

# GOOD PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION

## Kalahi-CIDSS' I-THINK System: Retooling to Keep Pace with Change

### CONTEXT:

When COVID-19 pandemic spread across the country, it drastically affected most of us. It disrupted our daily lives, including the systems and way of doing in businesses or workplaces. One of the effects of pandemic in the workplaces is that many of its activities shifted to technological platforms, and to advancement of systems in the workplace.

Like any other agencies, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) keeps pace with the new normal in the workplace due to COVID-19 situation.

I-THINK system has primary objective:

1. **provide interconnectivity**
2. **promote interaction or intensify that the collaboration and interaction among regional staff** to field staff amidst the challenges on physical distancing brought about by the pandemic
3. **build a community of practice and interest** among CDD advocates and partners.

Thus, the conceptualization of the I-THINK system includes with primary objective to provide interconnectivity, promote interaction or intensify that the collaboration and interaction among regional staff to field staff amidst the challenges on physical distancing brought about by the pandemic to also build a community of practice and **interest** among CDD advocates and partners.

I-think Learning system is the agency's means of retooling to keep pace with the new normal in workplace.

The I-THINK system contains the ff feature”

- sharing information
- collaboration tools
- operational systems, and
- monitoring and tracking of program accomplishment.

Moreover, it is also the program's response to harmonize and integrate its sectoral processes through efficient monitoring and evaluation, provision of technical assistance and coaching, knowledge sharing, and content and records safekeeping while promoting effective communication.

The collaboration and interaction within the system focuses on the provision of training courses and learning and development intervention to our staff, field implementers, and even LGU stakeholders through virtual classrooms.



The image of I-think cover in the i-think system

## **Main Features of the I-think System**

### **I. Kalahi-CIDSS E-Learning Portal**

Through i-THINK System, an E-Learning Portal will be used as a virtual learning rooms for Kalahi-CIDSS Area Coordinating Teams where training materials and content shall be uploaded and shared to staff.

Each ACT shall have a unique classroom for their learning needs while each RPMO Sector namely: Community Development (CD) Sector, Engineering Sector, Finance Sector, and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Sector, shall have their individual learning rooms to ensure technical support and assistance to ACTs.

### **II. Monitoring and Tracking of Program Implementation**

The i-THINK System shall also serve as an online tracking system for RPMO and ACT to monitor implementation progress of the program's Disaster Response Operations Procedure (DROP) per target municipality. The dashboard in the system reflects real-time program accomplishment from the M&E Unit based on sectoral reports from CD, Finance, and Engineering & Procurement Sectors.

### **III. Knowledge Management Portal**

The system will also serve as a Knowledge Management portal developed to facilitate collection, storage and sharing of existing knowledge online. The portal is created to establish a learning environment in which implementers and stakeholder's experience and wisdom on Community-Driven Development (CDD) are created and shared through published knowledge products available at our KM E-Library.

### **IV. Repository and Archive House of Kalahi-CIDSS**

Through i-THINK System, Kalahi-CIDSS official files are now saved in one repository instead of being placed in different google drives. Through the system, files like manuals, guidance notes, memorandums, training materials and other content relevant to program implementation are accessible, stored and organized per sector. With this, the program can achieve records safekeeping and accurate file uploading and sharing.



