



Nograles commends NEA, ECs support on COVID-19 fight

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles thanked the electric cooperatives (ECs) supervised by the National Electrification Administration (NEA) for offering help in the national government's ongoing COVID-19 vaccination program.



Nograles, Co-chair of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases, made the statement during the NEA-EC Communicators' Conference held virtually on March 6.

"With the support of the 121 electric cooperatives across the country, we will be able to reach even those in remote communities by utilizing your multi-purpose facilities and other resources," Nograles said.

The ECs earlier expressed readiness to assist the national government by offering their facilities, such as multi-purpose halls and gymnasiums, for COVID-19 vaccination rollout in rural communities.

The former Davao City representative also cited the efforts of the ECs to maintain continuity of reliable electricity services to the countryside, especially to critical infrastructure like hospitals and other healthcare facilities, amid the ongoing pandemic.

Moreover, Nograles commended the NEA, under the leadership of Administrator Edgardo Masongsong, and the ECs for supporting the earlier pronouncement of President Rodrigo Duterte regarding the extension of 'no-disconnection' policy for lifeline consumers.

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NEA obtains ISO certification anew

The agency has earned the ISO 9001:2015 Certification for Quality Management System, reaffirming the agency's compliance to international standards of service.

The ISO 9001:2015 certificate was issued by certification body TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Inc. on January 27, after successfully passing the recertification audit. The certificate has a validity of three years, from February 10, 2021 to February 09, 2024, subject to annual surveillance audit.



"This would not have been possible without the efforts of all the NEA officials and employees," NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said.

The audit was conducted by TÜV Rheinland on December 11, 2020. The scope of certification is the provision of "financial, institutional, technical, and legal assistance to the electric cooperatives which in turn undertake power distribution on an area coverage basis."

In its recertification audit report, TÜV Rheinland found zero nonconformity in the processes surveyed. The audit also showed that "the organization has

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NEA welcomes funding boost for rural electrification program in 2021

NEA welcomed the increase in funding for the implementation of the government's rural electrification program for this year.



the population and number of houses per sitio, map of the municipality or city indicating the sitios and barangays to be energized, and cost of energizing a sitio.

Under the 2021 NEP, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) recommended PhP1.828 billion subsidy for the implementation of the rural electrification program, with PhP1.628 billion for SEP and PhP200 million for ECERF pursuant to Republic Act No. 11039, also known as the ECERF Act.

Under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for 2021, the NEA was allocated PhP2.498 billion for the rural electrification program. This amount is PhP670 million higher than the PhP1.828 billion recommended under the 2021 National Expenditure Program (NEP).

"We are pleased to receive this additional allocation of P670 million to support the government's rural electrification program, especially the emergency funds for the electric cooperatives (ECs) during calamities," NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said.

The PhP2.498 billion is broken down as follows: PhP1.628 billion for the Sitio Electrification Projects (SEP); PhP750 million for the Electric Cooperatives Emergency and Resiliency Fund (ECERF); PhP100 million for the installation of solar panels in schools in Lipa City, Batangas; and PhP20 million for the installation of solar panels in public schools.

In the implementation of SEP, a special provision in the GAA states that the NEA shall "prioritize sitios where absolute number of indigents and the incidence of poverty are high as identified in the latest official poverty statistics of PSA as well as those with the high probability of being energized."

The NEA shall also release funds only to ECs which have fully liquidated funds from previous years' electrification projects. In cases where the ECs are not qualified to implement projects for barangay and sitio electrification, the NEA "may enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Public Works and Highways, and the latter through its district engineering offices will implement the project."

The release of SEP fund shall also be subject to the following: submission of National Unified Electrification Strategy as certified by the Department of Energy (DOE); submission of parameters for the selection of beneficiary sitios as certified by the DOE; and submission of a certification from the Barangay chairperson on

The ECERF Law, enacted in June 2018, seeks an orderly and continuing means of financial assistance to ECs in the form of grants for the immediate restoration or rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure after a fortuitous event or force majeure. ###

