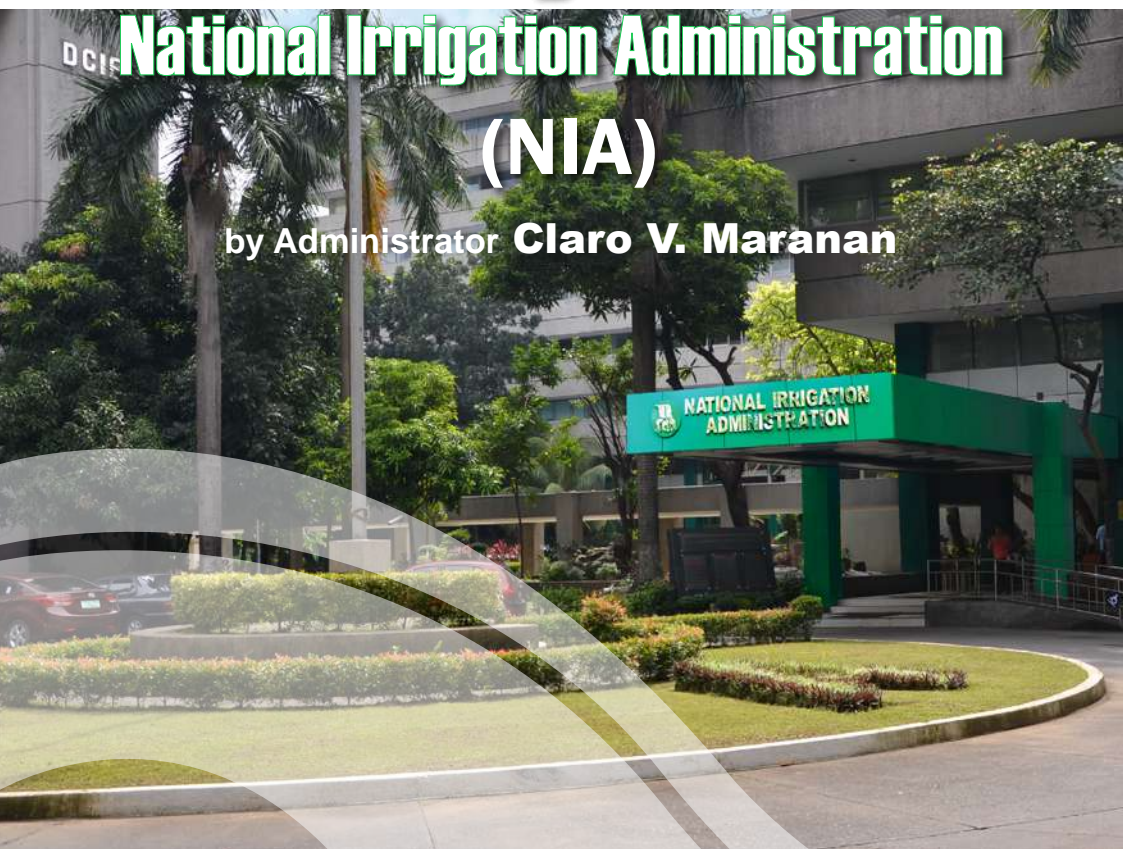




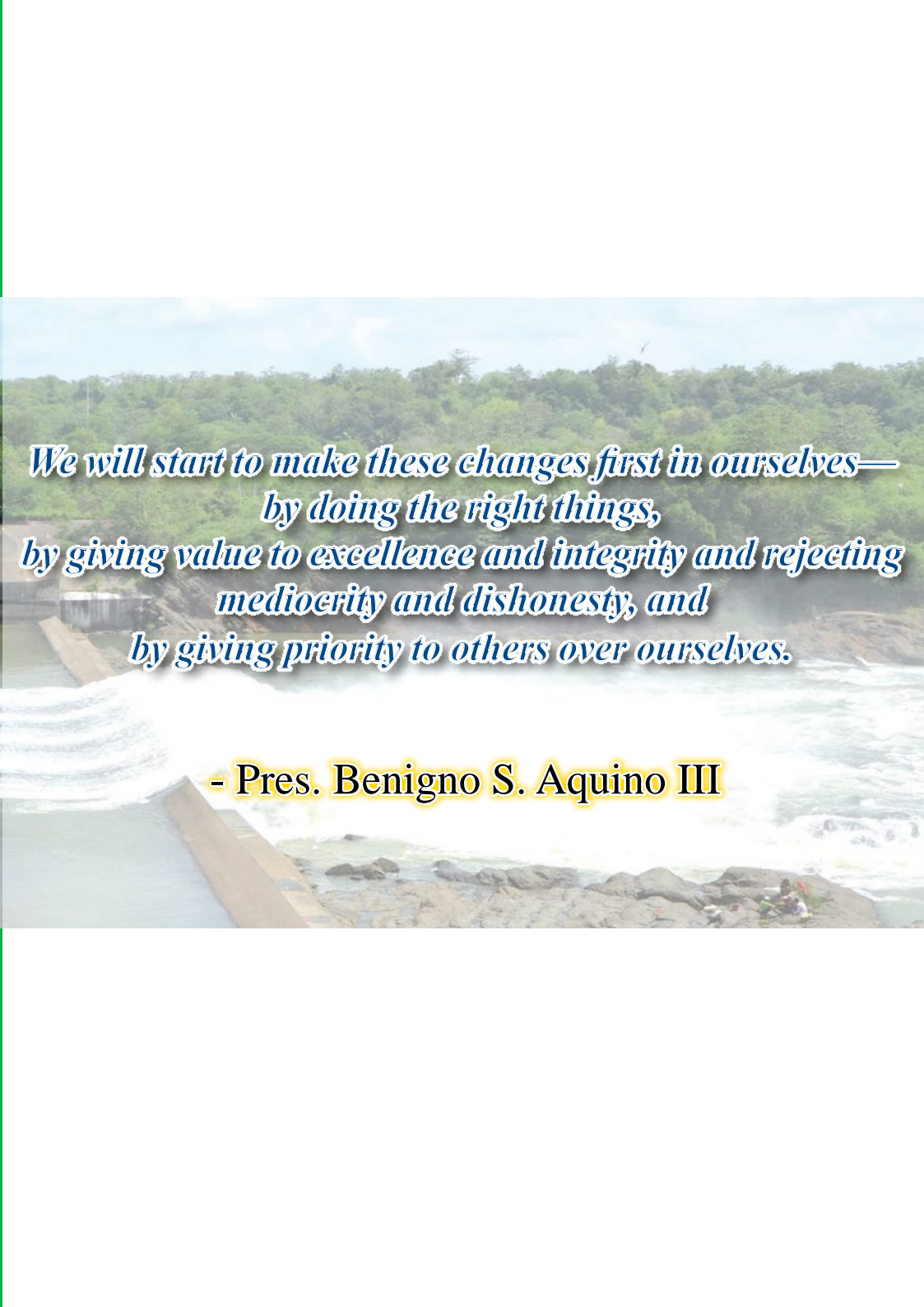
A Renewed Commitment to
Organizational Excellence

7-Point Program for the National Irrigation Administration (NIA)

by Administrator **Claro V. Maranan**







*We will start to make these changes first in ourselves—
by doing the right things,
by giving value to excellence and integrity and rejecting
mediocrity and dishonesty, and
by giving priority to others over ourselves.*

- Pres. Benigno S. Aquino III

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A Renewed Commitment to Organizational Excellence: 7-Point Program for the National Irrigation Administration (NIA)

By: Administrator Claro V. Maranan



I. INTRODUCTION

On its 50th year, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is facing its biggest challenge yet. As a Government Owned and Controlled Corporation (GOCC), it is mandated to develop and manage the country's water resources for irrigation and to provide the necessary technical services for the sustainable agricultural development program of the Government.

During the Agency's Anniversary celebration last June 25, 2013, President Benigno S. Aquino III emphasized the important role that NIA plays in the fulfillment of the Administration's Social Contract with the Filipino people with its three cornerstones, namely:

- i. Anti-corruption and Transparent, Accountable, and Participatory Governance;
- ii. Poverty Reduction and Empowerment of the Poor and Vulnerable; and
- iii. Rapid, Inclusive, and Sustained Economic Growth.

Referring to NIA's importance in achieving these cornerstones with emphasis on the third cornerstone, the current Administration sees the development of the country's Agriculture and Fishing industries as priority areas for economic development and job generation in the communities. Moreover, the international Non-Government Organization (NGO) Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) warns of an imminent global food shortage in the near future brought about by climate change. It is therefore with much urgency that the Philippines needs to become self-sufficient in rice production to feed its people. Success in this area will depend largely on NIA's efficient delivery of irrigation services.

As the newly appointed 22nd Administrator, I accepted the challenge of transforming NIA into a high-performance organization responsive to the changing times to effectively carry out its mandate.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

With all its available resources, expectations are high for the Government to be the performance leader in Nation-building. This is the theme of the President's Social Contract with the Filipino People and I hold myself accountable for its realization in NIA. There is urgency to this message, considering the unprecedented challenges the Filipino, and the whole world, are facing today with the increasing complexities of globalization, climate change, technological advancement, and changing moral values.

But the President cannot do it alone. Thus, all public sector organizations need to step up to performance leadership as well.

Upon assumption to office, I assessed the current state of the NIA organization. Obstacles in the system were evident – deeply entrenched mindset and attitude, too much preoccupation with traditional operational and reactionary functions, internal discord, and too much top-down management and lack of real empowerment. There are challenges that are needed to be addressed foremost of which is the institutionalization of a culture of excellence and reforming the unresponsive system in the Agency.

As a result, annual targets are not being met, the Agency despite having a lot of financial support from the National Government, continue to operate at a loss. The Rationalization Plan which was intended to streamline operations instead led to a decline in organizational performance. Furthermore, NIA was little prepared for the negative effects of climate change on its irrigation facilities, farmer-stakeholders, and food production in general.

III. CHANGE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

During my first few weeks in NIA as Senior Deputy Administrator, after having briefings with all departments, I already got a glimpse of the things that need to be improved in the Agency. After consultations with the stakeholders, especially the employees, irrigators associations (farmers) and others. It further confirmed my earlier view that there is a need to make NIA responsive as a Government Corporation and as an attached agency to the Department of Agriculture.

During that time, I suggested several improvements that were not addressed before in the organization. Some have been given positive responses and actions but some were ignored.

The day I was installed as Administrator, I asked myself further: “What can I do to recover NIA’s lost performance?”. It was in these early days that I conceptualized and formulated the 7-Point Program that I think would be the better answer for NIA to become a high-performing organization once again, committed to excellence, and contributing positively to inclusive growth.

Change Goals

The overarching goal of the 7-Point Program focuses on **setting the direction and scope of the Agency** under a new leadership. Given the circumstances of the organization, the effort is an initial move to outline the immediate course of action on various aspects of organizational and operational performance. Though the program is not unique in terms of content, its main feature is the urgency of having it done to make the Agency more responsive. The 7-Point Program is a Framework of what needs to be done in the Agency.

Objectives

The 7-Point Program represents the first level of organizational initiative to get to “desirable ends with available means.” The program has the following objectives:

1. Provide creative and immediate solutions to the urgent problems confronting NIA;
2. Rally the support of employees and officers in carrying out the Change Strategy;
3. Document the program for future reference as a learning organization committed to continuing improvement.

7-Point Program as a Change Strategy

The 7-Point Program is a change platform consistent with the President's vision of the Philippines which depicts a country with *transformational leaders, a government dedicated to honing and mobilizing people's skills and energies as well as the responsible harnessing of natural resources, and the value for excellence and integrity*. The Program identifies key points and outlines the change initiatives to be undertaken to achieve desired results.


