



**PLANTING CACAO, ARMM DTI Trade Secretary Sakiran Hajan watches keenly as a farm worker shows members of industry cluster teams from ARMM provinces, how to prepare a cacao seedling for planting at Malagos cacao farm in Davao.**

## ARMM clusters visit Davao cacao farms

DAVAO CITY --- Industry clusters from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao wended up their monitoring meetings in this southern city by visiting the well-established cacao plantation of Malagos Garden Resort belonging to the Puentespina family.

Set up and arranged by the Davao regional office of the Department of Trade and Industry, the visit covered the sprawling cacao plantation area where ARMM cluster teams were shown how cacao pods are

covered in small plastic bags to protect them from insects.

Malagos farm technicians also showed them how cacao is harvested and processed, how the raw beans are fermented, how they are dried using solar drying on a covered wooden drying platform and how the beans are classified automatically before they are packed into jute sacks.

"Our cluster teams were inspired and moti-

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## Coco coir nat'l cluster tapping big Ph markets

MAKATI CITY --- Potential big markets for coco coir products like geonets are now being targeted by the National Industry Cluster for Coco Coir or "NIC Coco Coir", an industry cluster group focusing only on this fiber by-product from coconut husk.

Coco coir is a fiber from dried coconut husk after it is crushed and processed in a decorticating machine which produces the coco coir as well as coco peat, a material used in making feeds and organic fertilizer.

In a workshop held in December last year here in

Makati, the NIC Coco Coir Planning Workshop 2015-2016 gathered some 20 participants from the Department of Trade and Industry's bureaus and regional offices to discuss the Road Map for the national coco coir industry, set up coco coir industry clusters in regions with no cluster teams yet, and finalize budgets for the release of funds.

NIC coordinator for coco coir Marcelina Alcantara said the workshop was part of the process to prepare the Coco Coir Road Map which was expected to

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## NICCEP clusters to keep sending reports

MAKATI --- Industry cluster teams nationwide are still being invited to submit copies of their reports to the National Cluster Bulletin newspaper for publication, despite the termination of the NICCEP or the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project last March.

Senior consultant Tet-suo Inooka of Japan International Cooperation Agency said the activities and projects of all the industry clusters under the NICCEP will still be spotlighted on the pages of the

Cluster Bulletin.

"We expect them to continue sending in copies of their reports to the Cluster Bulletin to let everyone know their clusters are still actively continuing their activities," Inooka said.

Makati-based CB assistant editor Maylene Aquino said she has relayed this message to all the industry clusters nationwide under the NICCEP to continue sending copies of their cluster reports to the Cluster Bulletin ( via email direct to> aureliopena2013@gmail.com)

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# PHILIPPINE Cluster Bulletin

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PHILIPPINES

## ARMM-DTI official sees bright future for industries

COTABATO CITY --- More robust industries turning out bigger outputs and better quality products in the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao are expected to attract billions of pesos in direct investments in the region, according to ARMM Trade Secretary Sakiran Hajan.

In a table talk with the National Cluster Bulletin editor recently in Davao, Hajan said he is "very positive" about

the future of the ARMM especially with the ongoing AICCEP or the ARMM Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement

Project, a joint undertaking between ARMM-DTI and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

"That's why I like to accompany the industry clusters and involve myself personally in their visits to places like Davao and see how they are doing and benefiting from these activities," says Hajan who recently joined the ARMM industry clusters and DTI provincial directors to the Malagos cacao plantation in Calinan, Davao City.

"I'm always hands-on when it comes to doing things at the DTI, this way I know what's going on and try to solve problems on the spot. Seeing all that passion in my people on what

they're doing, I can see a bright future for us at the ARMM," Hajan said.

The ARMM Trade Secretary said the coming of a new Bangsamoro government, trailed by millions of dollars in commitments from foreign countries like the US, Canada, Australia, Japan, Korea, etc to expand their assistance and bring in more foreign investments---have likewise made the future of the Muslim region even brighter than ever.

"I've always kept my faith and confidence on the capabilities of our people in the region and the economic potentials of all the provinces in the ARMM" Hajan said. (Philpress News)

## Palawan palm oil farm impresses cluster team

PUERTO PRINCESA --- Nine members of the palm oil industry cluster team led by two high ranking ARMM officials of the Department of Trade and Industry wended up their benchmarking trip to the palm oil operations of Agumil Plantations Inc in Maasin, Brooke's Point, Palawan last May 26-31, with lasting impressions that are expected to benefit the cluster.

ARMM Assistant Trade Secretary Abubacar Datumanong said the Palawan benchmarking trip was a good learning experience for the palm oil industry cluster team who picked up many "best practices" from Agumil, whose palm oil operations in Palawan is considered the best among its other operations in the southern Philippines.

"It was a very good trip, we all learned a lot from the benchmarking,

most especially our palm oil cluster members," Datumanong said.

The assistant trade secretary was accompanied by DTI provincial director Khalikuzaman Baraguir who helped coordinate the trip with the palm oil cluster officers, most of who are palm oil growers in Maguindanao.

The ARMM visiting group was met by Agumil plant manager Engr. Verulo Sabio who took them around the sprawling palm oil plantation, showing them an actual harvest operation, the nursery, a model farm and the company's processing facilities.

Baraguir said the plant manager showed them some of their best practices in palm oil production, explaining in detail how to handle the seedlings at the nursery, the kinds of tools to use, how to harvest

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**PALAWAN BENCHMARKING.** Members of the ARMM palm oil industry cluster took a breather posing with the operator of a crawler truck used in hauling harvested oil palm fruit bunches to the oil mill at Agumil Plantation in Maasin, Brooke's Point, Palawan.

## ARMM-DTI sets up offices to manage industry clusters

COTABATO CITY -- A "Project Management Office" or PMO has been set up here at the regional office of the Department of Trade and Industry to oversee the operations of the six pilot industry clusters in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi.

The six pilot industry clusters are the coconut industry, palm oil industry in Maguindanao, abaca industry in Lanao del Sur, rubber industry in Basilan, coffee industry in Sulu and the seaweed industry in Tawi-tawi.

In a meeting held in Davao recently, ARMM-DTI Assistant Secretary Abubacar Datumanong explained the organization of the PMO with the five provincial DTI directors of the five provinces, naming them managers of the five "satellite project management offices" or SPMO.

"As head of the SPMO in your province, you will oversee and help plan and control the projects and activities of the pilot industry cluster in your area," Datumanong told the DTI pro-

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**ARMM INDUSTRY CLUSTER CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

A PROJECT OF

**JICA**  
JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY

**ARMM dti**  
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

## PROJECTS

# Abaca cluster eyeing handicrafts project

MARAWI CITY -- Most abaca growers in Lanao del Sur province are still unaware that so many kinds of handicraft products can be made from abaca fiber generating big earnings for them, according to abaca cluster chairman Pundato Alug.