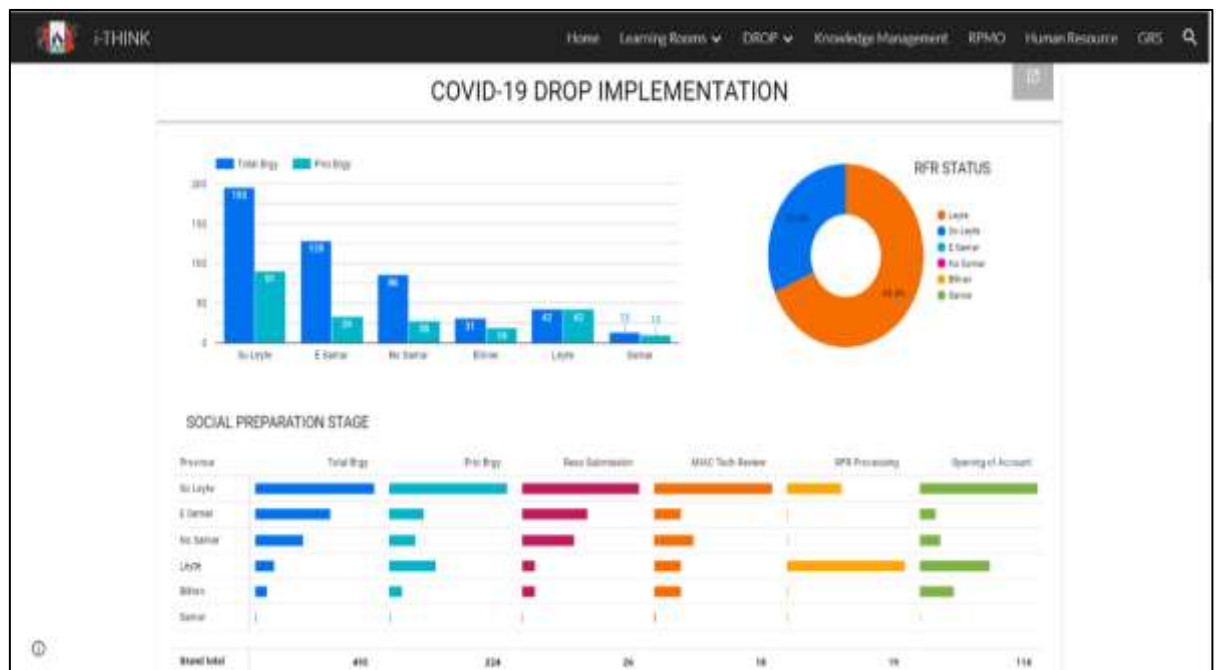
## V. Provision of Technical Assistance and Coaching

Each sector shall have a Call-a-Coach Feature where official request from ACTs for Technical Assistance (TA) and coaching shall be sent online to RPMO Monitoring and Technical Assistance (MATA) Teams. TA request details and other information shall be collected and documented through Google Forms.

### A. Disaster Response Operations Procedure (DROP)

The DROP page is designed as an integrated dashboard for RPMO staff and ACT/MCT team members where program implementation progress and accomplishment is presented using data visualizations. This shall highlight the ***Request for Fund Release (RFR)Tracker, Implementation Monitoring and Procurement Status***. The said information management tool will enable program staff and management committee to track key performance indicators, metrics and other key data point relevant to the implementation of CDD COVID-19 Response.

The dashboard shall display real-time updates on the submission of RFR documents from ACTs and tracking of RFR review processing managed by the Finance Unit, Community and Program Procurement monitoring and Milestone-Oriented Plan (MOP) as tracked by the CD and M&E Unit. The dashboard shall also show the progress of DROP activities conducted in each target municipality per implementation stage.



The home page for the i-THINK System displays basic details about the Kalahi-CIDSS program including its Vision, Mission, Program Development Objective and the Kalahi-CIDSS Credo for the staff and the Municipal Coordinating Team members information.

Although the main page displays general knowledge about the program, one of its highlights is the **Regional COVID-19 update**. The home page displays real-time COVID-19 Cases Bulletin from the Department of Health (DOH) since their monitoring report is embedded in the i-THINK System. The official DOH update which presents number of daily summaries of confirmed cases, its trends and demography, and the status per province and municipality will guide RPMO Management Committee and Area Coordinating Teams in their DROP operations and in conducting activities in their assigned municipalities.