1. RAPID DELIVERY OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS
2. ACCURATE REPORTING AND MONITORING SYSTEM
3. ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS AND PROCESS INNOVATIONS
4. CORPORATE FINANCIAL PROFITABILITY
5. EMPOWERED AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING OF EMPLOYEES
6. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION
7. BUILD STRONGER COMMITMENT TO FARMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

IV. CONCLUSION

With the compelling visions of “Daang Matuwid” and “Kung walang kurap, walang mahirap”, the message is clear that under President Aquino's Administration, all government institutions must either “shape up or ship out.”

This holds true with the National Irrigation Administration, an important player in the crucial role of the country's agricultural food self-sufficiency programs. Blessed with an abundance of natural resources, there is no reason why the Filipino farmer cannot participate in the fruits of economic growth.

Thus, with a renewed commitment to excellence, the dedicated men and women of NIA are ending the age of “blame, reasons, and excuses.” The old, ineffective structures will be transformed into innovative systems and processes responsive to the demands of NIA and its stakeholders. Taking full responsibility for results, the next ten years of NIA will be the greatest decade ever.



CLARO V. MARANAN
Administrator



THE 7-POINT PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION (NIA)



**RAPID AND EFFICIENT DELIVERY
OF IRRIGATION PROJECT**

1.0

1.0 RAPID AND EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS

This point aims to address the twin problems of **project procurement** and **project implementation**.

Provision of irrigation infrastructure is crucial to the attainment of food production program specifically in attaining rice self-sufficiency. While huge amount is invested annually in irrigation, a sluggish growth is noted with only 55% of the country's irrigable agricultural land developed for irrigation and the slow progress of generating new track for irrigation while considerable resources are focused on restoration and rehabilitation projects.

Project implementation is characterized by delays. Projects are behind schedule, with negative slippages, and late starts causing the clogging of irrigation project for implementation. Problem causing delays in delivering irrigation projects is generally internal. Review of projects showed that as of June 2013, NIA has achieved a mere 17% of its target, thus, resulting to backlogs, overlapping, and carry-over projects.

The bulk of procurement activities for irrigation projects are lodged in the Central Office. The recent implementation of NIA-Rationalization Plan considerably reduced manpower. Hence, with limited manpower performing irrigation design, review, and procurement, it is expected that some projects have been halted. While outsourcing of technical services is employed, the result proved inadequate to meet the expected output. To fast-track project implementation, the following strategies will be pursued:

1.1 Capability Build-up

This shall address the delay in the project implementation. The personnel involved in the Pre-engineering works shall be continuously developed. More training on the design of dams and embankments shall be conducted to update skills of existing staff both at the Central and Field Offices. On the procurement aspect, the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Technical Working Group (TWG) members and BAC Secretariat will have continuous learning on procurement laws and processes.

By building employee capability in project implementation, project supervision is expected to be enhanced thus ensuring that quality projects are implemented in the most efficient manner guided by sound engineering practices. In improving the employees and officers project procurement skills, the bidding process will become more transparent, efficient and effective, thus eliminating the problem of clogging of projects for implementation.

1.2 Decentralization

This shall not only involve increasing the Delegated Authority of the Regional Offices but also responsibilities and functions for the approval of irrigation designs and authority to enter into Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) with the LGUs.

Decentralization of bidding activities will expedite project preparation and implementation and will easily address areas of concern identify problem areas or loopholes in case project encounters problem.

1.3 Procurement

Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184 shall be adhered to and shall be properly internalize. “No Room for Error” shall be observed.

Aside from decentralization earlier mentioned, a proactive stance to project implementation is the advanced procurement activities in the last quarter of the current year. This will allow projects to start in the first quarter for succeeding year in time for the dry season and will surely deliver projects on time.