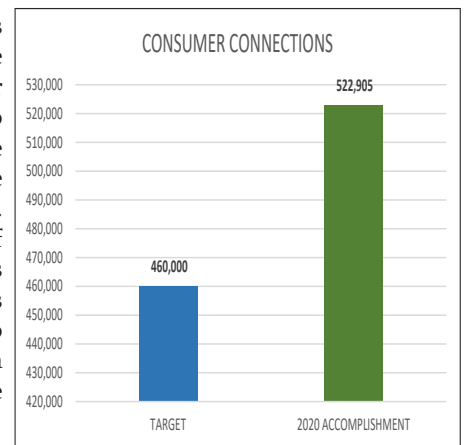
NEA, ECs exceed 2020 Consumer Connections target

The agency surpassed its electricity consumer connections goal for 2020 by 62,905 or 14 percent despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NEA Information Technology and Communication Services Department (ITCSD) reported that the ECs have connected over 522,905 new electricity consumers in 2020, 14 percent higher than the 460,000 corporate target.

"This achievement reflects the hard work and commitment of the NEA and the 121 electric cooperatives to provide and extend electricity services to Filipinos living in rural areas even though faced with challenges posed by the pandemic," Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said.

The 2020 figures brought the total consumer connections to 14,253,053 within the franchise areas of the 121 ECs nationwide. The number of unserved consumers in the rural areas is now down to 1,550,510 based on the 2015 census, the NEA ITCSD said.



NEA implements intensified health and safety measures to address Covid 19

With the continuing threat of Covid-19, the NEA, through its Human Resources and Administration Department (HRAD), has continuously implemented health and safety measures to address the spread of the disease.

For the first quarter of 2021, a number of initiatives has been programmed to confront the challenges and cushion the impact of the current health crisis to NEA and its workforce.

Among them was the conduct of a survey on profiling for vaccination to come up with the NEA Interim Vaccination Plan. A total of 291 employees has responded to the survey.

The Employee Data Profiling is one of the documents of the NEA's Interim Vaccination Plan. This shall be submitted to the NTF Covid-19 as one of the requirements for procurement

Further, the NEA-HRAD has also conducted Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns on Covid-19 risk management through different channels such as during Monday



convocations and departmental social media page of the NEA HRMD

In addition, the agency ensured the continuous disinfection and repair of motor vehicles, facilitated sanitation,

dismantling, re-painting of essential building structures like installation of security fence and maintained a garden within the vicinity of the office premises to provide a safe and healthy work environment.###

NEA builds up manpower pool and institutes employee performance recognition system



With a significant number of NEA personnel who retired, resigned and/or separated from the agency, NEA, through the Human Resources and Administration Department (HRAD) facilitated the continuous recruitment,

hiring and promotion of deserving officials and employees to strengthen the manpower pool of the agency.

For the first quarter of 2021, a total of four persons were hired and eight employees were promoted that brought NEA's total workforce to 291. This and other activities have been conducted to fill up the gap in personnel requirement.

Meanwhile, NEA has established its PRAISE or Program Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence.

PRAISE recognizes the exemplary performance of officials and employees and grant them corresponding incentives.

The PRAISE includes the following awards: Best Employee for different levels, Best Field Worker, Efficient Service Delivery, NEA Achievers, NEA Service Excellence, Corporate Innovation, among others.

For 2020, a total of 295 officials and employees were nominated to various awards and citations and will be given corresponding incentives after committee deliberation and management approval.###

NEA: Loans to power co-ops reach PhP440 million in 2020

For the year 2020, NEA disbursed a total of PhP440-million worth of loans, including calamity loans, to 20 electric cooperatives (ECs).

According to the report of the NEA Accounts Management and Guarantee Department (AMGD), total loans extended to ECs from January to December 2020 reached PhP439.983 million of which, or PhP311.903 million, went to 12 ECs to help fund their capital expenditure (CapEx) projects and working capital requirements.

The PhP311.903 million translates into 127% accomplishment rate of the agency. The NEA set a 2020 target of PhP245 million for lending to ECs for their electrification projects.

Meanwhile, the NEA extended P128.080 million in calamity loans to 13 ECs. Of the total calamity loans released by the NEA to ECs, PhP25 million went to FICELCO for the repair and rehabilitation of its damaged power distribution facilities due to the onslaught of recent typhoons Quinta and Rolly.