"That's why it was important for us to include skills training on abaca handicraft weaving to teach people in our communities to make various kinds of abaca handicraft products in demand by local and foreign tourists," Alug said.

Abaca farmers in the province, according to Alug, know only one thing,

and that is to grow, harvest and process abaca fiber to be sold to local traders who supply the needs of exporters and manufacturers. "They don't do anything else except grow abaca to supply traders," Alug said.

The abaca industry cluster team is targeting the towns of Ganassi and Pualas in Lanao del Sur province as pilot areas where they can start this training program for farmers and local folks to learn weaving abaca fiber into different kinds of attractive abaca handicraft products.

"When they are trained to diversify to handicraft-making, this will boost their

earnings from abaca besides supplying fiber to traders -- this will make them plant more abaca in their farm areas," Alug said.

This city of Marawi is being eyed as an alternative venue for the upcoming training on abaca weaving due to the absence of power in Ganassi and Pualas towns.

Accredited trainers from the Zamboanga Sibugay province has been recommended by officials from the Fiber Industry Development Authority or FIDA, as the abaca cluster finalized the details of this project last month. -(Philippine Press News)



ASST. TRADE SECRETARY Abubacar Datumanong (second from left) stresses a point during a recent meeting with ARMM DTI provincial directors in Davao as the group began organizing satellite project management offices (SPMO) in each province.

# BSMED to put out manual on industry clustering

MAKATI --- A manual on the "management and operation of cluster team" has been prepared and produced by the Bureau of Small Medium Enterprise Development division of the Department of Trade and Industry, according to a document received by the National Cluster Bulletin.

"There's really a need for a manual for industry clusters to guide them on managing and operating an industry cluster team effectively," says Jerry Clavesillas, assistant director of DTI-BSMED.

Clavesillas said it was

necessary for his office to compile all the valuable experiences of the industry clusters, upscale their learnings and showcase their experiences for use in developing the growth of industries by using the industry cluster approach.

To come up with the manual, the BSMED recently commissioned a professional documentation writer who gathered and compiled various industry clustering experiences from selected cluster teams in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, identifying and documenting lessons learned by

industry clusters, their successes and failures, lessons learned, etc.

The industry cluster manual, according to Clavesillas, tried to capture the significance and results of the NICCEP project under the topics of "Good Practices", "Areas for Improvement", "Emerging Patterns and Trends" and "Models and Approaches".

New, emerging industry clusters being developed by the DTI all over the country are expected to benefit from the new manual guide when finally published in

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CACAO FARM VISIT. ARMM Trade Secretary Sakiran Hajan joins the industry cluster teams at Malagos farm (upper left photo), ARMM cluster teams get good farming tips from a successful cacao farmer of a cooperative (upper right photo); farm supervisor explains benefits of covering cacao pods with plastic bags at Malagos cacao farm (above photo).

# DAR-ARMM gives lands and tractors to farmers

COTABATO CITY -- More than PHP20 million worth of common service facilities and equipment were distributed recently to agrarian reform farmer beneficiaries in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

This was part of the ARMM - Department of Agrarian Reform's 27th anniversary of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Amihilda Sangcopan, DAR-ARMM regional secretary, said the anniversary celebration was even more meaningful to the farmer beneficiaries as they were given their own farmlands as they received certificates of land ownership awards (CLOAs).

Held at the Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Complex,

the distribution activities were done under the Agrarian Reform Community Connectivity and Economic Support Services (ARCESS)..

The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law was signed into law by the late President Corazon Aquino on 10 June 1988.

The ARMM has distributed under its land tenure system a total of 263,563 hectares of farmlands to 68,087 agrarian reform farmers, contributing roughly 6 percent of the nationwide accomplishment of 4.45 million hectares land distributed.

The region, Sangcopan added, has 112,290 hectares more to dispose which is expected to benefit at least 37,430 more beneficiaries in

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# Seaweed fertilizing a big problem for cluster

TAWI-TAWI --- One of the biggest worries of the seaweed industry cluster team here are seaweed farmers in the island that use fertilizer to "fatten" their seaweeds to make them "heavier" to traders who pay higher prices for such seaweeds.

This is one big concern of the seaweed cluster of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao which is focusing right now on ways to save the reputation of Tawi-tawi seaweeds industry for its quality and highest output in the Philippines.

"We can't let this practice continue among some seaweed farmers here in Tawi-tawi, this practice has got to stop to save this industry," says cluster co-chairman Dr. Filemon Romero who works closely with team leader Dr. Jumelita Romero to address this problem among seaweed farmers in the island.

"The problem with these robust, fatter and heavier seaweeds is that

they have lower carageenan content-- which is what manufacturers and exporters are looking for. Fact is, they'll pay higher prices for seaweeds with high carageenan content," Romero said.

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# Nat'l cacao official urges ARMM to plant cacao

COTABATO CITY -- National coordinator for cacao industry cluster Engr. Edwin Banquerigo urged the various industry clusters of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao to start planting cacao and take advantage of the unlimited market demand and the growing global markets.

Addressing a conference room at the Davao DTI regional office filled with industry cluster members from the ARMM led by Assistant Trade Secretary Abubacar Datumanong, the national cacao coordi-

# CB editor planning a book on industry clusters

DAVAO CITY --- Although nothing is definite yet, the chief editor of the National Cluster Bulletin is thinking about writing a book on model industry clusters--how they work, how they succeeded, why some fail, etc-- which could be used as a reference book by members of industry cluster teams.

"It's going to be a very simple book, very easy to read without the usual jargons, very informative and inspiring for cluster teams" says chief editor Aurelio Pena who recently sounded off the idea to some Japanese industry consultants to get their interest to help in the publication.

Pena started working as CB editor for Davao Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project sometime in 2008 when the project was first started here in Davao by the DTI regional office and JICA as a pilot project for eight selected industries.

This exposure to the original DICCEP pilot project

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nator stressed that cacao trees can be intercropped with coconuts to boost the income of coconut farmers in Maguindanao.

"Production of cacao in Maguindanao will definitely boost the cacao production of Mindanao, especially with Davao as the country's leading cacao producer," Banquerigo told the ARMM industry cluster group coming from Tawi-tawi, Jolo, Basilan, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur representing different pilot industries under the ARMM Industry

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## SPOTLIGHTS

## JICA to continue Cluster Bulletin for NICCEP, AICCEP

DAVAO CITY -- The publication of the bi-monthly National Cluster Bulletin newspaper for industry clusters, will continue even after the end of the NICCEP project, according to senior consultant Tetsuo Inooka of Japan International Cooperation Agency.

"Yes, we should continue publishing the Cluster Bulletin even after the NICCEP," Inooka said when asked about the status of the publication after the termination of the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project.

