

News FROM Philippines

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2021



PH RECEIVES 10-B YEN JICA ASSISTANCE IN COVID WAR CHEST

The Philippines received 10 billion yen from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Post Disaster Stand-by Loan (PDSL 2) to boost COVID-19 response strategies.

Disbursed in August, the amount was the last tranche of the financing assistance under JICA PDSL 2 that serves as contingency funds for the Philippines' response to the financial demand of post-disaster recovery in case of public health emergencies and natural disasters. Prior to this, the Philippines has received 20 billion yen from PDSL 2 in June this year, on top of the 10 billion yen disbursed last year, to support economic recovery measures from COVID-19. Another 10 billion yen of the PDSL 2 was disbursed in January 2021 to support the rescue, relief, and rehabilitation of areas devastated by Typhoons Quinta, Rolly, and Ulysses in 2020.

"JICA continues to support partner countries like the Philippines in curbing potential breakouts from COVID-19 variants and help Filipinos build back better from this public health crisis," said JICA Philippines Chief Representative AZUKIZAWA Eigo. "As development partners, we need to work together to manage the crisis, strengthen health systems, and save lives. JICA's PDSL 2 assistance will hopefully support effective and sustainable measures against COVID-19 in the Philippines."

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The new vessel will be helpful in the Philippines' continuing efforts to address challenges in an evolving maritime landscape. This project with the PCG is also an example of the true partnership between the Philippine government and JICA in generating economic growth and supporting maritime safety and security.

AZUKIZAWA Eigo
JICA Chief Representative



PHILIPPINES LAUNCHES FIRST 94-METER MULTI-ROLE RESPONSE VESSEL TO BOOST MARITIME SECURITY

The Philippines' first 94-meter Multi-Role Response Vessel (MRRV) was launched in July in a move to boost the country's maritime safety and security. The vessel is the first of two 94-meter MRRVs under the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project Phase II of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) with JICA and will be the PCG's flagship vessel.

The launching was held in Shimonoseki, Japan known for its shipbuilding history. The vessel was constructed by Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. using Japanese technology to help it withstand sea operations during rough conditions. The vessel will join the Philippine fleet in early 2022.



FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND FLOOD RISK PROTECTION PROJECT IN CAVITE INAUGURATED

The Imus River Basin Subproject under the PHP 3 billion (7.54 billion yen) Flood Risk Management and Improvement Project in Cagayan River, Tagoloan River, and Imus River of JICA and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) was inaugurated in September.

The Imus Retarding Basin has a holding capacity of 35 hectares while Bacoar Retarding Basin, that has two temporary storage ponds or basins connected by sluiceway, has a total of 9 hectares that will help contain floodwaters during a storm and reduce peak volume of flood in Imus and Bacoar rivers.

The retarding basin feature of the project is the first-of-its-kind man-made reservoir project in the Philippines that serves as a temporary storage pond to contain water during heavy rains, helping save lives and property.



RESEARCH TO ENHANCE FLOOD MANAGEMENT IN THE PH LAUNCHED

JICA, International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM), Public Works Research Institute in Japan, and University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) are teaming up in a research project to study water-related disaster risks in the Philippines, particularly in the Pampanga River Basin, Pasig-Marikina River, and Laguna Lake Basin.



The Project for Development of a Hybrid Water-Related Disaster Risk Assessment Technology for Sustainable Local Economic Development Policy or HyDEPP is part of the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) of JICA promoting joint research between Japanese institutions and partner countries like the Philippines to help address global issues like climate change.

Also part of the project are University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD), University of the Philippines Mindanao (UPMin), government agencies such as Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), and Japanese universities namely University of Tokyo, Tohoku University, University of Shiga Prefecture, Nagoya University, and Kyoto University.

NETWORK OF STAKEHOLDERS IN LUZON TO PROMOTE COASTAL CONSERVATION IN PH ESTABLISHED

To promote climate change resilience and help conserve coastal environments, the team behind a coastal conservation project of JICA held in July a virtual workshop towards establishing the Blue Carbon Network (BCNet)-Luzon that will help promote and implement a Blue Carbon Strategy.

