

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY



NewsFROM Philippines

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2022

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

JICA unites with Filipinos affected by Earthquake in North Luzon

Scholarship program for Filipino professionals celebrates 20 years

JICA Chief at the Post-State of the Nation Economic Briefing

A bridge of hope for upland communities in Ifugao

First of its kind digital textbook in Visayan language to help close gap in PH math education



JICA EXPANDS SUPPORT TO BANGSAMORO PEOPLE

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Philippines Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema visited Cotabato City in August for courtesy meetings with Chief Minister Ahod B. Ebrahim of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and Minister Mohagher Iqbal of the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE), to discuss the wide-range cooperation between JICA and BARMM.

SAKAMOTO highlighted JICA's two new projects supporting the Normalization Process under the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB), which refers to the transformation of armed struggle to peaceful political participation, citizenship, and livelihood. Among them, JICA is about to launch a new technical cooperation project "Socio-Economic Assistance for Bangsamoro Normalization Process" for smooth and effective implementation of livelihood skills training for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities by strengthening the coordination and implementation capacity of MBHTE-Technical Education and Skills Development-BARMM.

A 1.8 billion-Japanese yen grant project entitled "Programme for the Urgent Improvement of Socioeconomic Infrastructure in Bangsamoro Region" aims to further promote the peace process and stabilize the society in BARMM through urgent reconstruction of the Provincial/City Manpower and Development Center (PCMD) in Marawi City, development of the Regional Manpower Training Centers in the Municipality of Sultan Kudarat and Basilan, and improvement of farm-to-market roads in some barangays in conflict-affected areas.

Chief Minister Ebrahim and Minister Iqbal expressed their utmost gratitude to the Japanese Government and JICA for continuously expanding its support to the Bangsamoro government. These projects will address the needs of their people and improve the state of their livelihood. ■

JICA UNITES WITH FILIPINOS IN TIMES OF DISASTERS



JICA provided much-needed relief supplies to North Luzon which was left devastated by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake last July.

To aid affected communities in the north, JICA in collaboration with the Government of Japan is sending camping tents, sleeping pads, plastic sheets, generator sets with cord reels, conversion plugs, and portable jerry cans/water containers.

JICA Chief Representative to the Philippines SAKAMOTO Takema expressed the deepest sympathies to the people affected by the earthquake, saying "Kasama niyo kami. Our thoughts are with those who suffered from this disaster. Acknowledging these are challenging times, we sincerely reaffirm our support to our Filipino friends. We have already decided to provide our disaster relief supplies and the Japanese experts already in the Philippines are willing to share their knowledge and experience with frontline government agencies involved in disaster management and recovery."

Japan and the Philippines are both disaster-prone nations, being both located on the Pacific Ring of Fire. Over the years, JICA, as PH's reliable partner, has been enthusiastically cooperating in the field of disaster management and resilience building to help the Philippines

cope with natural disasters. JICA seeks to explore more opportunities to contribute to the Philippines using its experience on disaster management in its cooperation with its Philippine counterparts. ■



JICA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CELEBRATES MILESTONE

Twenty (20) Filipinos left for Japan last August to pursue their Master's degrees in premier Japanese universities under the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship by Japanese Grant Aid or the JDS Project. This grant aid aims to share Japan's technology, knowledge, long history of development experience and others to young government professionals of partner countries such as the Philippines who will spearhead their countries towards high quality socio-economic growth and prosperity.

With the year 2022 marking the 20th anniversary year of the JDS Project's implementation in the Philippines, the 20th batch is composed of multi-sectoral government staff with high potential coming from various national government agencies. Among them are National Tax Research Center, Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment



and Natural Resources, Department of Public Works and Highways, and the Department of Transportation.

Since its inception, Filipinos have had 99.2% completion rate of their successful

studies in Japan and have returned to the Philippines with new knowledge and advanced technical skills, and gaining promotion and key policy leadership positions in their respective fields. ■



L-R: BSP Governor Medalla with JICA Chief Sakamoto.



