

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Metro Manila

Eighth Congress

Republic Act No. 6978

January 24, 1991

**AN ACT TO PROMOTE RURAL DEVELOPMENT BY PROVIDING FOR AN ACCELERATED
PROGRAM WITHIN A TEN-YEAR PERIOD FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRRIGATION
PROJECTS**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled::

Section 1. It is hereby declared to be a national policy to promote the quality of living of every Filipino through the provision of adequate social services including, but not limited to, the provision of adequate irrigation projects facilities to increase agricultural production.

Section 2. The National Irrigation Administration shall undertake a ten-year program for the construction of irrigation projects in the remaining one million five hundred thousand (1,500,000) hectares of unirrigated but irrigable lands, whether in the lowlands or in the uplands, including other related project components nationwide. The program shall give priority to areas with social and economic problems, taking into consideration population, area served, project cost and other economic and environmental factors as may be deemed necessary in undertaking the program within the context of the national development plans. The National Irrigation Administration, in consultation with the provincial and municipal development councils, shall determine the areas which shall be given priority.

Section 3. The National Irrigation Administration shall observe the following priorities and guidelines in the planning, construction and management of irrigation projects:

(a) Funds provided for in this Act shall be used only for the construction of new irrigation projects;

(b) Priority shall be given to the construction of communal irrigation projects. At least fifty percent (50%) of the funds shall be used for communal irrigation projects;

(c) Priority shall be given to the following:

(1) Beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program;

(2) Members of the indigenous cultural communities;

(3) Beneficiaries in areas where there are farmer-irrigators associations; and

(4) Beneficiaries in fifth and sixth class municipalities;

(d) The irrigation projects must be equitably distributed among the provinces and municipalities, giving priority to those provinces and municipalities without any irrigation system;

(e) The farmer-beneficiaries of communal irrigation projects shall participate in all stages of the project. The beneficiaries shall participate in the project planning, identification, design, management of the project funds, construction and monitoring;

(f) The beneficiaries of communal irrigation projects shall pay fifty percent (50%) of the project cost without interest for a period of fifty (50) years: provided, that, in case the beneficiary dies, his legal heirs or whoever may own the land benefited by the project at any given time during the term of payment shall shoulder the remaining obligation of the land;

(g) The communal irrigation system shall be managed and maintained by the irrigators association or cooperative. The National Irrigation Administration shall help organize the irrigators association or cooperative and shall assist in the conduct of orientation seminars and training to the members of the said association or cooperative; and

(h) The provincial offices of the National Irrigation Administration shall be responsible in the preparation of the feasibility studies and design of communal irrigation projects.

Section 4. Such sums as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be taken from any available appropriations of the National Irrigation Administration under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, the succeeding appropriations for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act until the program shall have been completed by year 2000. In addition, the portion of financial grants and concessional loans extended to the Philippines by foreign governments and multilateral agencies including, but not limited to the Philippine Aid Plan, the amount to be determined by the President, shall be allocated by the Department of Budget and Management and augment the appropriations of the National Irrigation Administration until the program is completed as envisioned in this Act.

Section 5. Whenever practicable, the construction of irrigation projects under this Act shall consider any or a combination of the following related or complementary purposes:

- (a) Prevention of flooding;
- (b) Ensuring water supply for drinking purposes;
- (c) Erosion control;
- (d) Watershed management;
- (e) Fish culture;
- (f) Power generation; and
- (g) Tourism development

Section 6. In any part or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall be in full force and effect.

Section 7. All laws, presidential decrees execution orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed.

Section 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved: **January 24, 1991.**