

# News FROM Philippines

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2020

## A Year in Pictures



Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) thanks our counterparts in the Philippine government, private sector, grassroots organization, academe, and communities for supporting our development cooperation activities in 2020. The year 2020 was an exceptionally challenging time and we appreciate the cooperation of our friends and partners in helping move forward JICA's mission in the Philippines.

While a post-pandemic world remains uncertain, let's keep working together to create a better future for everyone.





## JICA continues support to Philippine COVID-19 recovery via Post Disaster Standby Loan Phase 2



Signing Ceremony

“JICA stands with the Filipinos in this time of Bayanihan. We admire the tireless efforts and the leadership shown by the Philippine Government to tackle the unprecedented challenges posed by the spread of COVID-19. As trusted development partner of the Philippines, JICA will continue to help promote inclusive, sustainable growth, and help improve the quality of life of everyone.”

- AZUKIZAWA Eigo

JICA Philippines Chief Representative

JICA disbursed recently 10 billion Japanese Yen under the Post Disaster Standby Loan Phase 2 (PDSL 2). The Philippine government requested this to address financial needs arising from the State of National Calamity extended on September 2020.

The disbursed amount is part of the total 50 billion Japanese Yen loan to ensure that contingency funds are available for the Philippines' response to the financial demands of the post-disaster recovery phase in cases of natural disaster and public health crisis. Phase 1 was provided immediately after the natural disaster Typhoon Yolanda in 2013, while Phase 2 covers public health crisis.

Earlier this year, JICA also made the disbursement of 50 billion Japanese Yen under the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan (CCRESL) to immediately help the Philippines deal with the pandemic. Many of JICA's counterpart countries have requested CCRESL and PDSL amid the pandemic, but the Philippines is the first country to receive both loans.●

## JICA, DAR turned over PHP 105-M infra projects for Mindanao farmer

A total of PHP 105 million infrastructure support facilities were turned over in a series of ceremonies on December 17-18 and 21 in Lanao del Norte, North Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat to benefit agrarian reform beneficiaries in Mindanao as part of the support of JICA to farmers reeling from the impact of COVID-19.

The projects - which include a farm-to-market road, rural water systems, and communal irrigation facilities - were completed in partnership with the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) as part of the Mindanao Sustainable Agrarian and Agriculture Development Project (MinSAAD). The cooperation aims to jumpstart economic activities in agrarian reform communities through infrastructure projects like farm-to-market roads, bridges, irrigation, potable water systems, and post-harvest facilities.

Farmers and farmers' organizations under the project are also trained on agriculture, agribusiness, and agroforestry development. Four (4) subprojects amounting to PHP 44 million under this component were also turned over to farmer beneficiaries in North Cotabato on December 16. ●



Unveiling of marker of the Pantao Level II Rural Water System in Lanao Del Norte

“Turned over subprojects have to be operated and maintained well for them to sustain the delivery of their intended benefits over their intended economic life. With the increase in household incomes, peace, prosperity, and development will follow within the target settlement area.”

-Mr. Eduardo Suaybaguio  
Project Manager of MinSAAD.

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD



© Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co. Ltd.



© Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co. Ltd.

Safety prayer ceremony in Japan



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the inauguration of support facilities



Unveiling of the marker for the rehabilitated Alsam Dam under NISRIIP

## Construction of new JICA-assisted PCG flagship vessels starts

The construction of the new additional 94-meter Multi-Role-Response Vessels (MRRVs) under the development assistance of JICA began in December 2020 at a safety prayer ceremony in Japan.

The ceremony marks the commencement of the construction of the two additional MRRVs under the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project Phase II of JICA and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) amounting to 16.455 billion yen. The PCG flagship vessels is targeted to be delivered within the Duterte Administration.

The project is part of JICA's support to Philippine sustainable development efforts particularly in promoting maritime safety and security, while addressing maritime accidents, aging vessels, and search and rescue during frequent natural disasters. The MRRVs will feature a helicopter hangar and equipment for helicopter operations, marine environmental protection room, and use of special clad steel plate durable for extreme weather condition.

The Shinto ceremony in Japan was led by the project contractor, Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co. Ltd.. Officials from the Department of Transportation, PCG, Embassy of Japan, and JICA attended virtually.●

## JICA-assisted river irrigation system in Quezon inaugurated

More than 1,700 farmers will benefit from the rehabilitated Dumacaa River Irrigation System in Quezon inaugurated recently. JICA supported the rehabilitation project citing that the agriculture sector can play a key role in the Philippines' economic recovery from COVID-19. The project is under the ongoing National Irrigation Sector Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (NISRIIP) of JICA in partnership with National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice).

The NISRIIP project includes not only agriculture infrastructure but also capacity building of irrigators' associations and farmers. When completed, the project sought to benefit a total of 25,376 farmers not just in Quezon but also in Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Palawan, Iloilo, Bukidnon, Davao del Sur, Maguindanao, and Agusan del Sur.

For the Dumacaa River Irrigation System, the rehabilitation included infrastructure works in the river canals, drainage, farm structure, and other support facilities.●



## Enhancing Philippine disaster management capacity

JICA bared that it has nine (9) ongoing projects in the Philippines dedicated to disaster risk reduction and management.

