



IMPLEMENTATION BULLETIN



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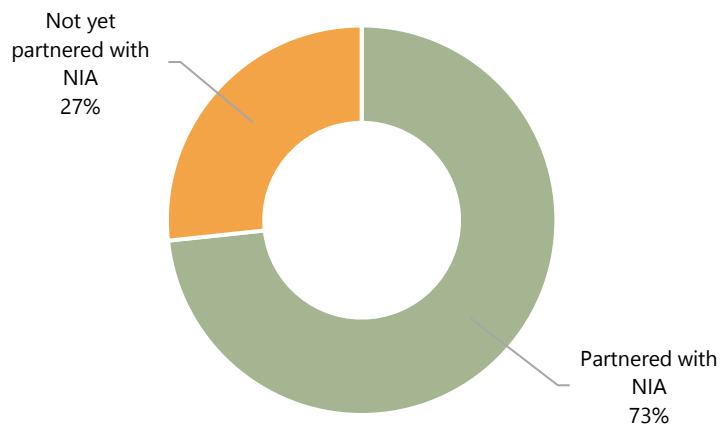
RA 10969: An Act Providing Free Irrigation Service

This law exempts all farmers with landholding of eight hectares and below from paying irrigation service fees for water derived from National Irrigation Systems (NIS) and Communal Irrigation Systems (CIS) that were, or are to be funded, constructed, maintained and administered by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

NIA is mandated to implement this law in consultation with concerned government agencies, farmers, irrigators associations, farmers' cooperatives, and other stakeholders.

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of this law were issued by the NIA Board through Resolution No. 8574-18 series of 2018 dated December 18, 2018.

NIA, through its Administrator Gen. Ricardo R. Visaya (Ret.), reported to the Senate that it had organized a total of 10,793 irrigators associations (IAs) covering an area of 1,568,644.77 hectares with 1,264,910 farmer beneficiaries on the NIS and CIS areas. Of this number, 7,914 IAs covering a total area of 1,309,390.79 hectares had partnered with NIA for the operation and maintenance of NIS and CIS under the agency's Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) program. The breakdown is outlined in the table below.



Of 10,793 IAs organized by NIA, 73 percent have entered into a partnership with the agency

Type	Number of IAs	Total Area (ha.)
National Irrigation System	2,893	832,046.12
Communal Irrigation System	5,021	477,344.67
Total	7,914	1,309,390.79

Source: National Irrigation Administration

Incentives and technical assistance

IAs that join the IMT Program are provided with operation incentive of PhP 150.00 per hectare during the wet and dry cropping season per year. For the maintenance of irrigation canals, NIA provides IAs with a PhP 2,800 incentive per clearing of a 3.5 km unlined canal or 7 km lined canal. This is an increase from the PhP 1,750 per clearing incentive in 2019. This incentive can be availed for up to six times a year.

IMT Incentives

PhP 150.00 per hectare

**PhP 2,800.00 per clearing
(up to six times a year)**

With the help of the Department of Agriculture, 3,387 IAs had availed of equipment and machineries, and 464,515 farmers were provided with either seeds, fertilizer, cash, credit, vegetables, and other forms of assistance. With the help of the Agricultural Training Institute, 9,692 farmers had undergone training in modern farming technology. Administrator Visaya noted that NIA continuously provides training opportunities to IAs on organizational and irrigation systems management, as well as to prepare them for the IMT program. Moreover, once IAs are adequately equipped to venture into agribusiness, NIA coordinates with government and private organizations to help them become partners in the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty Program, which qualifies them as suppliers for commodities demanded by the partner agencies.

Identifying beneficiaries

NIA reported that as of June 30, 2020, 572,354 landowners were identified as having eight hectares or less each, thereby qualifying them to the program. Qualified landowners own a total of 763,329.82 hectares of land. They have been asked to submit requirements so they can apply for condonation and writing off of past due accounts and penalties.

One of the requirements is the proof of ownership of land, which many farmers are unable to produce. In some instances, the title of the land is still under the name of their parents or grandparents. To resolve this issue, NIA allowed the farmers to present any of the following documents to support their claim of ownership:

- Transfer Certificate of Title;
- Certificate of Land Ownership Award;
- Emancipation Patent;
- Tax Declaration;

- Certificate of Landowning issued by the Office of the Treasurer of the concerned local government, Land Registration Authority, or Department of Agrarian Reform; and
- Other supporting evidence that may support their claim.

Total amount condoned and written off

As of August 20, 2020, NIA reported that the total irrigation service fee condoned and written off under this law has totaled PhP 14,451,454,923.00.

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