NIA will also strive to formulate an agency with procurement manual in accordance to the requirements of RA 9184 and it's IRR.

1.4 Pipeline Projects

Each Regional/Field Office shall establish pipeline projects consistent with the Master Plan (for formulation) as basis of Project Identification and Prioritization Process. This will minimize problem on Right of Way, inappropriate design, wrong location of irrigation facilities and uncooperative irrigation users or local government units.

1.5 Adoption/Execution of the Irrigation Development Process

Corollary to Item 1.4, the Irrigation Development Process or the Participatory Approach Program wherein beneficiaries/users are involved in the various project cycles shall be re-instituted/improved.

1.6 Project Monitoring and Evaluation

A proper monitoring, evaluation, and reporting system shall be installed. Adherence to Calibrated Action on Projects with Negative Slippages shall be strictly implemented. Blacklisting of undesirable contractors shall be imposed and Termination/Rescission of contract shall be properly observed.

1.7 MOA with Local Government Units

A number of projects implemented by Local Government Units have been found problematic. As the scheme is a binding agreement, review of existing policy shall be conducted to include criteria on technical capability of LGU's.

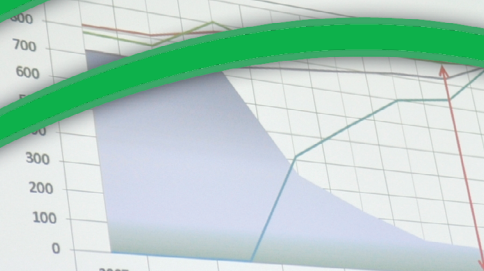
1.8 Geo-tagging

To promote transparency and public disclosure and to facilitate project validation, progress monitoring and review, geo-location or Web-based Mapping System shall be mandatory. With the aid of computer and digital technology such as photos, web-site roams, project activities can be easily monitored with high precision.





...ing, Registration and ... PDP IAS as of September 2013



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Old contracts	718	714	727	303	520	520	520
IA Organized	813	815					
IA Registered	786						
With contracts	718						
Model contracts							



ACCURATE REPORTING AND
MONITORING SYSTEM

2.0

2.0 ACCURATE REPORTING AND MONITORING SYSTEM

The presence of incongruent if not highly dispersed data from various NIA explains the need to rectify/reconcile and update irrigation data and information. Error is noted in the blown up report on the accomplishment of target area. Wide discrepancy is attributed to haphazard if not loose monitoring system evidenced by different monitoring tools and formats submitted to different departments and dates. To achieve consistency, reliability and accuracy of data and to obtain efficient data management, the following shall be instituted:

2.1 Establish Baseline Data

The existing Management Information Department (MID) shall be tasked to identify order of baseline data needing rectification and updating in addition to the programs currently implemented by the agency.

2.2 Adopt Standard Monitoring Format

A review of Monitoring & Evaluation System and the reports associated with it shall be conducted to come up with standard format for simple consolidation. One cut-off date shall be used to avoid confusion arising to “whose data” and the usual backsliding of data if report is not updated.

2.3 Create Monitoring Team

For accountability and consistency of data, a Monitoring Team in the Central Office and counterpart in the Field Offices shall be designated to undertake monitoring and evaluation – from data gathering, collation, analysis, monitoring, and evaluation. Clearance on data transaction noted by the Chief of Office concerned shall be instituted.

2.4 Strengthen On-line Data Management

A well-designed and efficient database shall be created to facilitate faster and more precise encoding, processing, and access of data. Computerization of data including use of appropriate softwares and upgrading of hardwares shall be prioritized.

2.5 Parcellary Mapping of Irrigation Service Area

Generally, most irrigation systems have outdated cadastral maps. Parcellary mapping shall be done to define actual service area and master list of farmers shall be updated regularly in coordination with Irrigators Associations.



**ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS AND
PROCESS INNOVATIONS**

3.0

3.0 ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS AND PROCESS INNOVATIONS

With the objective of making the Agency more dynamic in addressing its current operational capability and to rectify the negative impact of the recent development, organizational reforms shall be instituted consistent with the NIA-Rationalization Plan effort to achieve a lean but strong, sustainable, and financially-efficient organization. NIA as it stands today recognizes the reforms which must be initiated in order to become a more responsive organization, optimize human resource, insure productivity and promote camaraderie and unity. Strategies are as follows:

3.1 Conduct Strategic Planning

A Strategic Planning Conference shall be conducted soonest to determine the strategic positioning of the agency; craft (improve) the new vision, mission, and objectives; chart the road to progress; and, formulate the ways by which employees will embrace/internalize and contribute to the realization of the new statement.

3.2 Implement the Strategic Performance Monitoring System (SPMS)

Follow-up and immediate implementation of Strategic Performance Monitoring System (SPMS) shall be pursued to attain organizational effectiveness and optimize unit and personnel efficiency and effectiveness.

3.3 Enhance Human Resource Development

The existing Human Resource Development Program shall be enhanced to include improvement in Training Needs Assessment, Career Path Plan, Succession Planning/Mentoring, and Office Utilization Plan.

3.4 Intensify Public Relation

To restore the corporate standing of the Agency, a program on corporate branding/image building shall be formulated; the Citizens Charter shall be monitored; and, suggestion box shall be installed with proper and timely response to issues raised.



4.0 CORPORATE FINANCIAL PROFITABILITY

Distinctly categorized as a Government-Owned and Controlled Corporation (GOCC), the bulk of NIA's income is generated from collection of Irrigation Service Fee (ISF). At average collection efficiency of 60%, the agency expense is more than its income. Similarly, records show that for the previous years, NIA has been operating at a loss and will continue to be as government subsidies are reduced. Meanwhile, existing contracts on power generation appears to be one-sided to the disadvantage of NIA as value of infrastructure or facilities are not considered in the computation of concession fees. To attain corporate financial stability , the following shall be conducted:



- 4.1 **Improve targeting, collection, and remittance of Irrigation Service Fee (ISF);**
- 4.2 **Generate additional income from sales of non-performing assets, rental of facilities and equipment;**
- 4.3 **Implement and program mini-hydro power plants and domestic water system (to include review of existing contracts on power generation);**
- 4.4 **Amend existing contracts on power generation with consideration on the value of infrastructures and facilities used;**
- 4.5 **Enforce austerity measures (AO 103, MC 9, 2005); and,**
- 4.6 **Centralization of funds under a Common Basket Policy.**







**EMPOWERMENT AND CONTINUOUS
LEARNING FOR EMPLOYEES**

5.0

5.0 EMPOWERMENT AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR EMPLOYEES

Inspired people produce outputs while demoralization leads to mediocrity and complacency. By creating an environment conducive to excellence and integrity, personal capacities are developed and confidence to the leaders is renewed. In consultation with the Employees' Union (NIA Employees Association of the Philippines or NIAEASP), the administration agrees to fully implement the provision of the approved Collective Negotiation Agreement (CNA). The Union shall be tasked to draft programs to further empower employees and for the Union to serve as watchdog of the Agency. Also providing all benefits that are due to NIAns and partnering them in livelihood program with farmers.

5.1 Implementing of CNA

The CNA is a Two-Way Street, ensuring that NIA management will perform what they are obligated to do on the one part and that the employees will perform their responsibilities on the other. This is a synergetic relationship that will result to a stronger NIA.

Management will ensure that NIA will be run conscientiously for the public good and to ensure that the employees' welfare is protected and enhanced. This means that we will expect the Union to be an active participant in running NIA, they will give inputs and suggestion not only to ensure that their benefits are given but they will be a partner of management in improving systems and procedures in NIA. We will expect them to not only serve as critical voice in NIA to point out what management is doing wrong but, we expect them to suggest and recommend solutions, and more importantly to act in improving NIA's systems and procedures.