The calamity loan, which bears an interest rate of only 3.25 percent per annum, has a 10-year repayment term and one-year grace period. ###

A. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROJECTS	
1	Cagayan II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAGELCO II),
2	Camarines Sur I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CASURECO I),
3	Camarines Sur III Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CASURECO III)
4	Davao del Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (DANECO)
5	Masbate Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MASELCO)
6	Misamis Oriental I Rural Electric Service Cooperative, Inc. (MORESCO)
7	Occidental Mindoro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (OMECCO)
8	Sorsogon I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SORECO I)
9	Sulu Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SULECO)
10	Surigao del Sur I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SURSECO I)
11	Ticao Island Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TISELCO)
12	Quezon I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (QUEZELCO I)
B. CALAMITY LOANS	
1	Camarines Sur III Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CASURECO III)
2	Masbate Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MASELCO)
3	Occidental Mindoro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (OMECCO)
4	Sorsogon I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SORECO I)
5	Sorsogon II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SORECO II)
6	Ticao Island Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TISELCO)
7	Iloilo III Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ILECO III)
8	Lubang Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LUBELCO)
9	Marinduque Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MARELCO)
10	Northern Samar Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NORSAMELCO)
11	Oriental Mindoro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ORMECCO)
12	Tablas Island Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TIELCO)
13	First Catanduanes Electric Cooperative, Inc. (FICELCO)

NEA directs power co-ops to support TransCo as off-grid system operator



Photo credits: Manila Bulletin

NEA instructed ECs serving the off-grid areas to ensure the smooth transition of their system operator functions to the National Transmission Corporation (TransCo).

This, after the Department of Energy (DOE), in a memorandum issued by Secretary Alfonso Cusi on February 4, mandated TransCo to “serve as an off-grid system operator to any small grid or off-grid power system with more than one source of power supply.”

Administrator Edgardo Masongsong thereafter signed Memorandum No. 2021-09, enjoining the concerned power co-ops to give their "utmost cooperation and support" to TransCo, in compliance with the directive of the DOE.

According to the DOE, the designation of TransCo as an off-grid system operator is in accordance with the mandates set forth under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 and its implementing rules and regulations.

The DOE, meanwhile, said the franchised distribution utility in other

off-grid areas not covered by the memo—meaning those with only one power supplier—is still authorized to perform as off-grid system operator subject to existing rules and regulations.

Masongsong, therefore, encouraged power co-ops that are operating under these conditions to keep proving their competence in the maintenance and management of independent grids if they want to continue serving as the default system operators.

"The ECs need to defend their position with the assurance of ensuring power reliability, power quality and system efficiency in their respective franchise areas, especially in the islands or a group of islands with more than one electric cooperative," the NEA chief said.

The NEA, which supervises 121 electric co-ops nationwide, is responsible for providing technical assistance, financial and management support to enhance the operations of the electric distribution system in the off-grid areas. ###

NEA enjoins ECs to implement 'no disconnection' for lifeline consumers

NEA has enjoined all electric cooperatives (ECs) in the country to implement a "no disconnection" policy for low-income households or lifeline consumers amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

In a memorandum dated February 10, NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong advised the 121 ECs to fully observe the directives issued by the Department of Energy (DOE) regarding the extension of "no disconnection" policy for lifeline consumers.

The DOE issued an Advisory on February 5, 2021 directing all distribution utilities, including ECs, to "implement a no disconnection policy due to non-payment of bills falling due by March 2021 for all electricity consumers whose consumption level are within the lifeline rate set by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) for the DU's franchise area."

This will apply to all unpaid regular bills and installment payments relative to various advisories of the DOE and the ERC. In addition, all power consumers who are still unable to pay their bills may coordinate with their DUs to enter into socially equitable and manageable payment terms to prevent eventual disconnection of electricity services.

"In this regard, all ECs are advised to fully observe the implementation of the (DOE) directives," Administrator Masongsong said.

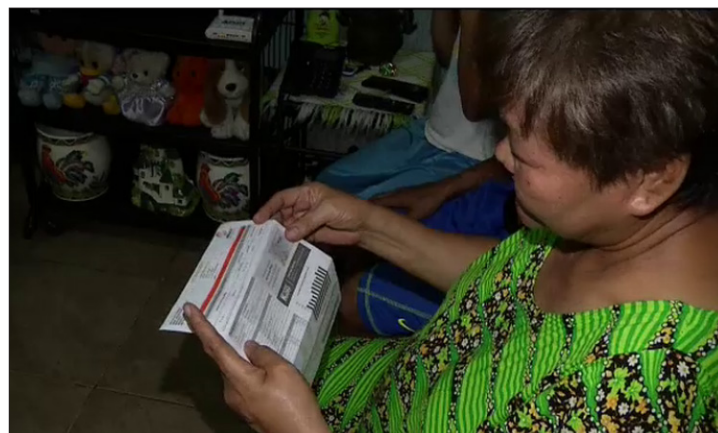


Photo credits: CNN Philippines

The NEA chief also enjoined the electric co-ops to post the DOE Advisory on their respective websites and consumer welfare help desks for the information of their member-consumer-owners (MCOs).