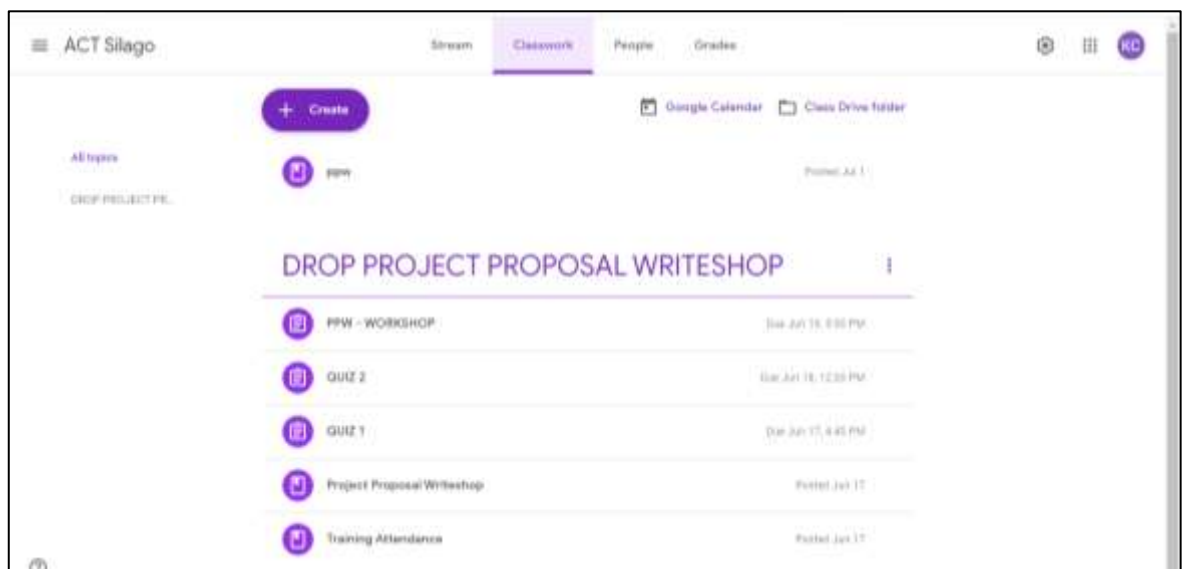
### b. Learning Rooms



The learning rooms in the system is run by Google Classroom which aims to provide a virtual training rooms to ACT and MCT members where training content are created, uploaded and shared to its target learners. The primary purpose of the learning room is to streamline the process of sharing files and content between the trainer/teacher and students/learners in one online classroom. Through the Google classroom, Google features like Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, Gmail, Google Calendar and Google Meet are integrated into one harmonized platform to manage the training intervention to staff and communication between the trainer/teacher and learners/students.

All 26 Area Coordinating Teams have a unique classroom where all training content, materials, and slides are uploaded. Communication features are also embedded in the classroom through a **Forum Discussion** where learners and trainers/teachers can interact with each other and even answer official queries.

Announcements can be posted by trainers/teachers to the **Class Stream** which can be commented on by students allowing for two-way communication between the teacher and students. Multiple types of media from Google products such as YouTube videos and Google Drive files can be attached to announcements and posts to share content. Gmail also provides email options for teachers to send emails to one or more students in the Google Classroom interface. Classroom can be accessed on the web or via the Android and iOS Classroom mobile apps.



There are also learning rooms per sector (CD, Engineering and Procurement, Finance and M&E). Each Sectoral learning room contains the **Sectoral Trainings** Section where training content and materials are uploaded, **Sectoral Updates** for ACTs, **Announcement Corner**, **Downloadable materials** such as manuals, memorandums, guidance notes, tools and templates are also uploaded for ACT use.



Each Sectoral Learning Room has a **Call-A-Coach Feature** where the ACT or MCT member can officially request for RPMO’s technical assistance and coaching through Google Forms. Through this, all TA requests are sent and collected online to RPMO Monitoring and Technical Assistance (MATA) Teams.