The Cluster Bulletin which started in 2008 was conceived, designed and produced to cover and re-

port on all the activities, meetings, workshops and projects of all industry clusters, first in Davao under the DICCEP and later nationwide from Luzon, Visayas to Mindanao, under the NICCEP.

Designed, produced and edited by chief editor Aurelio Pena, it was conceived as a public information medium to inform, educate and draw all the industry clusters together as one big team working to achieve one common goal for the country: Philippine industry development.

"Whenever we put out an issue, all I wanted to do is to let every industry cluster all over the country know what other clusters

are doing. It could be very inspiring and motivating for the clusters," says Pena, who was formerly the Davao bureau chief of the Philippine News Agency and foreign correspondent of the Hong Kong-based Asiaweek magazine.

The Cluster Bulletin is circulated to all DTI provincial offices, DTI Makati and other national government agencies, JICA, foreign chambers and selected Japanese companies operating in the Philippines.

Inooka said the next edition of the Cluster Bulletin after the NICCEP will be published by the ARMM Industry Cluster

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## Visayas sets up strategy for tourism support industries

CEBU CITY -- An industry cluster strategy that will support the country's tourism industry has been proposed here late last year and expected to be doing several activities since May this year, according to a project proposal submitted by Asteria Caberte, regional director of the Department of Trade and Industry in Region 7 here.

Various sectors and industries supplying products to tourists and visitors like the Fashion Accessories (FA), Furniture and Furnishing (F&F), and Gifts Decors and Housewares (GDH) were decided by industry cluster groups during a planning workshop to be named collectively as "Support to Tourism Industries: Wearables and Homestyle".

This came about as industry clusters nationwide were preparing various activities to continue with their projects after the end of the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project (NICCEP), the joint project of DTI and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

In a planning work-

shop for the National Industry Cluster for Tourism Support Industries held in mid-September last year, it was noted that most tourists and visitors always look for a lot of processed foods, (fruits, nuts, meat, jams, purees, baked products, etc).

This proposal was later changed by the workshop participants to include Pro-

cessed Food to Wearables and Homestyle and eventually set up an industry strategy for Tourism Support Industries: Wearables, Homestyle and Processed Food sectors.

Caberte said the DTI wants to see these sectors supporting the tourism industry, "to be more efficient in their operations

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## ARMM products shine at Int'l Food Exhibit in Manila

COTABATO CITY -- Various products from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) caught the eyes of investors and business people after they were showcased during the 2015 International Food Exhibition (IFEX) held recently at the SMX Convention Center in Manila.

The Royal Coffee and Coco Sugar both from Sulu, Mt. Kalatungan banana, pineapple from Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, and the "Hot moro, Hot chili" of Tawi-Tawi were among the ARMM products that attracted almost

700 exporters from different countries that shared the limelight during the event.

According to Dr. Susana Anayatin, chief of technical management services of the Department of Trade and Industry in ARMM, the region's entry in the IFEX was a big step for both the products and the region.

Anayatin said businessmen and importers were amazed at ARMM products because most of what they hear in the region was violence and kidnapping. After the exhibit, investors vowed to get in touch with

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## Philippine Festival to be held in Tokyo's big park

TOKYO -- A typical colorful Philippine "barrio fiesta", the fifth of its kind since the Filipino community in Japan started this event nine years ago, is now being planned here again by organizers led by Jenavilla Shigemizu, chairman of the Philippine Festival Organizing Committee.

These "barrio fiesta" events were so successful, that last year's festival held at Ueno Park drew over 150,000 visitors. This year's festival will be held at Yoyogi Park on September 19 and 20, according to Shigemizu.

"We're calling it "Philippine Festival 2015". The event will showcase the best of Philippine culture, arts, music, products, services. We're sure it will also promote the "Visit the Philippines 2015" tourism campaign," says Shigemizu.

The festival chairman said the theme of this year's festival is, "Visit the Philippines - Fiesta Masaya, Iko!" and will be open to the public for free and will feature a parade of Filipino traditional dances.

"We'll have musical numbers by Filipino well-know actors and actresses, childrens' games as well as several booths showcasing booths highlighting Filipino culture, tour destinations, products, native foods, handicrafts—the best of what we have to show to Japanese people," Shigemizu said.

This Japan event on September is now being circulated to regional directors of the Department of Trade and Industry nationwide with a memo from DTI Undersecretary Zenaida

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**ARMM TRADE FAIR.** Holding a trade fair during the month of Ramadan has become a tradition as Moslems all over the world observed this Holy Month of Ramadan. Led by DTI-ARMM, the event has been attracting thousands of visitors and traders from neighboring areas.

## ARMM holds trade fair during Ramadan month

COTABATO CITY -- The Department of Trade and Industry organized recently a month-long Ramadan Fair as part of the observance of the Holy Month of Ramadan.

The Ramadan Fair is considered the most popular annual multi-product consumer exhibition in the region.

Dr. Susan Anayatin, DTI-ARMM chief of technical exhibitors and visitors, said this year, 40 food exhibitors and 20 non-food exhibitors showcased ARMM's best goods and services from five provinces that include Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

During the Holy Month of Ramadan, Muslims all over the world are required to fast during the day.

This year's observance started last June 17. DTI-ARMM was the Ramadan Fair's lead agency of other line agencies of the region.

-According to Anaya-

tin, the event attracted exhibitors and visitors from ARMM and neighboring areas. Among the activities lined up for the month-long Ramadan Fair was the Quran reading competition headed by the Bureau of Madaris that aims at communicating messages written in the Holy Qur'an.

Each of the line agencies also sponsored free Iftar (fast-breaking) offering to the selected mosque in the region. Bureau of Madaresh also sponsored Islamic symposia throughout the Holy Month of Ramadan where various ARMM government agencies conducted Islamic gatherings.

With this year's theme "100 Days of Journey in Understanding the Culture and History of Bangsamoro Towards Peace and Development", the tribal villages inside the 32-hectare compound of ARMM in Cotabato City formed part of the Ramadan festival--.

(PNA)

## Investment meetings in Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-tawi

COTABATO CITY -- Investors and business leaders in the provinces of Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-tawi and Lanao del Sur are looking forward to a series of public consultations on investment planning to promote the growth and development of various industries.

These investment meetings with officials of the Regional Board of Investments will also review the 2014 ARMM Investment Priorities Plan (IPP). The RBOI-ARMM led the recent consultations with investors, businessmen, national agencies and stakeholders here in Cotabato City.

Ishak Mastura, chairman of RBOI, said this exercise is part of the regional government's goal of in-

volving private stakeholders and government planners in the planning of the region's economic development.

The 2014 IPP is a tool for industrial development, economic growth and consists of specific economic activities that are based on industry studies, plans and roadmaps.

This is part of the ARMM Development Plan as drawn up in the 2011-2016 Philippine Development Plan. All the priority economic activities and projects identified in the overall plan are the basis for the incentives granted to qualified investors in the region.

Mastura said the basis used in the review of the

investment projects include: net value added, job generation, multiplier effect and measured capacity of the project.

In the 2014 ARMM IPP list of preferred industries, identified are: agriculture; agribusiness; aquaculture fishery; basic industries; consumer manufactures; infrastructure and services; industrial service facilities; engineering industries; logistics; BIMP-EAGA (Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Association of Southeast Asian Nations Growth Area) trade and investment enterprises; tourism; health; education; services and facilities; and halal industry. (MINDANAO EXAMNER / PIO)



**WARM WELCOME.** A warm welcome met members of the ARMM palm oil industry cluster team upon arrival at the office of Agumil Plantations Inc. at Maasin, Brooke's Point, Palawan recently. Senior manager Verulo Sobrio of Agumil personally met the team (above photo) and explained how the company operates.

## ACTIVITIES



**RUBBER PLANTATION.** A comprehensive survey covering a total area of 15,000 hectares of rubber farm areas in Lamitan has been completed recently by the ARMM rubber industry cluster team in Basilan. Data collected are now being sorted, validated and analyzed by the cluster team. Photo shows a typical rubber plantation in Mindanao.

## Rubber cluster conducts updated survey of farms

LAMITAN CITY --- Aiming to cover a total area of 15,000 hectares of rubber farm areas situated in this bustling city of Basilan island, an extensive survey was made by the cluster team covering 38 island villages or barangays to get a very clear picture of the rubber industry here.

Rubber cluster vice-chair Domeng Narsico said it was important for the cluster team to reach all the 38 barangays in Lamitan area and survey all the existing rubber tree farms operating in the area.

"We're now validating all these data. We need to know how many trees, how old they are, how the farmer tap the latex, how they process it, how they run the farm--- everything we need to know about each

farm," says Narsico who coordinates all the cluster activities together with the cluster chairperson, Mayor Rose Furigay.

All the data collected by the six enumerators who conducted the surveys are now being sorted out, collated, analyzed, interpreted and validated together with government agencies and other stakeholders in the rubber industry.

## Coconut cluster eyeing cacao, coffee intercrops

COTABATO CITY -- Coconut farmers and growers are now thinking of intercropping their coconut trees with either coffee or cacao trees to boost their income from their farms.

Reaching an approximate target of 15,000 hectares of rubber farms in Lamitan would mean that the survey could cover about 40% of the entire Basilan rubber industry, according to Narsico.

Being the key commercial crop in Basilan, the rubber industry has long been established in the island for many decades, with large

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"After visiting some successful farms and seeing how we can use the wide spaces between our coconut trees to plant another crop that earns even more money than coconuts, I'm seriously thinking of planting either coffee or cacao at my coconut farm," says one coconut farmer and cluster member.

Provincial director Khalikuzaman Baraguir of the Department of Trade and Industry said the intercropping of coconuts with commercial crops like coffee or cacao, if properly planned and managed, could mean a bigger income for coconut farmers in Maguindanao.

Baraguir noted that several coconut plantations in Davao are even intercropped with Cavendish bananas, export quality papayas, Hawaii pineapples, besides coffee and cacao.

Farm technicians from the Department of Agriculture had been going around many coconut farms in Mindanao encouraging coconut farmers to use the wide spaces between the rows of coconut trees by

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## Coffee farmer's feat inspires Jolo growers

JOLO, SULU -- Jolo coffee growers, all members of the coffee industry cluster team in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao were inspired and motivated by the feat of one coffee farmer in Cavite during their benchmarking visit there early this year.

Provincial Director Harrison Haron of the Department of Trade and Industry said the coffee cluster team was impressed by how Cavite coffee farmer Gregorio Calanug was able to produce 50 to 70 kilos of coffee beans per coffee tree on his small 2.5 hectare farmland.

"That was a very productive benchmarking visit in Cavite and the coffee cluster team learned so many things like producing a bigger output of high quality coffee beans even from a small farm" Haron said.

This coffee farmer from Tagaytay village, Cavite, according to Haron, only have 550 trees on his small farm, yet was able to earn about P300,000 per harvest twice a year, earning a total of P600,000 a year, according to Haron.

"This means Calanug, this humble coffee farmer from Cavite, earns about

P600,000, more than half a million, or P50,000 a year, making him far richer than most Makati top executives," Haron said.

There were many things Sulu coffee growers learned from Calanug, but the advice that stuck in their minds was "to keep pruning the coffee trees even at the early stage to produce more branches" - which was why each tree could produce 50 to 70 kilos of coffee beans, according to Haron.

Many of the best lessons learned from the

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## Industry clusters get help on managing budgets

DAVAO CITY -- Systems and procedures on the release and liquidation of funds for various activities and projects of the six industry clusters of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao were explained in detail to coordinators of the five Satellite Project Management Office or SPMO by Yumi Balse, project coordinator of Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The coordinators were represented by provincial directors of the ARMM Department of Trade and Industry who earlier met with the ARMM Assistant Trade Secretary Abubacar Datumanong who briefed them on the available programs and projects of relevant government agencies that can be tapped for funding the activities and projects of the clusters in the region.

Balse said it was important for the cluster coordinators to know the system of accessing the funds to activate their projects and the detailed procedures of liquidating the expenses after the project is imple-

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**READY FOR HARVEST.** A farm worker checks the fruit bunches of a palm oil tree to see if it's ready for harvest at the Agumil Plantation in Palawan where the ARMM palm oil industry cluster members conducted their benchmarking study visit recently.

## DA farmers' school to train industry clusters

COTABATO CITY -- Farmers' Field School or FFS is becoming more and more popular as an effective way to train farmers right on the field on-site how to plant, grow, and harvest commercial crops using the latest proven methods and technology provided by agriculture experts and technicians from the Department of Agriculture.

Kadiguia Abdullah, DA agriculturist and information chief who sat through most of the planning workshops of the six ARMM industry clusters in Davao last year said the FFS program has kept them very busy training and re-training farmers who grow different commercial crops like mango, coconut, coffee, rice, corn, etc to update

them on new farm technology.

In a typical FFS, farmers are taught the correct way to plant seeds, maintain a good nursery, how to plant correctly, how to drive away pests using natural pesticides from farm wastes, how to make and use natural fertilizers, how to grow high quality fruits, how to harvest, etc, etc.

"We're working closely with the ARMM industry cluster teams like coconut and coffee to find out their requirements for training farmers in the field. The DA can link up with other national agencies, cooperatives, academe, and other stakeholders to help set up the FFS" Abdullah said.

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**ARMM DTI Trade Secretary Sakiran Hajan joins a meeting of industry clusters and DTI provincial directors from Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao during a recent JICA workshop in Davao.**

## ARMM clusters tapping funds from government

COTABATO CITY -- Government funds allocated by various national agencies for industry growth and development are now being tapped by the industry clusters of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

ARMM-DTI Assistant Trade Secretary Abubacar Datumanong urged the team leaders of the six

ARMM industry clusters and DTI provincial directors to look for government budgets set aside to boost the growth of local industries like coconut, palm oil, abaca, rubber, coffee and seaweeds.

"There are budgets for programs from relevant national government offices that match the needs of our pilot industries in the

ARMM. All you need to do is find this budget and submit your proposals to these government offices," Datumanong said.

Since the funds provided by Japan International Cooperation Agency are not enough to cover the entire costs of each cluster's total budget needs, Datu-

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## SIDELIGHTS



**OPEN DISCUSSION.** Various ideas and opinions are openly discussed during a typical planning meeting for an activity or a project by ARMM industry cluster teams until a common consensus is reached by every member of an industry. Photo shows Fernando De Dios, DTI senior trade and industry specialist stressing a point during a meeting by an ARMM cluster.

## Rubber cluster cites new investments, jobs, sales

ZAMBOANGA CITY -- A total of P313.6 million in new investments from expansion projects of existing rubber plantations in Zamboanga were cited recently by the rubber industry cluster in an accomplishment report received by the Cluster Bulletin.

The report covering the period January to June 2015 came after the end of the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project, (NICCEP) the joint project of Department of Trade and Industry and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Besides the expansion of various rubber farm areas, investments were also made in developing new rubber nurseries and rehabilitation of rubber processing equipment, according to the rubber cluster report.

Even after the end of NICCEP, the rubber cluster reported domestic sales totaling P498.8 or nearly half billion pesos, which is about 77% of their yearly target of P651 million. The domestic sales, according to the report, came from seedlings, latex, cuplumps and crumb rubber, according to

the rubber cluster report.

In only a span of six months this year since January, the various projects of the rubber industry cluster also generated a total of 3,375 jobs. Besides jobs, the rubber industry also helped perk up the region's local economy by creating 26 small businesses--- micro small and medium enterprises (MSME) while helping a total of 386 micro enterprises which provided various services to the industry in many areas.

## Coffee industry cluster cites full gov't support

BAGUIO CITY -- National government agencies have affirmed their full support for the growth and development of the coffee industry in the Philippines, according to a report submitted recently by Myrna Pablo, regional director of the Department of Trade and Industry.

In her report to DTI UnderSecretary Zenaida Maglaya, Pablo cited the

the rubber industry in Zamboanga, according to the report, was also a recipient of the DTI's Shared Service Facility (SSF) program which provided various equipment to qualified beneficiaries in the industry. These equipment included: Rubber Sheet Processing Equipment for Regions 7 and 12, and 77 weighing scales for rubber for Zamboanga Sibugay and Zamboanga Norte in Region 9. (Philpress News)

high priorities given to the coffee industry by such government agencies as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Agrarian Reform, the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Labor and Employment and other agencies, offices and bureaus.

Addressing partici-

## Trade officials want better internet in ARMM islands

COTABATO CITY -- The islands of Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan are still having a hard time getting good internet connection and cannot send reports or receive emails as often as they want to.

Provincial trade officials said telecommunication firms trying to provide internet services in the islands offer "very expensive" broadband services for internet that keeps breaking down due to many technical problems that have not been ironed out by the telecoms.

"It could be very exasperating when you can't send out your reports and send emails to another

province in the region. Communications is very important for people like us located in islands like Tawi-tawi, Sulu and Basilan," one provincial official said.

Another trade official said the recurring brownouts and very slow internet made available in Tawi-tawi, Basilan and Jolo islands by two giant telecom firms, are slowing down the economic activities in the ARMM island provinces due to breakdown in communications.

New satellite telecom firms like the Global Network Satellite TV has also offered the "I-Sat" or Internet Satellite designed to

function well in far-flung islands, but this too, has to be tested yet to prove whether or not it could deliver fast and efficient internet services to the ARMM islands, according to one provincial official assigned in one of the islands.

"We've had some telecom companies offering similar satellite internet services, but they are very expensive and cannot guarantee whether or not their broadband services can really deliver fast internet at all times," a high regional trade official said here.

Having a very efficient broadband service offering satellite internet in Tawi-

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## JICA Cotabato coordinator following ARMM clusters

COTABATO CITY --- A Japanese project coordinator is now acquainting himself with the various activities and projects of the pilot industry clusters in the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao to help boost the growth and

development of industries in the region.

Shu Nishimaru, project coordinator of Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development or J-BiRD, has been attending the series of planning and monitoring workshops of the ARMM industry clusters in Davao these past few months together with some Bangsamoro development executives.

J-BiRD is one of the prominent projects of Japan International Cooperation Agency dealing with rebuilding and developing towns and villages in Mindanao's former conflict areas together with various national government agencies.

"It's nice to know how well the industry clustering project is turning out in the ARMM as well as the deep interest and involve-

ment of participants from these industries," Nishimaru said.

The Japanese project coordinator said the growth of industries like the coconut industry, palm oil industry, abaca industry, rubber industry, coffee industry and seaweed industry will uplift the living standards of thousands of Muslims in the ARMM region.

While the J-BiRD project focuses on building roads, bridges, schools and providing deep water wells and power projects, the JICA-assisted ARMM industry cluster project on the other hand, provides the technical assistance and funds to help each industry maximize its potentials by training them how to organize, plan and manage their own projects. (Philpress News)

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## FEATURE

“ JICA’s programs on peace and development in Mindanao include aid efforts under the Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development (J-BIRD) program. The total ODA provided to the region to date has reached 15.1 billion yen. ”

# JICA mulls on quick impact projects in Mindanao

**T**HE WORLD’S largest bilateral aid agency is looking at the possibility of implementing quick impact projects in Mindanao following the signing of the historic peace agreement between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and areas severely devastated by typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) the previous year.

Speaking to reporters during his visit to the Philippines, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) president Akihiko Tanaka said he stressed the necessity of implementing quick impact projects to show the dividends of peace in separate meetings with President Benigno Aquino III, MILF chairman Al Haj Murad Ebrahim and MILF Vice Chairman for Political Affairs Ghadzali Jaafar.

“We would like to realize some in the coming months or within the year,” Tanakas said in press briefing in Manila. “Maybe we can mobilize some of the

funds provided for grant aid what JICA is doing as seamless as possible.”

JICA is an agency of the Japanese government responsible for implementing the technical cooperation, grant aid and yen loan programs of Japan’s ODA to developing countries such as the Philippines.