The DOE Advisory came following President Rodrigo Duterte's approval of the Energy department's recommendation to extend the "no disconnection policy" to assist the marginalized electricity consumers. ###

ECs reminded to ensure timely conduct of CSP

NEA has reminded all ECs to ensure timely conduct of the competitive selection process (CSP) in procuring their power supply requirement.

Administrator Masongsong issued a memorandum reminding the 121 ECs nationwide of their compliance to NEA Memorandum No. 2019-035 dated June 27, 2019.

The Administrator cited in particular Item

No. 6 in the memorandum, which states that "ECs with expiring Power Supply Agreements (PSAs) in three (3) to five (5) years can start the conduct of CSP on power supply procurement to ensure the continuous and sufficient power

supply."

Under the CSP, the electric co-ops must conduct a bidding in the procurement of Power Supply Agreements for the captive market to ensure transparency and fair competition and full public accountability.

The timely conduct of CSP in procuring power supply is currently being proposed before the NEA Board of Administrators to be included in the overall performance assessment of ECs.

An attached agency of the Department of Energy (DOE), the NEA has the supervisory powers over 121 ECs as mandated under R.A. 10531, otherwise known as the "National Electrification Administration Reform Act of 2013." ###



Photo credits: Iseleo II

Power co-ops eyed as TESDA-accredited training centers for line workers

To address the need for more skilled line workers and barangay electricians in the countryside, the NEA is pushing for the accreditation of ECs as training and assessment centers by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

The NEA, through its NEA-EC Training Institute (NETI), identified seven ECs for accreditation by TESDA as assessment and training centers in carrying out lineman training programs.

These ECs are the Benguet Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BENECO), Cagayan I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAGELCO I), Camarines Sur II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CASURECO II), Nueva Vizcaya Electric Cooperative (NUVELCO), Pampanga I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (PELCO I), South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II), and Zamboanga del Sur I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMSURECO I).

Ms. Nora Rivera, department manager of NETI, said the TESDA accreditation of the ECs aims to ensure compliance with the standards prescribed under the promulgated training regulations of Electric Power Distribution (EPD) Line Construction NC II and EPD Operation and Maintenance NC III and IV.



The NEA, through its NEA-EC Training Institute (NETI), identified seven ECs for accreditation by TESDA as assessment and training centers in carrying out lineman training programs.

"This is in consonance with NEA's pursuit of offering quality and responsive programs for ECs and capacitating a pool of certified line workers and trainers," Rivera said.

Administrator Masongsong said this will also help address and fulfill the demand for qualified electricity distribution workers, especially during calamities.

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NEA, ECs exceed ... from page 2

Broken down, the NEA data revealed that 47 percent of the total consumer connections, or 6.682 million, are located in Luzon; 27 percent or 3.788 million are in the Visayas; and 26 percent or 3.783 million are in Mindanao.

The data also showed that Batangas II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BATELEC II) contributed most to the overall accomplishment with 341,252 connections, followed by South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II) with 274,239 connections.

Also in the top five ECs are Albay Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ALECO) with 273,668 connections, Central Pangasinan Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CENPELCO) with 268,830, and Central Negros Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CENECO) with 247,744 connections.

Meanwhile, Negros Occidental ranked first among the provinces with highest number of consumer connections at 634,092, followed by Pangasinan at 580,805, then Batangas at 525,229, Cebu at 523,109, and Leyte at 474,259 consumer connections. ###

NEA obtains ... from page 1

established and maintained an effective system to ensure compliance with its policy and objectives."

"The audit team confirms, in line with the audit targets, that the organization's management system complies with, adequately maintains and implements the requirements of the standard(s)," the certification body stated.

As a result, TÜV Rheinland recommended the award of a new certificate to the NEA.