Talk of the Town

JICA CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE @ THE POST-STATE OF THE NATION ECONOMIC BRIEFING

JICA Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema attended the Philippines post-State of the Nation Economic Briefing along with high-ranking executives from the Philippine government.

SAKAMOTO noted that JICA's participation was an opportunity to meet counterparts and further promote JICA's development assistance complementing Philippine development priorities. "It's an important opportunity to meet and listen to decision makers from the Philippine government and reiterate our continued commitment to Philippines' quality economic growth, overcoming vulnerability, and peace and development in Mindanao," he said.

At the briefing, Philippine officials discussed GDP growth trends from 2015 to 2021 and economic projections until 2028 as well as foreign direct investment inflows. They also stressed ongoing preparations for the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 focusing on these key agenda: protecting households' purchasing power, maintaining sound macroeconomic fundamentals, ensuring a level playing field, and upholding public order. Officials also highlighted 'right-sizing' measures in infrastructure and social services to promote efficiency in government.

Aside from bilateral partners like JICA, also present in the briefing were members from the private sector, media, and other government agencies. ■

NEWS IN PHOTOS

A BOOST TO PHILIPPINE AGRI SECTOR

Japanese officials from the JICA Headquarters visited the Philippines as part of a study mission to discuss the project framework for the cooperation of JICA with the Department of Agriculture (DA) on enhancing the Philippine vegetable value chain. They met with officials from the DA and visited DA regional offices in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Region 4A, and provincial and municipal offices in Quezon and Benguet.

The Planning Phase of the "Project for Market-Driven Enhancement of Vegetable Value Chain in the Philippines" or MV2C, which started in early 2022, covered an in-depth analysis of the vegetable value chain in the country. Based on the results of the Planning Phase, JICA, DA, and relevant stakeholders came up with a framework for this value chain project for implementation until year 2028.

The JICA-DA cooperation also identified pilot projects that will comprise the inclusive value chain model which include the improvement of cultivation techniques and business/organizational capacity of farmer groups, cold chain distribution system, packaging, diversification of sales channels, agro-processing, and vegetable consumption. Said cooperation, is an example of collaboration and sharing of Japan's expertise towards creating a systematic approach in the entire Philippine vegetable value chain and to support local farmers. ■



A BRIDGE OF HOPE IN IFUGAO

A new concrete bridge with access road was completed recently in Mayoyao, Ifugao giving hope to upland farmers in the area who needed access to new markets and social services. JICA and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) led the momentous turnover of said bridge in September.

For years, farmers and residents in Barangays Alimit and Nattum in Mayoyao traverse an aged hanging bridge made of steel cable. Now, under the assistance of the JICA and DENR, a new 80-meter bridge and access road rose above the ordinary footpaths in Mayoyao that dramatically changed the way of living in the community. People now can have better and safer access to both ends of the river thanks to this sub-project of the Forestland Management Project.



For the agroforestry support facility in Ifugao alone, more than 1,600 people including farmers stand to benefit by having an easier, accessible means to transport agriculture and non-agriculture products to markets, allow students to reach schools safely, and have access to medical centers.

Mr. Eddie Maina, President of the Alimit Langayan Banao Farmers Organization, Inc. and a local farmer, shared that the new bridge offers them an opportunity to seek out new markets for their products. "This facility gives us hope when it comes to increasing our income and providing for our family." ■



END RABIES NOW! JICA'S SUPPORT TO ELIMINATING RABIES IN THE PH

With unpredictable emerging infectious diseases and deaths from rabies in the Philippines, JICA lends technical support to the Department of Health (DOH) in managing the rabies disease.

As part of supporting an integrated approach to rabies diagnosis and prevention, JICA turned over a biosafety cabinet for the Regional Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Region 3 to promote safety when handling infectious agents and laboratory samples. The project, in partnership with Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) and Muntinlupa City, also launched Rapid Neutralizing Antibody Detection Test (RAPINA) to improve disease surveillance. The project also collaborated with Japanese vlogger Fumiya Sankai for a series of rabies education video to promote rabies prevention awareness in the Philippines.