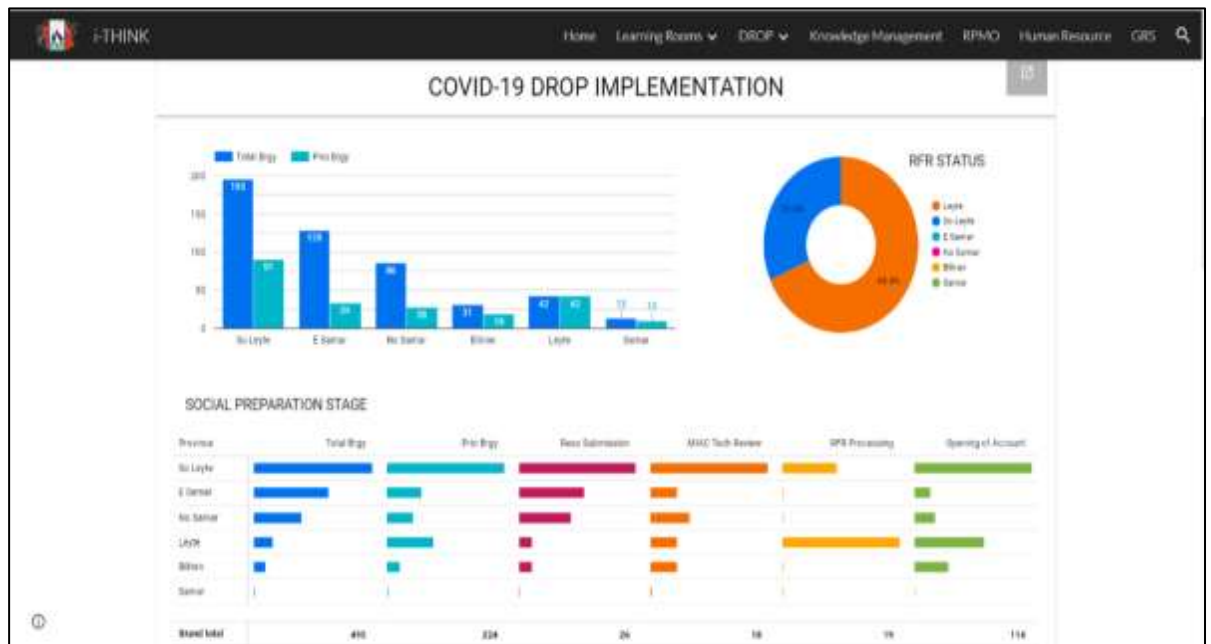
The screenshot shows a Google Form interface. At the top, it says 'Call a Coach' in green. Below that is a white box with the title 'Technical Assistance Request Form' and a red asterisk indicating a required field. The form has a 'Requesting ACT' dropdown menu and a text input field labeled 'Your answer'. A green 'Next' button is at the bottom. At the very bottom, there is a Google Forms footer with the text 'Never submit passwords through Google Forms.' and 'This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.'

**c. Disaster Response Operations Procedure (DROP)**



The DROP page is designed as an integrated dashboard for RPMO staff and ACT/MCT team members where program implementation progress and accomplishment is presented using data visualizations. This shall highlight the **Request for Fund Release (RFR) Tracker, Implementation Monitoring and Procurement Status**. The said information management tool will enable program staff and management committee to track key performance indicators, metrics and other key data point relevant to the implementation of CDD COVID-19 Response.