The certification body noted a number of positive findings in management initiatives, which include the implementation of the 'Pantawid Liwanag' program in partnership with the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, Inc. (PHILRECA) and the ECs; the remittance of P1.26 billion unutilized subsidies and P85.71 million in dividends to the national government for COVID-19 response; issuance of relevant memoranda to the ECs, such as extending payment of consumers' electricity bills and EC loan payments/amortizations.

The TÜV Rheinland also cited the awards and recognitions received by the NEA, such as ranking 2nd in the Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) category at the 2020 Freedom of Information (FOI) Awards, and 2020 Government Energy Management Program Award by the Department of Energy. It also commended the conduct of 21 online training programs.

It also noted the granting of clearance to ECs to implement capital expenditure (CapEx) projects; providing loans and government subsidies to electric co-ops; sustaining NEA's operations and maintaining a positive margin; and exceeding the target collection efficiency of 96.78 percent.

TÜV Rheinland, in its audit report, also made some recommendations and opportunities that can contribute to the continuous improvement of the agency's quality management system.

The NEA was upgraded to ISO 9001:2015 certification beginning December 2016. ###

NEWS AROUND THE ECS

NEA installs project supervisor to manage electric co-op in Ifugao



NEA has assigned a project supervisor to oversee the daily operations of an electric cooperative (EC) in Ifugao province in a bid to improve the power distribution utility's operational efficiency and standards of service.

Administrator Edgardo Masongsong issued an office order appointing Romeo Acuesta as Project Supervisor and Acting General Manager (PS/AGM) of

the Ifugao Electric Cooperative, Inc. (IFELCO), effective January 4, 2021.

"In the exigency of the service and pursuant to Sections 4(e) and 5(a) of Presidential Decree No. 269 as amended, Mr. Romeo Acuesta is hereby designated as the Project Supervisor/Acting General Manager of Ifugao Electric Cooperative, Inc. (IFELCO), effective 04 January 2021," NEA Office Order No. 2020-134 stated.

In issuing the order, Masongsong cited IFELCO's deteriorating operational performance over the past few years that has adversely affected the delivery of service to its member-consumer-owners (MCOs).

Based on the EC Overall Performance Assessment conducted by the NEA, IFELCO retrogressed from "A" rating in 2015-2017 to "C" in 2018, and remained in the "C" category in 2019. On the EC classification level, IFELCO was graded Yellow 1 from 2015 to 2019. The NEA also noted the EC's non-compliance to standards on collection efficiency and on system loss cap in 2018 and 2019.

"The retrogression in operational performance has, in turn, adversely affected the interest of the member-consumer-owners. In order to prevent further service decline, and to protect the interest of the member-consumer-owners, it is imperative for NEA to intervene," Masongsong said.

As indicated in the NEA Office Order, Acuesta is mandated to manage the day-to-day operations of the EC and ensure the efficient delivery of electric service to its MCOs.

He is also authorized to approve or disapprove EC Board resolutions in consultation with concerned NEA departments; sign checks, withdrawal slips, and other banking transactions, as well as perform other tasks that may be assigned by the NEA for the purpose of operational efficiency.

IFELCO is the lone power distribution utility in the province of Ifugao, which is composed of 11 municipalities, namely Aguineldo, Alfonso Lista, Asipulo, Banaue, Hingyon, Hungduan, Kiangan, Lagawe, Lamut, Mayoyao, and Tinoc. ###

NEA: Quezon electric co-op secures Php20-million calamity loan

NEA helped the EC servicing Quezon province hit by recent typhoons with the provision of Php20.138 million in calamity loan.

The Quezon I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (QUEZELCO I) availed of the NEA calamity loan for the repair and rehabilitation of its power distribution systems damaged by typhoons Quinta, Rolly, and Ulysses last year.

This brings the total calamity loans to electric co-ops to Php23.460 million as of end-February 2021, data released by the NEA Accounts Management and Guarantee Department (AMGD) showed.

In January, the NEA released Php3.322 million to Marinduque Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MARELCO) for the reconstruction of its damage power distribution facilities due to the previous typhoons.

The loan offered by the NEA to ECs adversely affected by calamities has a maximum 10-year repayment term, with a grace period of one year and an interest rate of 3.25 percent per annum.

Meanwhile, the NEA AMGD data also showed that the Davao del Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (DANEKO) applied for a loan amounting to P4.508 million to finance its capital expenditure (CapEx) projects. ###

NEA extends calamity loan to typhoon-hit Marinduque electric co-op

State-run National Electrification Administration (NEA) has disbursed P3-million in calamity loans to aid an electric cooperative (EC) in Marinduque province, which was affected by previous typhoons.