It is the world’s largest bilateral aid agency with about \$10.3 billion in financial resources and a network of more than 100 overseas offices around the world. Its core professional staff works hand in hand with dispatched Japanese personnel, experts and vol-

unteers and local staff in the overseas offices in inclusive and dynamic development which is incorporated in about a hundred on-going cooperation programs.

JICA’s programs on peace and development in Mindanao include aid efforts under the Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development (J-BIRD) program. The total ODA provided to the region to date has reached 15.1 billion yen.

In the past, JICA has assisted Mindanao through the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Social Fund for Peace and

Development. Under this, some 707 community development assistance projects and 32 infrastructure projects were implemented.

The Japanese agency is also currently implementing a 780 million yen project for establishment of the new Bangsamoro government.

Aside from quick impact projects, Tanaka also emphasized the importance of inclusiveness to ensure a future of peace, prosperity, and stability in Mindanao.

“We have to see to it that no important segment of society will be excluded,” the JICA chief pointed out. “All our activities should be inclusive.”

Tanaka said the subject of inclusiveness was also the main focus of his discussions with President Aquino, Murad and Jaafar.

“I am very happy that the MILF, the Philippine government and JICA all agreed that future development should be based on inclusive development and growth,” he noted.

Meanwhile, Tanakasaid JICA continues to support recovery and rehabilitation of Typhoon Yolanda-hit areas through an on-going study identifying grant aid projects to help rehabilitate

infrastructure and provide equipment to devastated areas post-Yolanda.

He said that although he was impressed by efforts of people there in reconstruction and recovery, there were still a huge amount of challenges to be overcome.

“JICA is in the process of bringing about some quick impact reconstruction effort and long term plan,” he disclosed. “We are now discussing at least fifty projects.”

“Experts are now surveying what should be done in reconstruction process,” added Tanaka. “We are utilizing our experience in disaster management and we are doing our best to build back better.”

He also expressed his optimism that JICA was able to sign a loan agreement on March 19 out of which the Philippine government stands to benefit for its reconstruction efforts.

“We are now preparing a grant program in order to reconstruct and recover in affected areas,” he said. “We need quick impact projects to make area safer and transform the area to be more resilient from potential typhoon threats.” (JICA News / Manila Bulletin)

## Palawan palm...

properly, how to manage wastes at the farm, etc.

The ARMM palm oil cluster team also saw the actual bagging of germinated seeds, saw the drip method of watering the young palm oil seedlings, the spacing of the planted seedlings, etc at Agumil,

which were so important for the team to learn after they all go back to their own palm oil farms in Maguindanao.

“That was a very good learning experience for all of us. We were all impressed with what we saw at Agumil in Palawan,” Baraguir said. (Philpress News)

## ARMM clusters...

vated by this visit, especially for our coconut farmers who are planning to intercrop their coconut trees with cacao,” says ARMM DTI provincial director Khalikuzaman Baraguir

To top the Malagos cacao farm visit, the visiting ARMM industry cluster group dropped by the small chocolate factory inside the farm where the world famous award winning brand “Davao Dark Chocolate” is cooked, processed and packed for export to world markets.

On their way back, the ARMM cluster group also visited a cacao plantation, well-managed by a group

of farm cooperatives with individual farmers managing their own cacao farm with special assistance from USAID and national government agencies like the Department of Agriculture and Department of Agrarian Reform.

With JICA assistance, this benchmarking visit was led by ARMM Trade Secretary Sakiran Hajan and Asst. Trade Secretary Abubacar Datumanong accompanied by DTI provincial directors from Tawi-tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur as well as a number of industry cluster members. (Philpress Features)

## BSMED to put...

book form and made easily available to industry cluster teams.

Inquiries for such a book manual on industry clustering have been received by JICA consultants, editors of Cluster Bulletin and industry cluster teams from the ARMM. (Philpress News)

## Trade officials...

tawi, Jolo or Basilan could be very profitable for anyone who plans to put up an internet café business, according to the trade official, because the initial capital invested in the equipment can easily be recovered by the earnings from the internet service to the island community. (Philpress News)

## ARMM-DTI sets...

vincial directors.

A project coordinator from the provincial office will need to be assigned by the provincial director to help coordinate with the industry cluster on their activities and projects, according to Datumanong.

The DTI Assistant Secretary said he looks forward to each provincial DTI director to know how to plan and manage the basic industry cluster approach from policy-making, to activity planning to monitoring activities and projects of the cluster.

Datumanong said he expects each SPMO to gather information on the cluster activities and proj-

## Coco coir nat'l...

be validated by March this year.

The activity was also timed to coincide with the end of the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project, the joint project of DTI and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Alcantara said the national coco coir industry is now tapping the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) as among the big markets for geonets—an industrial net made out of coco coir woven into big nets that are used by road engineers to cover steep slopes of earth beside highways to prevent erosions and landslides.

“Geonets made from coco coir have a big mar-

ket at the DPWH which is ready to buy anytime from producers and suppliers. The other by-product, coco peat, is also used by the livestock industry,” says Alcantara, one of the provincial directors at the DTI.

Aside from the DPWH, also cited by the NIC Coco Coir group were the National Greening Program of the DENR, especially its Slope Protection Project which is spearheaded by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), as well as the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) which needs coco nets and coco logs for vegetation control along irrigation dikes, according to Alcantara. (Philpress News)

## PHILIPPINE CLUSTER BULLETIN

The Philippine Cluster Bulletin is the monthly publication of the ARMM Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project (AICCEP) a joint project of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Department of Trade and Industry of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. (DTI-ARMM).

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### DISCLAIMER

Editorial responsibility for every issue of the Philippine Cluster Bulletin lies solely on the Editor in Chief. Although every effort is made in validating and proofreading this issue under the time pressure of press deadline, we still anticipate some avoidable but unintentional errors, omissions and factual oversights. Being the sole responsibility of the chief editor, it is understood that NO member of the AICCEP project teams from either DTI or JICA is liable for any errors, omissions and oversights in every issue of the Philippine Cluster Bulletin.

# MONITOR

## DAR-ARMM gives...

the coming months.

Data showed that a total of 8,832 cases under agrarian justice delivery were resolved in the last 27 years, and 19,392 farmers were trained in the area of human development, financial management, and agricultural technology.

The facilities included six units of four-wheel drive tractors, three units of corn sheller-huskers, three units of hand tractors and one unit of power tiller cultivator.

Gulam Omar, chairman of the Mangal Agrar-

## CB editor...

ect for the next three years, its eventual success as an award-winning project, and its adoption nationwide as the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project for another three years, provided the long experience and background of industry clustering all over the country for the CB chief editor.

"After attending all these cluster meetings of different industries for many years, one gets a sense of why an industry team succeeds and why an industry team fails. New cluster teams today will learn a great deal from these failures and successes of industry clusters," Pena said.