5.2 Employees Livelihood Program

Employee empowerment also entails financial freedom of employees. NIA Management recognizes that a financially secured employee is an empowered employee. We recognize that the financial benefits from the government to the employees may not be sufficient to attain employee financial security, thus need for other sources of income. This is the reason for the employees' livelihood program. This will ensure that employees will have financial security while they are in government service and after they leave the service. The financial livelihood program will be crafted together with the Union.



6.0 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

The Plan aims to reduce impact of climate change on irrigation facilities/structures, water availability, and the irrigation environment due to erosion, run-off, and flooding. Program for the following shall be pursued:

6.1 Climate profiling of irrigation structures through adoption of alternate and improved design

The design of irrigation structures will be improved to consider the needs of the locality and the topography of the area to be serviced. The most efficient structural design will be used taking into consideration the durability of the structures, its reliability, and its efficiency. Water losses due to various causes before it reached its target irrigation area will be minimized by improving irrigation structure profile and sections.

6.2 Utilization of Geo-Hazard Maps in determining alignment and the optimum location of Irrigation Structures

Climate change has exposed the vulnerability of various areas in the country to environmental hazards. Structures built in the past may no longer be able to effectively perform its intended purpose due to changed conditions. This requires a proactive approach to structural design and irrigation lay-out and alignment. The approach will be to make irrigation structures adaptive to climate change by taking into consideration the possible environmental hazard that exist by the use of Geo-Hazard Maps in the design stages of the project.



6.3 Adoption/Observance of Sustainable Agricultural & Water Saving Technologies

International Best Practices on water saving technology will be adopted. Water is a limited resource, the importance of which cannot be overemphasized. Although the country is fortunate in having a bountiful supply of water resources, it does not mean that the efficient utilization of water is not a major concern. The growing competition for the utilization of water resources requires greater responsibilities to those who benefit from its use. We in NIA benefit from its use and we must ensure its sustainability as a responsible government agency.

6.4 Pioneer sustainable Tree Planting Program maintenance on watershed

Protecting the present water resources that we have through responsible use is one thing, ensuring that the water resources will continue to be there for future generation is another; thus, our thrust to ensure that the future of water resources will be protected and enhanced. This is the underlying reason in launching a sustainable Tree Planting Program on watersheds. We will do this by mainstreaming our program for watershed tree-planting.

6.5 Enforce Energy Reservation

To foster awareness of the need to actively involve NIAns in the responsible use of our energy resources, we will institute energy reservation program in NIA.



6.6 Formulate Program for Dam Assessment and Maintenance

As a critical component of the irrigation system, Dams need to be properly maintained to ensure that they will be able to provide the needed water for irrigation needs. But, with the present climate change and our recent experiences in the weaknesses of present Dam structures, an assessment program is needed to make them adaptive to climate change.





**BUILD STRONGER COMMITMENT TO
FARMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS**

7.0

7.0 BUILD STRONGER COMMITMENT TO FARMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Anchored on the Agency goals and objectives, the new leadership entrusts in itself a Strong Commitment to the farmers for lasting cooperation, understanding, and partnership in irrigation development. The Institutional Development Program (IDP) shall remain instrumental in creating a functional and dynamic Irrigators Association. To improve the participation of Irrigators Association in project implementation and in the operations & maintenance of irrigation systems and to show total commitment to the IA for an administration of good governance and transparency, the following shall be carried-out:

- 7.1 **Adopt and internalize the Department's Irrigation-Based Development Approach, a bottom-up approach in rice industry development;**
- 7.2 **Encourage Farmers Participation in Project Monitoring;**
- 7.3 **Continue to support Institutional Development Program of Farmer-Irrigators;**
- 7.4 **Provide additional livelihood projects for the farmers (Aquaculture, Tourism);**
- 7.5 **Involve farmers in the mini-hydro program; and**
- 7.6 **Establish hotline, open communication and direct access to the Administrator to be dubbed "ISUMBONG MO KAY ADMIN" to immediately act on problems and suggestions.**





