

## **PHILRECA and ERC Launch Compassion-Driven Consultation and Dialogue for Consumer Welfare Desk Officers of Electric Cooperatives**

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Press Release

Quezon City - In a shared commitment to elevate consumer welfare standards and further strengthen service-oriented delivery in the rural electrification sector, the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, Inc. (PHILRECA) and the Energy Regulatory Commission-Consumer Affairs Service (ERC-CAS) have formally launched a consultative discussion and orientation program for the Consumer Welfare Desk Officers (CWDOs) of electric cooperatives (ECs) across the archipelago.

The initiative, titled “From Compliance to Compassion: Empowering Frontline Service,” underscores a paradigm shift, moving beyond mere procedural compliance toward a more humane, empathetic, and consumer-centric approach in addressing public concerns.

Experts from the Commission attended this two-day event spearheaded by Chief Energy Regulation Officer Atty. Marie Denise S. Gayon, Supervising Energy Regulation Officer, Mr. Joevyn V. Peralta, Ms. Rowena C. Nidea, and Engr. Magelle Kris C. Macabeo of the Meter Division.

Recognizing that CWD Officers serve as the first line of communication between consumers and the energy sector, PHILRECA and ERC reiterated the importance of equipping them not only with technical knowledge of the regulatory process and issuances but also with the values of responsiveness, empathy, and proactive conflict resolution.

The discussion and orientation sessions served as a platform for open dialogue where EC representatives can seek clarifications, raise operational challenges, and align their practices with the Commission’s evolving regulatory frameworks.

PHILRECA Executive Director and General Manager Atty. Janeene Depay-Colingan highlighted the importance of frontline service rendered by CWDOs of ECs to more than 16 million member-consumer-owners (MCOs).

“Compassion in the frontline service is not just a value, it is an obligation to the millions of household consumers depending on us,” she stated.

Electric Cooperative’s Consumer Welfare Officers Philippine Association (ECCOWPA) President, Mr. Edison De Guzman, underscored that true public service begins when CWDOs embrace compassion as a regulatory value, not merely a soft skill.

“We need to escape from the traditional way of providing customer service. We should now level up and be champions of Consumer Welfare,” he remarked.

“To do this, we have to continuously develop our personal capabilities, improve our skills, and update our knowledge,” he added.

Power Bloc Representatives, PHILRECA Party-List Representative Hon. Presley C. De Jesus and APEC Party-List Representative Hon. Sergio C. Dagooc, delivered their solidarity messages, emphasizing that Consumer Welfare Desk Officers serve as vital conduits in nurturing a strong and trust-based relationship between ECs and their MCOs.

They stressed that CWDOs are not merely administrative personnel but key ambassadors of service, whose role directly shapes consumer perception, confidence, and engagement in the rural electrification movement.

PHILRECA commends the ERC's collaborative stance, affirming that effective consumer protection requires both regulatory direction and people-centered implementation.

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