This book, if ever its written and produced, will be a little bigger than a pocket book, size 5" x 8" with soft-bound cover and designed for commercial distribution at bookstores, according to Pena.

The CB editor said he is glad to know that the DTI Bureau of Small Medium Enterprise has already produced a manual of industry clustering based on the NICCEP and DICCEP experiences and made available to DTI provincial offices nationwide. (Philpress News)

## NICCEP clusters...

Although the Cluster Bulletin is now being published by the AICCEP or ARMM Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project, a joint project of JICA and ARMM-DTI, the paper's contents will still contain news items of cluster teams from the former NICCEP, together with ARMM region news, business news, ARMM cluster news, as well as JICA project news items.

As the national DTI office is continuing and expanding the industry clusters all over the country, the ARMM industry clusters are also eager to know how the other cluster teams in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao are doing these days, funded this time by DTI's own funds instead of JICA, according to the CB chief editor Aurelio Pena. (Philpress News)

ian Reform Beneficiaries Development Cooperative (MARBEDCO) based in Sumisip, Basilan received one unit of four-wheel drive tractor.

The MARBEDCO, which started in 1994, has been operating for 21 years with 246 members. He said the tractor will facilitate the transport and delivery of agricultural products such as rubber and coconut. (PNA)

## Coconut cluster...

planting commercial crops that could generate more income for them.

National cacao industry coordinator Edwin Banquerigo recently met all the ARMM industry clusters and ARMM - DTI provincial directors at the DTI regional office to encourage them to start planting cacao, even by intercropping them between the coconuts.

"Cacao trees, as we all know, thrive very well under the shade, so they are perfect crops to plant between your coconut trees," Banquerigo said.

One ARMM coconut cluster member said one of the best places to plant cacao in Maguindanao are the coconut farms and cornfields of Mamapasano town where a bloody event there figured prominently in the national media.

"Once the farmers there start earning much from their coconuts and cacao, that will become one of the most peaceful and progressive towns in the province," he said. (Philpress News)

## Cluster Bulletin...

DAVAO CITY --- Soon as more activities and projects begin to crop up among the industry cluster areas of Tawi-tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, the Cluster Bulletin editor is considering on-the-spot coverages of ARMM industry clusters' activities, only if approved and allowed by JICA consultants.

CB chief editor Aurelio Pena said it would be "very informative and inspiring" for other industry clusters to see the projects and activities of their fellow cluster teams from other ARMM provinces thru the pages of the National Cluster Bulletin.

"If given the chance by JICA, I would like to see the seaweed farms in Tawi-tawi, coffee growing and processing in Jolo, rubber processing in Basilan, coconut and palm growing in Maguindanao and abaca processing in Marawi," says Pena, who has been writing and editing the Cluster Bulletin since 2008 under the DICCEP, the first pilot industry cluster project.

Although nothing is definite yet, this plan is still being discussed by consultants and coordinators of

## Seaweed fertilizing...

This husband-and-wife team who both hold Ph.D's in their chosen fields, are now working on a seaweed nursery project that will produce high quality seaweeds with high carrageenan content in them in their Seaweed Cultivars Laboratory at the Mindanao State University in Bongao, Tawi-tawi.

This new species of high quality seaweeds they are developing in the laboratory will soon be made available to seaweed farmers who are able to organize themselves into a well-organized and well-managed seaweed farmers' association or cooperative, according to Romero.

With technical and funding assistance from Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the project is expected to enhance the capabilities of seaweed farmers in Tawi-tawi to adopt the highest quality standards in producing seaweeds for the local and export markets. (Philpress News)

## Industry clusters...

mented.

Questions raised by the coordinators were answered and cleared by Balse who was open to various suggestions and inquiries from the provincial DTI directors who come from such far-flung islands like Tawi-tawi, Sulu and Basilan, as well as the provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur.

Balse recognized that the systems and procedures in accessing funds from JICA was a lot different under the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project or NICCEP compared to the ARMM-ICCEP but this was clarified with the coordinators during the meeting here in Davao.

"It would be good to everyone if each cluster gets the funds to activate their projects or activities right after they're approved," says Balse whose concern was teaching them how to liquidate the expense from the cluster projects. (Philpress News)

Japan International Cooperation Agency to see if it is possible to arrange for such visits.

JICA coordinator Yumi Balse said she will discuss the plan with higher officials in JICA sometime this month.

Balse noted that the May-June 2015 issue of the National Cluster Bulletin is no longer under the NICCEP or the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project, but has shifted over to the ARMM under the AICCEP—or the ARMM Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project, a joint undertaking by JICA and the ARMM Trade and Industry regional office. (Philpress News)

## Nat'l cacao...

Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project, a joint project of ARMM and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The fast-growing cacao industry in Davao has attracted more and more investors, growers and farmers to the industry, most of whom are banana growers and coconut farmers who are now growing cacao trees in-between rows of Cavendish bananas and commercial coconut trees, according to Banquerigo.

Guided farm tours of the Malagos cacao plantation in Calinan and a farmers' cacao cooperative farm near Tugbok turned out to be inspiring and educational for all the ARMM industry cluster group participating in the farm tours.

"It's so inspiring to see how an ordinary farmer can own and manage a very successful cacao plantation that earns enough to live comfortably," says one cluster member of the ARMM industry group. (Philpress Features)

## JICA to continue...

Capacity Enhancement Project, a joint project of ARMM-Department of Trade and Industry and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Under the new AICCEP, the Cluster Bulletin will be covering and reporting on the industry cluster activities the ARMM region to include Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur provinces. (Philpress News)

## DA farmers'...

Definite proposals for FFS training had been included in the plans, programs and budgets of the coconut industry cluster in Maguindanao and the coffee industry cluster in Jolo, Sulu province and these were confirmed by a DA representative within the cluster teams, according to Abdullah.

In Davao Occidental (Del Sur) province, DA also provided the FFS training programs for mango growers and farmers of three big mango associations who are members of the mango industry cluster under the Davao Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project (DICCEP)—the first pilot project started in 2008 by Japan International Cooperation Agency and the DTI Davao regional office. (Philpress News)

## Philippine Festival...

Maglaya informing them of the commercial booths available to potential sponsors and exhibitors in their regions who might be interested to take this opportunity to promote and market their products during the Philippine Festival 2015 in Japan. (Philpress News)

## Coffee farmer's...

Cavite benchmarking trip will soon be applied and shared by the coffee industry cluster team during the coming Farmers' Field School for coffee farmers in Sulu to be launched soon by the Department of Agriculture.

DA farm technicians are expected to train Sulu coffee growers and farmers on the proper way of growing and harvesting Robusta coffee and other varieties in the town areas of Patikul, Talipao, Indangan and Panamao in the island province.

The Cavite benchmarking trip was part of several projects and activities of the ARMM coffee industry cluster approved by consultants of Japan International Cooperation Agency this year. (Philpress News)

## Rubber cluster...

rubber plantations owned and run by big landowners and large corporations.