The Blue Carbon Strategy is an expected outcome of an ongoing five-year research project called Comprehensive Assessment and Conservation of Blue Carbon Ecosystems and Their Services in the Coral Triangle or BlueCARES. Under BlueCARES, Japanese and Filipino scientists engaged in mapping coastal ecosystems like mangroves and seagrasses to help them assess constraints and recommend policy actions on coastal environment conservation.

Blue Carbon refers to carbon captured by world's oceans and coastal ecosystems. When these ecosystems are damaged, an enormous amount of carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere, adversely contributing to climate change.

The virtual workshop rallied stakeholders from national government agencies, local governments, state universities and colleges, and non-government organizations into monitoring and preparing a Blue Carbon Strategy. Other participants came from universities in Thailand and Malaysia. Once BlueCARES is completed, research findings will be translated to easy-to-understand information to help policy makers come up with solutions to conserving coastal ecosystems.



JICA, DAR WRAP UP AGRARIAN AND AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN MINDANAO

The Mindanao Sustainable Agrarian and Agriculture Development Project (MinSAAD) of JICA and Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) was implemented in 2012 and finally completed this year, with 280 sub-projects in 12 settlement areas in Bukidnon, Lanao del Norte, Compostela Valley (now Davao del Oro), Davao del Sur, North Cotabato, South Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat.

In September, a project exit conference was held in General Santos City to celebrate the success of MinSAAD. Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines KOSHIKAWA Kazuhiko and JICA Philippines Chief Representative AZUKIZAWA Eigo joined the event online. Under MinSAAD, sub-projects composed of farm-to-market roads, bridges, irrigation facilities, post-harvest facilities, water systems, and agribusiness and agroforestry support amounting to PHP 2.75 billion were implemented in target areas.



COMPLETED MARAWI TRANSCENTRAL ROAD PROJECT TO HELP REVIVE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – JICA

Newly completed segments of the Marawi Transcentral Road under the 2-billion-yen Program for the Support to Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Marawi City and Its Surrounding Areas were inaugurated last September 29, 2021.

The completed portions of Marawi Transcentral Road were supported through JICA grant assistance for the rehabilitation of the Islamic City after it was left in rubble in the 2017 siege. Prior to the conflict, Marawi City was a trading hub known for its towering mosques and busy commercial streets. Said construction of 18.97-kilometer road aims to catalyze growth and economic opportunities, as well as sustain peacebuilding initiatives in the city.



NEWLY REHABILITATED IRRIGATION SYSTEM IN PAMPANGA TO HELP BOOST FOOD SECURITY



The Porac-Gumain River Irrigation System, a subcomponent of the 6.187-billion-yen National Irrigation Sector Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (NISRIIP) of JICA and the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) in collaboration with the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), seeks to improve and sustain rice production in the Philippines, ensuring food security in the long-term. The project in Pampanga is the sixth rehabilitated irrigation system in the project and will help more than 4,000 farmers in four municipalities that are challenged with water source problems from the Mount Pinatubo eruption and watershed denudation from the eruption.

The newly rehabilitated irrigation system consisting of three dams in Pampanga is seen to boost food security for Filipinos amid COVID-19.



FILIPINO SCHOLAR JOINS JICA SPACE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM IN JAPAN

This year, despite the threat of COVID-19, JICA through its Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP) sent its first Filipino scholar to join the Program on Human Resource Development (HRD) for Space Technology Utilization to study space technology with Japan's leading universities, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and JICA.

Charleston Dale Ambatali, a faculty of the University of the Philippines Electrical and Electronics Engineering Institute (UPEEI), was chosen under the KCCP to join the program. He will be completing a doctorate degree in aeronautics and astronautics at the University of Tokyo Graduate School of Engineering.

When I return to the Philippines, I envision myself to be mentoring young students on satellite development and contributing to the growth of the space program in my country.

To learn more about the JICA Group Training courses, please visit this link
<https://www.jica.go.jp/philippine/english/activities/activity_01_05.html>.

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

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