JICA's ongoing projects in the Philippines include the Flood Risk Management Project for Cagayan River, Tagoloan River, and Imus River; Flood Risk Management for Cagayan de Oro River; Cavite Industrial Area Flood Risk Management; Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement; Master Plan and Feasibility Study on Flood Control and Drainage in Davao City; Development of Extreme Weather Monitoring and Information Sharing System in the Philippines; Improvement of Flood Forecasting and Warning System for Cagayan de Oro River Basin; Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Enhancement Project Phase II; and Capability Enhancement for High Quality Weather Observation, Forecast, Warning and Information in the Philippines.

"The pandemic showed us how structures and systems can be affected severely. We aim to continue working with the Philippines towards strengthening disaster risk reduction and management. This way, people become better prepared in addressing the gaps and impact of future natural disasters in their lives," said JICA Philippines Senior Representative OHSHIMA Ayumu.●



Pasig Marikina River



Along Pasig Marikina River

## Filipino scholars in Japan complete SDG Leadership Program

Eight (8) Filipino scholars recently returned from their studies in Japan under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Global Leadership Program of JICA. These were Mark Jhuden Dela Cruz, Jason Yrvin Sol Establecida, Justin Simon, Megan Barte, Franz Raphael Raña, and Mayril Arciaga from the Department of Finance (DOF) and Vanessa Candido and Rodolfo Serrano Jr. from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

JICA has been sending Filipino scholars for training in Japanese universities and organizations under its Knowledge Co-Creation Program or KCCP. The SDG Global Leadership Program is a long-term course that includes master's and Ph.D. scholarships for individuals in target government agencies. JICA scholar Vanessa Candido, who completed her master's degree in Public Policy at the University of Tokyo, said, "Studying in Japan opened me to a lot of opportunities that helped me grow professionally and personally. After graduating, I am now better equipped at being a public policy practitioner and am now more than ever, ready to contribute to Philippine development."●



Scholars of Sophia University and JICA Philippines Chief Representative



JICA scholars with JICA Philippines Chief and Senior Representatives

## NEWS IN PHOTOS



## 19 Filipinos under JICA scholarship return to PH government service

19 Filipino scholars who received the Japanese Grant for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) in 2018 returned to the Philippines last September 2020 to apply what they have learned in their work and to contribute to Philippine development.

The JDS is a component of JICA's Official Development Assistance (ODA) where young leaders from partner countries are given full scholarships for graduate degrees in Japanese universities as support to human resource development. Also, the JDS Program is a platform for Japan to share their experience in development and prepare young leaders on emerging development issues.

The returning Filipino scholars came from the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Finance - Bureau of Internal Revenue, Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Local Government Unit of Cabanatuan City, Public Private Partnership Center of the Philippines, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Public Works and Highways, and Department of Science and Technology.

An online presentation seminar was conducted, where six (6) of the scholars presented their research on corporate tax management, the Philippines' preferential trade agreements with different countries, the Assistance to Municipalities Program (AMP), solid waste management, bridges reinforcement through anti-corrosive materials, and building ventilation. To know more about the program and scholarship opportunities for AY 2021-2022, please visit <http://jds-scholarship.org/country/philippines/index.html>.

## NEWS IN PHOTOS

### Japanese company builds new factory for ready-to-eat rice in Philippines

BiotechJp Corp (BTJP), a manufacturer of packed rice using low-protein rice technology, has established a new factory in the Philippines in Tarlac Province. The factory has a daily production capacity of 20,000 rice packs and will help BTJP meet the demand of a growing market for packed rice.

Under its Partnership with the Private Sector scheme, JICA supported BTJP in introducing low-protein rice technology in the Philippines to address the growing cases of chronic kidney diseases (CKDs) in the country. The low-protein rice technology helps delay progression of CKD and consequently reduces the costs of medical treatments of patients. The technology is also able to bring benefits to Filipino farmers by adding value to their rice products, according to the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice).

Apart from the low-protein rice, BTJP has also introduced other variants such as ready-to-eat packed rice with a one-year shelf life that makes it ideal for emergency situations. "The JICA Partnership with the Private Sector initiative was intended to share innovations from Japanese companies to help address development problems in our partner countries," said JICA Philippines Senior Representative OHSHIMA Ayumu.



Turnover Ceremony in Tarlac



Fist bump between BTJP President and BTJP Chairman



BTJP Team

### About JICA

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is the executing agency of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA), which handles technical cooperation, ODA loans and investment, and grant aid, as well as cooperation volunteers and disaster relief programs. JICA is the world's largest bilateral aid agency with its volume of cooperation amounting to about USD 16.37 billion for JFY 2019 and a worldwide network of about 100 overseas offices including the Philippines.



Join the conversation. Follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/jicaphilippines/](https://facebook.com/jicaphilippines/)

### JICA Philippines Office

40F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza  
6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City  
Telephone: +632 8889-7119  
Facsimile: +632 8889-6850  
Website: <https://www.jica.go.jp/philippine/english/>  
Editorial Team: Jennifer Erice, Maffy Carandang-Patio,  
Amanda Bacani, Roxanne De los Santos