Thousands of small rubber farmers, farm cooperatives, traders and processors all over Lamitan and the rest of Basilan are earning their livelihood today from rubber farming, tapping, trading and processing

This updated survey of the rubber industry here will be very valuable to local government and business officials determined to attract more investors to the island of Basilan, according to Narsico. (Philpress News)

## ARMM clusters...

manong urged the cluster teams to seek budget commitments from provincial governors, mayors and other local government units as well as national government agencies.

Commitments for funding from such agencies like the Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, Fiber Industry Development Authority, Bureau of Fisheries and Natural Resources, etc. have been pouring so far, during the last few months, even during the planning stages of the six ARMM industry clusters.

Local government units, like the Governor's office in Tawi-tawi and the Mayor's office in Lamitan, Basilan, had already set aside funds to help the seaweed and the rubber industry clusters.

Budget plans submitted by industry clusters to JICA now includes columns for such government agencies like the DA, PCA, DOST, DTI, BFAR, LGU, DAF, etc, with their corresponding contributions to projects and activities of the clusters. (Philpress News)

## ARMM products...

the local producers. She said the agency is offering technical assistance to all the exhibitors to further develop product brands and on product quality to penetrate domestic and export markets.

"We are helping our exhibitors in terms of packaging, labeling, promotion, and marketing," Anayatin said.

"We are also facilitating the accreditation of the products at the Bureau of Food and Drugs so that producers will have an easy access to both national and international markets," she added. (PNA)

## Coffee industry...

actively working with the coffee industry cluster include Nestle Philippines, Philippine Coffee Alliance, GIZ-ProGED, and Red Cherry Coffee Shops.

"It's so nice to know how much support the coffee industry cluster is getting from these government agencies and private sector groups," says Pablo who also heads the coffee industry cluster here.

These declarations of support came a few months after the end of the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project (NICCEP), the joint project between DTI and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Three government agencies which confirmed that coffee is a "high priority" commodity are the DA, the DENR and the DAR, according to the cluster report

DA director Oscar Parawan said coffee is a "high priority commodity under the High Value Crops Development Program" while a DENR official said coffee is one of the priorities in their National Greening Program where they plan to grow 90,457 hectares of coffee trees from 2012 to 2016. (Philpress News)

## Visayas sets up...

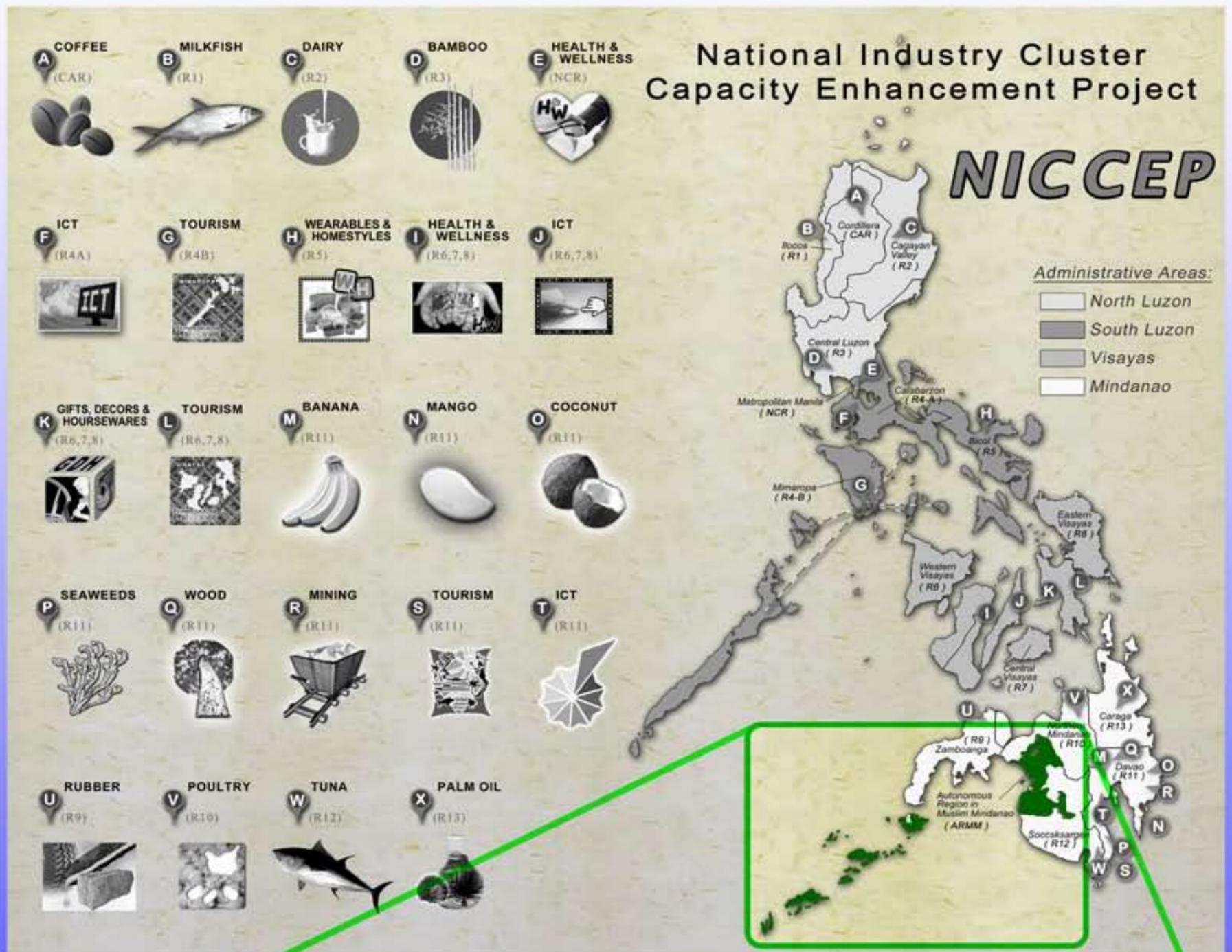
by providing them with proper training and capacity building activities, to encourage them to avail of new technology to improve their products."

"To take advantage of the fast growing travel retail market, they need to upgrade the way they sell their products. We're ready to help them with workshops to improve their products, develop their own brands and design their product labels," Caberte said.

Branding is very important to all kinds of products, according to Caberte, because it helps these small enterprises stand out from their competition. "They cannot just wait for customers to come to buy. They need to produce high quality products with attractive brands and labels that attract customers to their products," she said. (Philpress News)

**AICCEP PROJECT MAP**

# Industry Cluster Project Map



## Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project

- ABACA
- COCONUT
- COFFEE
- PALM OIL
- RUBBER
- SEAWEEEDS