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**d. Knowledge Management (KM)**

The KM Page is also named as i-Connect page which will serve as a Knowledge Exchange portal dedicated to our LGU partners and stakeholders. It is categorized into five sections namely: *The i-Speak, i-Share, i-Express, KM e-Library and Infographics Section.*

The i-Speak is a collection of quote cards from Kalahi-CIDSS CDD advocates such as volunteers, staff and LGU stakeholders. The i-Share section is composed of videos, blogs and CDD Talks/speeches of KC implementers and partners. i-Express on the other hand is a section on the page where Kalahi-CIDSS magazine, newsletters, brochures and other reading materials from Social Marketing Unit are published online. Infographics presenting the current implementation status of the program and its accomplishment in the region are also posted and ready for download. Lastly, KM e-Library contains PDF files of all CDD knowledge products



such as manuals, thematic handbooks, policy notes, guidelines, etc. are available in the system for public viewing and downloading.



**e. Regional Program Management Office (RPMO)**

The RPMO page contains five sections namely: *The Admin Section*, *Regional Action Plan* through Google Calendar. This calendar will present major regional events and activities that is sync to each ACT’s individual calendar. Another section is the *RPMO Updates and Announcements* and the *Downloads Section* which contains both Internal KC and Promotive Service Division Memoranda.

The Admin Section highlights the RPMO Fund Utilization Tracker and Regional Procurement Monitoring Report which is linked to the Procurement Section database for real-time updating.



## f. Human Resource (HR)

The HR Page is integrated in the i-THINK system to ensure easy management of human resource processes and to address staff concerns and requests efficiently through online. An electronic **HR Request Form** is embedded on the page especially dedicated for ACT and RPMO staff's request for HR documents such as Service Records, Pay Slip, Certificate of Leave Credits, Certificate of Employment, etc. Other **HR downloadable forms** are also uploaded on the page for staff's online submission such as Request for Overtime, Request for Compensatory Day-off, Notice of Absence and others.



A **Forum Discussion** is also integrated in the page for more efficient and documented interaction among staff and HR focal persons. Job Opportunities are also posted on the page. Moreover, online applicant's interview and online examination could be embedded in the system once Regional Guidance from Human Resource Management and Development Division is approved.

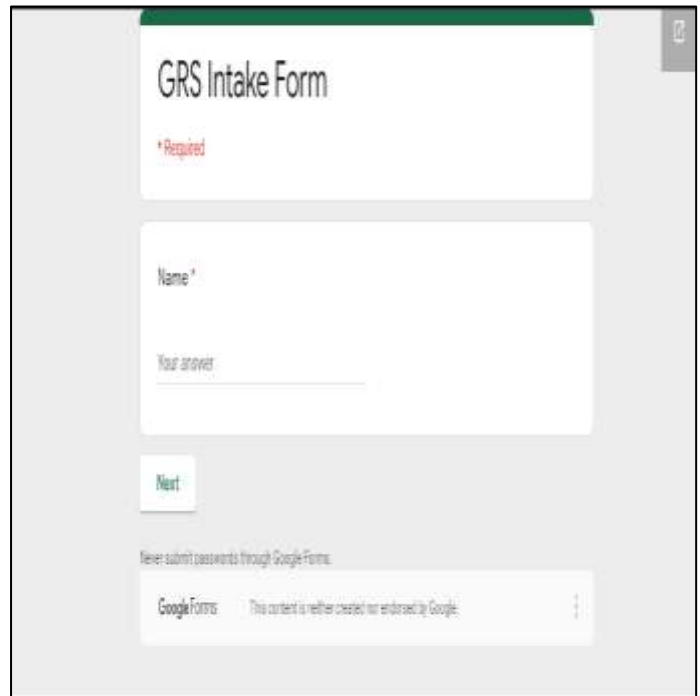
**HR Payroll Tracker and Tax Table** will also be uploaded on the HR page for real-time salary status update and BIR Tax information to all Kalahi-CIDSS Staff. This shall be updated by HR Focal only who will be assigned as collaborator of the page.



### g. Grievance Redress System (GRS)

The GRS Page is especially devised in the system whereby queries or clarifications about the program and its implementation are responded to while problems and complaints from regional staff and ACT/MCT members are addressed and resolved at the lowest possible level.

