ATI, I think I have the responsibility to do this to showcase that it's not good to just do all the talking but doing as well. This little contribution of mine to achieve our vision and mission is already a feat of a lifetime."

Government Quality Management Committee recognizes ATI

Angelica Marie T. Umali

Valuing a quality agricultural extension and training service delivery, the Government Quality Management Committee (GQMC) recently awarded the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) with a plaque of recognition for successfully establishing a Quality Management System Certification to ISO 9001:2008 standards.

Moreover, selected training centers of the ATI from regions II, VI, VIII, XIII, Caraga, Cordillera Administrative Region, and International Training Center on Pig Husbandry have successfully earned the certification, passing last year's surveillance audit which covered development and provision of trainings, knowledge products and services, accreditation of extension service providers, scholarships, alliance building, national extension system planning, and monitoring and evaluation.

Along with 179 government agencies, the ATI is able to enhance their efficiency, reliability, responsiveness, and transparency, proving that the public sector can also comply with the said ISO standards.



Deputy Director Aton receives the award for the ATI at GMQC's 4th Recognition Ceremony (grabbed photo release)

The awarding ceremony's Guest of Honor, Vice President Maria Leonora "Leni" Robredo, congratulated the awardees commending their dedication, hard work, and sacrifices to attain the certification. Moreover, Department of Budget and Management Secretary and GQMC Chairman, Benjamin E. Diokno challenged the awardees to continuously improve the commitment of delivering quality service.

This is in accordance with Executive Order No. 605, which refers to Institutionalizing the Structure, Mechanisms and Standards to Implement the Government Quality Management Program,

Amending for the Purpose Administrative Order No. 161, series of 2006), the program aims to strengthen institutional capacities of public

sector organizations in delivering citizen-focused public services and in implementing international standards-based quality management system.

The GQMC is composed of the DBM Secretary as Chairman, the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry as Co-chair, Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government, Deputy Executive Secretary, Office of the President-Internal Audit Office and President of the Development Academy of the Philippines as members.

Deputy Director Alfredo Aton received the award in behalf of ATI during GQMC's 4th Recognition Ceremony held at Diosdado Macapagal Auditorium, Landbank Plaza, Malate, Manila last November 2016.

Don't *fly* solo

Hazel Grace T. Taganas

“

Extension work is never done.

That's why the need for a team who will share carry the load, enabling us to travel light. A team who will help you bounce back when you get discouraged and frustrated. A team who will help you discover what really matters.



Hazel Grace T. Taganas is a Training Center Superintendent I at ATI-RTC VIII.

Like the rest of the RTCs, we aren't spared from numbers this year. We have to conduct nth times training and other extension activities. There are things to do in preparation for the ISO 9001:2015. We will be implementing a program for the 22 provinces with high incidence of poverty, and in our region, it's the province of Leyte and the three provinces in Samar Island. We have on-going rehabilitation of our facility. These make our hands full and overflowing.

I like "full and overflowing". It suggests abundance and blessing. It reminds me of sharing, of taking part and of support network. It also reminds me of our dependence on others and much more on God which enables me to handle the pressure over the long haul, over the year and the years to come.

Extension work is never done. Our services are always called for. That's why the need for a team who will share carry the load, enabling us to travel light. A team who will help you bounce back when you get discouraged and frustrated. A team who will help you discover what really matters.

The team spirit was flamed anew in IS limitless.

Limitless. It goes beyond boundaries, beyond what we have now, beyond what we are now. That is ATI. That is IS, nothing less. Talk about creative ideas, innovative activities, excellent information exchange, team that works, contagious laughter and many more. These happened in the 1st KM 2017. I was there soaring high with the teams regardless of colors.

“ I think this is the best activity I've participated in, so far. Especially with how I have seen the camaraderie between the teams during the team-building activities. I look forward to more learning opportunities with ATI.

Jonabelle Taggueg
Information Assistant, RTC II

“ Many misunderstand the meaning of the name "Jihad" as it is more popularly known as "struggle"; but it also means "charity". In this case, to do jihad, I will be sharing the knowledge that I have gained and replicate the team-building activities for the farmers in their training.

Jihad Mandi
MalMar Project Officer

* These are some of the Information Services team staff's insights during their 1st Knowledge Management (KM) Updates of 2017, an avenue where the whole IS staff can convene to re-establish teamwork and share each region's best practices.



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