

**Signing of Record of Discussions between JICA and LWUA for the
Project for Master Plan Study on Comprehensive Sewerage System Development**
At Local Water Utilities Administration Office on April 11, 2024
Draft Message of JICA Philippines Office Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema

LWUA¹ Administrator, Atty. *Jose Moises “Joy” Salonga*

My dear *Kasama* and *Kaibigan*,

Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat!

Ohayougozaimasu mina-san

Today, I cannot stop my excitement, as we can begin our very important technical cooperation project for the Master Plan Study on Comprehensive Sewerage System Development for Metropolitan Cebu, at last.

Undoubtfully, Metropolitan Cebu is one of the Philippines’ most beautiful and attractive tourism areas, indeed.

¹ Local Water Utilities Administration

I am sure that our Cebuano friends would like to preserve the beauty of Metropolitan Cebu for many generations to come.

We certainly share this desire.

Through this Master Plan cooperation, we are extremely pleased to work with our close partners – ①LWUA, ②MCWD² and ③LGUs, with the spirit of “Bayanihan”.

If not properly treated, wastewater pollutes waterways and beaches.

Despite many *Cebuanos* having their own toilets, we understand that majority do not practice regular de-sludging.

² Metropolitan Cebu Water District

Moreover, the lack of centralized sewerage systems increases the risks of water pollution and contamination.

Modernized wastewater treatment is crucial to expanding big regional hubs like Metropolitan Cebu, whose people need better sanitary environment for living and industries, including tourism.

Also, it should be noted that, on the business side, global investors, including Japanese, are more likely to aspire to invest in places where the business climate is not only friendly, but also considerate of the environment.

Today's signing is truly the good news for *Cebuanos* and visitors, including tourists and investors.

Our joint efforts for preparing the comprehensive sewerage Master Plan can surely help realize *Cebuanos'* burning desire, to ①improve wastewater treatment, ②create a more livable environment, and ③achieve more sustainable growth and development.

Actually, this is not the first time that JICA is joining hands with *Cebuanos* to promote sustainable development.

We have many projects also involving Japanese private sector and Japanese local governments, to introduce and share Japan's technology and expertise.

The AMCON Sludge Dewatering Facility and the Gunn Waste Plastic Recycling Facility are the examples, to name a few.

In addition, JICA is also closely working with MCWD to construct a new Septage Treatment Plant in Metropolitan Cebu through the grant financial assistance program.

If I may talk about the close partnership with LWUA, even beyond Metropolitan Cebu, I can also remind you another joint project name, that is the ongoing Master Plan Study for Comprehensive Sewerage Development in Davao City.

Last November, in his congress speech in Manila, Japan's PM HE KISHIDA highlighted the concept of "Golden Friendship, Golden Opportunities".

In this regard, once again, I sincerely welcome today's momentous event, to boost our further collaboration and to develop the potential of the area.

This Master Plan will give us the direction and policy guidance to chart the brighter future.

However, at present, we are standing at the starting line only.

We need to collaborate jointly and closely with various stakeholders, in a constructive manner, for the smooth implementation and maximum impact.

Let me count on your wise and strong leadership and “*Bayanihan*” spirit for the same.

Kasama nyo kami!

Sama sama tayó!

Para sa Bagong Pilipinas!

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Maraming salamat po at Mabuhay tayong lahat.