An online **GRS Intake Form** through Google Forms is available on this page which



can be used to collect or gather any queries, concerns or complains about the program implementation, staff, partner LGUs or anyone directly or indirectly involved in the program.

#### Pre-implementation

The I-think learning system was conceptualized in May 2020. At first, these were all just ideas ready to put into application.

The eLearning system was conceptualized by former Regional Director Marie Angela Gopalan, OIC Division Chief of Promotive Services Division (PSD) Natividad Sequito, together with the Capability Building Section and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of Kalahi-CIDSS program.

The idea is to have one site which will serve as a single streamline of communication from RPMO down to the field staff.





Consultation meeting among former RD Marie Angela Gopalan with Promotive Services Division on enhancement of the i-THINK learning system.

## MAXIMIZING GOOGLE SUITE AS INSPIRATION FOR A STREAMLINE OF COMMUNICATION

The proponents of the system started from just the idea of maximizing the Google suite application and customize a site out of it

**Google Suite (G-suite) (now called a Google Workspace) provides a custom email for one business and includes collaboration tools like Gmail, Calendar, Meet, Chat, Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, Sites, and more.**

Productivity tools are in one place through this G-suite. And is simply accessible.

The I-think Learning system is a free site. It is powered by Google site which is a free web-page creation tool provided by Google.

The site could be integrated to other Google features and services like Google Drive for file storage, Google Calendar for tracking of events and activity notification, Google Meet for video teleconferencing or online meeting, Google Docs, Slide and Sheets for **faster** file sharing, **content** uploading and collaborative work and Google Classroom to **streamline learning** and **collaboration** among **Kalahi-CIDSS regional staff and ACTs.**

## DURING IMPLEMENTATION

When the system was established, series of inter-division meetings were conducted.

It was also presented to other divisions, and units and Management Committee, with an aim replicate or get another ideas to improve the system, since the system will serve as an intranet that shall provide private network for sharing information, collaboration tools, operational systems, and monitoring and tracking of program accomplishment among program staff.



Orientation of I- think system to other Division/Units on July 2020 led by OIC-DC Natividad Sequito and the CapBuild Unit and M& E Unit.

### **i-THINK learning system as office intranet**

Making the i-THINK the official intranet of the Field Office VIII is one of the office's strategies towards #OneDSWD and #FO8isGr8!

Former DSWD Regional Director Marie Angela Gopalan has recognized the 'i-THINK learning system as a proof of concept for IT-enabled learning and collaboration in the workplace.

From the series of consultation meetings, enhancements were considered and done. The official roll out of the coaching sessions and training activities were conducted in September 2020. The Field Office VIII cascaded deliverables, guidelines and memorandum to the field staff through the google classroom, the Capability Building also recorded the topics and discussions, and uploaded it in the I-think for databank purposes.





Conduct of coaching sessions to the field staff thru the I-THINK learning system.

## POST-IMPLEMENTATION PHASE/ WAYS FORWARD

The i-THINK system is currently down since the CapBuild Unit and M&E unit are enhancing its system so that partner agencies and LGUs can have access to the said site.

The i-THINK will not only be an official intranet of the office, but also an extranet, wherein some features of the system will become point of collaboration and communication with the agency's partners and intermediaries.

## LESSONS LEARNED

### Maximizing IT-enabled technology in the workplace

On broader perspective, **resilience** and **connectivity** will be the new catchwords as any agencies or organizations navigate in this new normal. The COVID-19 pandemic only puts emphasis on the need to intensify communication amidst the physical distancing (when travelling to the communities are reduced). This was what the I-think learning system is all about.

DSWD as a service agency needs to collaborate with direct field implementers in order to have unified directive. I-think helps in streamlining decision-making processes, and increase responsiveness and planning within the program.

We put emphasis on the collaboration as a strategic priority of the agency, and also a way of support to our local communities during these unprecedented times.