"JICA is determined to support the Philippines in raising the standards in public health. Our cooperation with the DOH on rabies prevention is an opportunity to share Japan's expertise and approaches on health issues," said JICA Senior Representative YANAGUICHI Masanari. ■



Even as the habagat or southwest monsoon brought rain in July, Caviteños can rest easy with the successful completion of the two retarding basins (Bacoar and Imus) under the Imus River Sub-project of the Flood Risk Management Project for Cagayan River, Tagoloan River and Imus River.

JICA-ASSISTED FLOOD CONTROL FACILITIES IN CAVITE COMPLETED

Retarding basins are massive structures designed to catch heavy rainfall and reduce the risk of floods in surrounding areas. These projects form part of JICA's assistance to the Philippines' disaster management efforts amid the country's vulnerability to strong typhoons and changing climate patterns.

Project Manager Aurelio Mendoza of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH, UPMO-Flood Control Management Cluster) and Japanese engineers KAKU Shuji and KIN Hitoshi explained the various benefits and features of the project, including the basins that are the "first of its kind" in the

Philippines. Buhay na Tubig Barangay Captain Raymundo Ramirez also expressed his gratitude for the project which will help reduce the fear of residents from extreme flood in their area. ■



FIRST DIGITAL MATH TEXTBOOK IN LOCAL LANGUAGE HELPS CLOSE GAP IN PH MATH EDUCATION

JICA partnered with the Department of Education (DepEd), and Japanese company Keirinkan Co. to introduce a digital-paper math textbook in Visayan language (Smart Lecture), the first in the Philippines as move to help bridge disparities in math education, improve their grades, and boost the country's international competitiveness.

Smart Lecture is an easy-to-use teaching tool that encourages maximum learning. This Smart Lecture project uses Japan's organized structure and quality explanation while matching it with the Philippine curriculum. It is part of JICA's Partnership with the Private Sector that taps into Japanese innovations and introduces their expertise to partner countries.

Keirinkan Co., a well-known Japanese textbook company in Japan and partner in the project, held a pilot study in Cagayan de Oro. The pilot study showed marked improvement in students' math performance and interest in utilization from 95% of 180 high school teachers. The project recently held a conference in Cebu City to introduce the project and assess further needs of Filipino students in the math area.

When successful, DepEd plans to roll out the project into other regions in the country. ■

FEATURE

JICA volunteers are back in the Philippines in 2022 after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, the first batch of volunteers are ready to embark on a mission to support sustainable development initiatives in the new normal. This story is about one of the first batch of JICA volunteers in the Philippines this year.

JICA VOLUNTEER CHEF ON A MISSION TO SHARE COOKING TECHNIQUES TO TECH-VOC STUDENTS IN PASIG



MIYAGAWA Yoshimi is on a mission to teach Japanese cooking techniques to Filipino culinary students.

She recently joined the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Program in the Philippines to help upskill teachers and technical-vocational students of Cookery at the Rizal Experimental Station and Pilot School for Cottage Industries or REPSCI in Pasig. "I have been a chef for more than 40 years. I owned a restaurant in Yamanashi Prefecture in Japan that serves healthy vegetarian food. I'd like to share my experience with Filipino teachers and students for their capacity development and job opportunities. Also, I'd like to share Japanese culture through cooking to deepen mutual understanding."

Through Miyagawa's volunteer work, REPSCI will be introducing authentic Japanese cooking experience to their teachers and senior high school students taking up cookery and food and beverage courses. The school will also launch a cooking class bootcamp where parents of students can learn cooking standards and techniques in Japan to boost their livelihood skills and provide for their family.

Being a JICA volunteer, Miyagawa added, is one way to help make the lives of others better. "Just by simply sharing Japanese cuisine to Filipinos and hopefully inspire young Filipino chefs to create Japanese-Filipino fusion food can have great impact." ■

GOT FEEDBACK?

We would like to hear from you! Drop a question, message, comment, or suggestion in our email: pp_oso_rep@jica.go.jp

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 scale of operations amounting to about USD 16.69 billion for JFY 2020 and a worldwide network of about 100 overseas offices including the Philippines.

Join the conversation. Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/jicaphilippines>

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, Laurice Enriquez