Data from NEA Accounts Management and Guarantee Department as of January 31, 2021 showed that Marinduque Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MARELCO) received P3.322 million for the rehabilitation of its power lines damaged by typhoons Quinta and Rolly.

MARELCO was among the electric cooperatives (ECs) severely affected by Typhoon Quinta (international name: Molave) and Super Typhoon Rolly (international name: Goni) in October and November 2020, respectively.

The total damage to MARELCO facilities caused by two typhoons was estimated at P26.669 million, according to the data gathered by the NEA Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department (DRRMD).

In December 2020, the NEA also released P25 million in calamity loans to the First Catanduanes Electric Cooperative, Inc. (FICELCO) for the repair and rehabilitation of its power infrastructure destroyed by typhoons Quinta and Rolly.

The calamity loan program of the NEA has a 10-year repayment term and one-year grace period. It has an interest rate of 3.25 percent per annum. ###

NEA, ECs lauded for achieving 14-million consumer connections

The NEA and the 121 ECs were lauded by Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles for surpassing the 14-million mark in consumer connections, an important milestone in the government's rural electrification drive.

"For the past five decades, NEA has been vital in improving the lives of our people by providing total electrification in our rural areas," Nograles said during the NEA-EC Communicators' Conference held via Zoom on March 6, as he congratulated Administrator Masongsong and the ECs for this accomplishment.

"With the electric cooperatives as the agency's implementing arm in the mandated mission of rural electrification, even in economically unviable areas, the NEA continues to implement the Sitio Electrification Program (SEP)," the Cabinet Secretary added.

Data from the NEA Information Technology and Communication Services Department (ITCSD) showed the ECs have connected 522,905 new electricity consumers last year, 14 percent higher than the 460,000 target set by the agency. With this, the NEA ITCSD said the total consumer connections have reached 14.253 million within the franchise areas of 121 ECs nationwide, while the number of unserved consumers in the ECs' coverage areas is now down to 1,550,510 based on the 2015 census.

Meanwhile, Nograles also thanked the NEA and the ECs for responding to the electricity service requirements of the resettlement sites identified by the National Housing Authority (NHA) for super typhoon Yolanda survivors.

He specifically mentioned the Pope Francis Village in Tacloban City, which will finally be connected to the power distribution lines of the Leyte II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO II).

The Cabinet Secretary also sought the support of the NEA and the 121 electric co-ops nationwide in the campaign against malnutrition and hunger dubbed "Pilipinas Kontra Gutom (PKG)." Organized in November last year, PKG is a multisectoral, anti-hunger movement spearheaded by the government's Task Force Zero Hunger chaired by Nograles. #####

Power coops eyed as TESDA ... from page 6

"The establishment of TESDA-accredited training centers is part of our ongoing efforts to ensure that our line workers in the countryside are fully equipped with skills and knowledge," Masongsong said.

In 2017, the NEA and TESDA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the provision of training programs for line workers and barangay electricians, especially in rural communities.

Under the MOU, TESDA will assist in the review of curriculum on Electric Power Distribution Line Construction NC II; conduct competency assessment to the graduates and issue a national certificate to the passers; and assist in the capability of trainers and assessors.

The NEA, meanwhile, will conduct the training programs for Lineman NC II and Electrical Installation and Maintenance NC II in coordination with the ECs; and identify qualified applicants who will undergo the competency assessment and certification program.

To optimize the delivery of these training programs, TESDA sought the assistance of NEA for the identification of ECs that will serve as training and assessment centers in accordance with TESDA's operating procedures.

Presently, there are five ECs that are TESDA-accredited assessment centers, namely Agusan del Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ANECO), Cagayan II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAGELCO II), Ilocos Sur Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ISECO), Surigao del Sur I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SURSECO I), and Zambales II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMECO II). ###

Nograles commends NEA, ECS ... from page 1

"The Department of Energy recommended to the President that the no disconnection policy for lifeliners be continued, and the President has readily agreed because electricity is a basic necessity that we all cannot live without," he said.

In an Advisory on February 5, 2021, the DOE directed all distribution utilities, including ECs, to "implement a no disconnection policy due to non-payment of bills falling due by March 2021 for all electricity consumers whose consumption level are within the lifeline rate set by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) for the DU's franchise area."

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