## LIMITATIONS IN THE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

CapBuild and M&E Unit administered a survey to the field staff, and one of the distinguished feedback is the need to have an offline feature of the system. (*please see photo of feedback form below*)

	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH
32		3	2		2		Internet connection									
33																
34		4	4		4											
35		2	2		2											
36		2	3		2		misran lang po di maka access due to signal									
37		4	4		4											
38																
39		1	3		2		Internet allowance is very much needed most especially during online meeting									
40		2	1		2											
41																
42		2	3		2		Please provide mobile application so that we can easily open the site.									
43																
44		1	1		1											
45		3	3		3		Pls enhance the features for mobile usage									
46		1	1		1		none									
47		5	5		5		Happy									
48		1	1		2		Should have offline access for updates									
49																
50		1	1		1		no									
51		5	5		5		RPMO please provide the ACT internet connection									
52		5	4		5		It is only useful to those who have fast internet connection/area with good internet connection									

Some of the comments of Area Coordinating Team from the conducted feedback survey on October 2020.

Further, G-suite allows the users to open, edit and work on uploaded and shared files but is heavily reliant on being online.

To advance the system with the offline access feature will be dependent on the G-suite offline feature.

## ABSORTIVE CAPACITY OF FIELD STAFF IN SYSTEM USAGE

Also, most of the comments include the need to upgrade features and applications that the site can be accessed through the mobile devices. The RPMO CapBuild through coaching already orientated to the field staff that they can use the i-THINK through mobile devices. We need more to capacitate the ACT on how they will navigate and use their devices.

## AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

The advantage of the i-THINK system relies on the fast internet connection. A major consideration comes with the fact that some of the covered Kalahi-CIDSS municipalities have poor internet connection.

The program has no fund to allocate for pocket wi-fi which offer more MBPS.

## REPLICATION



The system has expanded and used as the official intranet of FO8.

The I-think learning system has been expanded. The Office of the Regional Director has a dedicated site called the I-Link.

It has sub-features as to the following:

- a. Regional directives
- b. Conference room
- c. Consultation meeting
- d. downloadable

The I-Link is intended to unify all online portals of each division and facilitate engagement among MANCOM and RMDC members.

ORD's i-Link System is an avenue for real-time tracking and monitoring of programs and service's accomplishment and virtual conference rooms for MANCOM and RMDC updates or direct reports and even consultation or mentoring.

Further, the Human Resource Management and Development Division (HRMDD) also added a feature on the system's Human Resource portal wherein in this feature, the HR related- documents are posted for information dissemination and repository purposes.

## **RESULTS/IMPACTS**

### **Facilitation of Deliverables Amidst Challenge in Distance.**

During the second quarter of 2020 when travel restrictions are strictly implemented in the municipalities in the Region, the RPMO thought of ways to reach the field staff, through the use of i-THINK learning system.

The I-think has its call-a-coach feature wherein ACT or MCT members can officially request for RPMO's technical assistance and coaching through Google Forms. Through this, all TA requests are sent and collected online to RPMO Monitoring and Technical Assistance (MATA) Teams.

This facilitated all the concerns of the field staff along program implementation. The I-think system has been of big to still coach and mentor despite the restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This avenue coupled with other platform of communication like text, call and messenger facilitated in achieving the deliverables in every stage of implementation.

To note, the Field Office 8 was the first region nationwide to accomplish the physical target of 100%.

### **Efficient in Time and Resources.**

During the coaching sessions or training activities, the pre-tests, PPT presentations and manuals presented are simultaneously saved to Drive. The field staff can access classroom anytime, anywhere. Compared if you are using google meet -all information or data shared in the chat during a meeting is lost after the meeting is



over. While in the classroom, you can store recordings and information in one classroom for a specific Area Coordinating Team.

Reference:

*Concept Note, Jennifer Caspe-Paa, Training Specialist II*

Key persons

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