

Turn-over and Acceptance Ceremony of RCDG Bridge to LGU Mayoyao under the
Forestland Management Project
September 16, 2022 8:00am
Mayoyao, Ifugao

Message of MR. SAKAMOTO Takema, Chief Representative, JICA Philippines
Office

NAIMBAG NGA BIGAT KADAKAYO AMIN!

It is truly my honor and great pleasure to be with you all today for this very momentous occasion, the Turn-over Ceremony of the newly constructed 80 meter Reinforced Concrete Deck Girder (RCDG) bridge under the Forestland Management Project (FMP). I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincerest appreciation to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for not only making this dream a reality of establishing a more secure infrastructure in linking communities together, but also for successfully establishing forest and agroforestry plantations here in Ifugao. I would also like to extend my warm appreciation to the Provincial Government of Ifugao and Local Government of Mayoyao for the partnership and support extended in ensuring the success of this project. And most of all, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of our partner people's organizations and communities, who are always at the forefront of this project, making the time and sacrifices in rehabilitating, protecting and maintaining our forests.

This project has come a long way since its humble beginnings in 2012. Now, we have 47 strong partner POs in Ifugao who have established a total of more than 18,000 hectares forest and agroforestry plantations, covering 8 sub-watersheds from 7 municipalities of Ifugao. In addition, FMP was able to construct 13 agroforestry support facilities. Hence, we are all here gathered today to inaugurate one of these facilities.

It is worth to note that before this bridge was constructed, a steel cable suspension was used as primary way for traveling and crossing the river. However, such infrastructure is limited in size, making it hard for residents to transport agricultural produce with no other option but to cross the challenging river beneath this bridge in order to move large quantities of their products. Moreover, in time, such infrastructure becomes structurally weak and dangerous, especially for children who are using the suspension cable in going to their schools on a daily basis. Hence, this new bridge is of significant social and economic importance to lives of the Ifugaos as they will have faster travel time, freely move and cross agri-products without worries, and improve access to basic social services. I fervently hope that this bridge shall contribute to improving economic conditions in this area and assist our partner POs and communities in their pursuit of sustaining the reforestation and conservation efforts of FMP.

As we are about to turn-over this RCDG bridge, I would like to take this opportunity to kindly urge our dear LGU officials and partner POs to take care and maintain the bridge in order to ensure longer utilization by the people of Mayoyao. I would also like to kindly remind everyone that FMP does not end with the completion of this bridge, but

rather, a symbol for us to intensify our forestland management activities and ensure a healthy watershed ecosystem for the future of the people of Ifugao.

In closing, I would like to congratulate everyone for the successful implementation of FMP in this region.

Maraming-maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat.