

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY



# News FROM Philippines

JANUARY - MARCH 2024



## JICA AND DPWH TO UPDATE PH FLOOD CONTROL STRATEGY TOWARDS 100-YEAR FLOOD SAFETY

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) launched a new technical cooperation project to update the flood control strategy for some major river basins in the Philippines as flood disasters become more frequent and severe due to climate change.

JICA Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema and DPWH Secretary Manuel M. Bonoan signed on January 17, 2024, the Record of Discussions for the Project for Enhancement of Flood Control Strategy in Prioritized River Basins.

This new cooperation will update the master plans and pre-feasibility studies for flood control in Pasig-Marikina and Cagayan Rivers. The updated master plans, according to JICA, will be a “guidepost toward achievement of 100-year flood safety even with climate change impact.” Throughout the project, JICA and DPWH will also hold basin-wide stakeholder consultations to gather feedback and lessons.

Flood control projects, such as this new cooperation, support the Luzon Corridor initiative, a joint initiative between the Philippines, Japan, and the United States that aims to enhance economic connectivity between four key economic hubs in Subic Bay, Clark, Manila, and Batangas by improving infrastructure and transportation networks in the region. By addressing flood control measures along key river systems, such as the Pasig-

Marikina and Cagayan Rivers, the project aims to enhance resilience and sustainability in these areas.

Rapid economic growth and recent typhoon disasters in the Philippines have led officials to come up with a national strategy to manage flood risks. Moving forward, JICA and DPWH seek to improve flood control infrastructures in river basins across the country through a multi-faceted approach. ▣

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

JICA and DICT team up to make cyberspace safe for Filipinos

Japanese SMEs showcase unique and high-quality products to address SDGs' targets and boost business opportunities

JICA and DOH push for a stronger national health laboratory network for infectious diseases in the Philippines

Metropolitan Davao readies to become a model growth area with JICA's cooperation

JICA hails 10 years of alumni association of Filipino JICA scholars and trainees



## JICA AND DICT TEAM UP TO MAKE CYBERSPACE SAFE FOR FILIPINOS



JICA and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) signed in February 2024 the workplan for cybersecurity experts dispatched by JICA to the Philippines for a two-year project on Capacity Building for Cybersecurity to boost the capacity of DICT and other government organizations on incident handling & monitoring, and sectoral coordination, among others.

The technical cooperation is in line with the recently approved “National Cybersecurity Plan (NCSP) 2024-28”, which sets the direction of the Philippine government in responding to cyber threats and network intrusions.

The cooperation is crucial in the digital age, as it will improve the security of the Philippines' critical information structures. The Philippines ranks 61st out of 194 countries in the 2020 Global Cybersecurity Index, below major ASEAN countries. Strengthening the country's cybersecurity position is essential for protecting government agencies, critical information infrastructures, businesses, supply chains, and every Filipino in cyberspace. This cooperation will support in enhancing the country's cybersecurity position.

As part of the JICA-DICT cooperation, training modules will be developed and implemented to boost technical capability of cybersecurity personnel, seminar/workshop about sectoral coordination and collaboration schemes will be conducted, and cybersecurity awareness will be enhanced through seminars and information materials.

Since 2012, JICA has been offering 50 Information and Communications Technology (ICT)-related training courses to the Philippines through its Knowledge Co-Creation Program. These courses cover capacity building for ICT project planning, Digital Terrestrial TV Broadcasting policy and engineering, strengthening cooperation against cyberattacks, and ICT core personnel development, among others. ▣

Scan this QR code to read the full story:



## JAPANESE SMES SHOWCASE UNIQUE AND HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCTS TO ADDRESS SDGS' TARGETS AND BOOST BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



Former JP Ambassador and JICA Chief showing Mulberry Tea products from Kuwanosato Inc.

Japanese Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) expanding their business presence in the Philippines will benefit the country in achieving its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as industry development, economic growth, job creation, and healthier lifestyle promotion, among others, according to JICA.

Three Japanese companies under the JICA Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Promotion Program were at the Mitsukoshi shopping mall at BGC to showcase their unique and high-quality products to innovate experience and enrich lifestyle. They are BIOTECH Japan, Takara, Inc., and Kuwanosato, Inc. – companies present in the Philippines through the said JICA program. BIOTECH Japan is a pioneer of low protein rice technology in the Philippines, beneficial for those with chronic kidney diseases while helping local farmers expand their market. Takara, Inc., meanwhile, is popular in Japan for their Black Garlic products. They are now partnering with Mariano Marcos State University for local Black Garlic production seen

to boost the local agro-industry in Ilocos Norte. Kuwanosato, Inc., on the other hand, spearheads mulberry cultivation and mulberry leaves tea making in the Philippines which is also to ignite both value-adding agro-industry development and healthier lifestyle.

The JICA Chief highlighted that Japanese private sector is known for their brand of innovative ideas with social impacts. By bringing their business to countries like the Philippines, they create a win-win scenario where jobs are created, while supporting developing countries in addressing sustainable development challenges. ▣



JICA Chief showing Black Garlic product from Takara, Inc.



Former JP Ambassador and JICA Chief showing low-protein rice products from Biotech Japan.

Read more about this story:



## TALK OF THE TOWN

### JICA AND DENR BACK UPLAND COMMUNITIES AS PROTECTORS OF FORESTS, TURN OVER PHP 114M AGROFORESTRY FACILITIES



Unveiling of Garangan Access Road marker in Calinog, Iloilo.

JICA and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are backing upland communities as protectors of the country's precious forests, with over PhP 114 million worth of agroforestry support facilities and a coffee processing facility turned over to Iloilo Local Government Units (LGUs) and People's Organizations (POs) in January 2024.

The facilities are part of the ongoing JICA-DENR Forestland Management Project (FMP) that aims to conserve the Philippines' forests in three river basins -- Upper Magat and Cagayan, Pampanga, and Jalaur – through community-based forestland management strategies.

The facilities turned over include access roads, irrigation systems, pathways, and hanging bridges in Calinog, Iloilo.

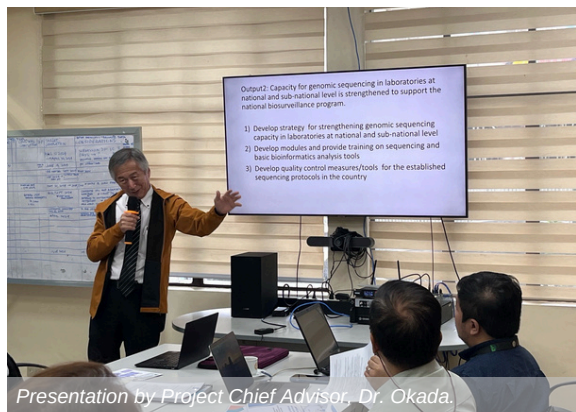
FMP has protected and developed 71,300 hectares of forestlands, providing access roads, pathways, irrigation systems, hanging bridges, and basic services for upland farmers. These facilities enable the transportation of products to markets, reduce vulnerability during disasters, and ensure steady water supply for plantations. Hanging bridges provide main access during typhoons and flash floods and link basic services for students and pregnant women.

The project also provided a new coffee processing facility in Janiuay, Iloilo for the Panuran Tasik Upland Farmers Association, Inc. (PATUFA), an association of 187 upland farmers engaged in coffee growing. The facility also benefits 22 people's organization (PO) members of the Janiuay-Lambunao-Calinog Federation of FMP POs Inc. (JALAMCA), who are also involved in coffee farming in the region. ▣

FULL STORY HERE:



## JICA AND DOH PUSH FOR A STRONGER NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE PH



Presentation by Project Chief Advisor, Dr. Okada.

A robust cooperation that aims to set up a national laboratory network for infectious diseases in the Philippines picks up pace with the kickoff of the second phase of the project on February 13, 2024.

The Project Strengthening the Philippine National Health Laboratory Network for Infectious Diseases (PHeLNIDs) of JICA and Department of Health (DOH) launched in 2022 will implement various capacity development trainings in the area of biosafety and biosecurity, whole genome sequencing, and data analytics in this coming second phase of the Project.

The activities are continuation of the Project's first phase that included dispatch of Japanese experts in different fields of disease management to assess the current gaps in the laboratory network, together with the Filipino experts from various DOH offices.

JICA supports the Philippine health sector in various areas including introduction of new treatment models for persons using illicit drugs and construction of drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation center, strengthening the cold chain and logistics systems, improving maternal and child health and nutrition, as well as, addressing other infectious diseases, among others. □



The kick-off meeting with representatives from various stakeholders from DOH and JICA.



FULL STORY  
HERE:

## JICA AND DA LEAD BIZ MATCHING FORUM FOR BENGUET AND QUEZON FVC STAKEHOLDERS

JICA and the Department of Agriculture (DA) are teaming up to boost the Philippine food value chain (FVC) by providing business matching opportunities among stakeholders of the vegetable industry in Benguet and Quezon in January 2024.

JICA and DA are working with Benguet and Quezon LGUs for the Project for Market-Driven Enhancement of Vegetable Value Chain in the Philippines or MV2C-TCP to uplift the livelihoods of Filipino farmers and other players in the vegetable industry, as well as improve food security and consumers' quality of life. The project pursues to address major problems in the supply chain such as fluctuating prices and unstable production, high production cost, low value addition, and low consumption of vegetables.

The forum opened opportunities to create new business modalities among institutional buyers, input producers, equipment suppliers, traditional traders, and vegetable producers. This initiative is the project's first stakeholders' forum, with future forums aiming to further facilitate dialogues among stakeholders and address the major issues in the vegetable supply chain.

JICA and DA have also aligned the MV2C-TCP's activities with the Philippine Vegetable Industry Roadmap 2021-2025 which called for increased stakeholder participation in agriculture development.

Launched in April 2023, the pilot activities of the project in Benguet and Quezon are currently ongoing. These include optimization of greenhouse cultivation, introduction of high-quality seedlings, use of humidifying refrigeration system and pre-cooling system, and use of plastic crates to reduce shipment losses, among others. □



FULL STORY HERE:

For more information on the MV2C project, please scan this QR code:



## METROPOLITAN DAVAO READIES TO BECOME A MODEL GROWTH AREA WITH JICA'S COOPERATION



Metropolitan Davao is gearing up to become a model growth area with the crafting of its Comprehensive and Sustainable Urban Master Plan 2025-2045 through the partnership between JICA and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

JICA and NEDA, along with the project's Steering Committee comprising of 15 Local Government Units (LGUs) and regional offices of National Government Agencies (NGAs), met last March 7, 2024, to kick off the master plan project aimed at attracting investments, identifying priority projects, and developing human resources in Metropolitan Davao.

The Metropolitan Davao Development Authority (MDDA), whose establishment was authorized in 2022 by virtue of Republic Act No. 11708 or the "Metropolitan Davao

Development Authority Act", is expected to play a major role in the realization of the master plan, which envisions to adopt a holistic framework that will help Metro Davao deal with issues related to urban development such as land use, infrastructure, and waste management, among others.

Once the master plan materializes, it is projected to benefit some 5 million people in Metro Davao and indirectly benefit the rest of the country through jobs and investments. ▣

FULL  
STORY  
HERE:



## NEWS IN PHOTOS

### JAPANESE FIRMS AND CEBU SPEARHEAD A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON CONVERTING FOOD WASTES INTO FUEL, SOIL CONDITIONER, AND ANIMAL FEEDS TO BOOST CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

JICA, Japanese firms Guun Co., Ltd., and Takematsu Shoji Co., Ltd., and Mandaue City Environment and Natural Resources Office (MCENRO) are implementing the feasibility study on converting food wastes into biochar as alternative fuel, soil conditioner, or animal feeds.

The cooperation is one of several projects under the JICA Partnership with the Private Sector Program introducing Japanese technologies and ideas to address common challenges in society like waste management. Through this initiative, Guun and Takematsu Shoji share their unique technologies in Cebu to convert middle or low-quality food wastes to biochar as alternative fuel, soil conditioner, or high-quality food wastes to animal feeds.

The Philippines already has a law implementing better landfill management and alternatives to it. The latest JICA initiative is along that line. Further, converting food wastes into fuel, soil conditioner, or animal feeds can help contribute to carbon dioxide reduction, and climate change mitigation in the Philippines.

Guun and Takematsu Shoji are known in Japan for their expertise in waste management. Guun has more than 20 years of experience in recycling wastes into fuels, while Takematsu Shoji has operated a large-scale food waste to animal feeds recycling facility in Yokohama City, Japan. ▣



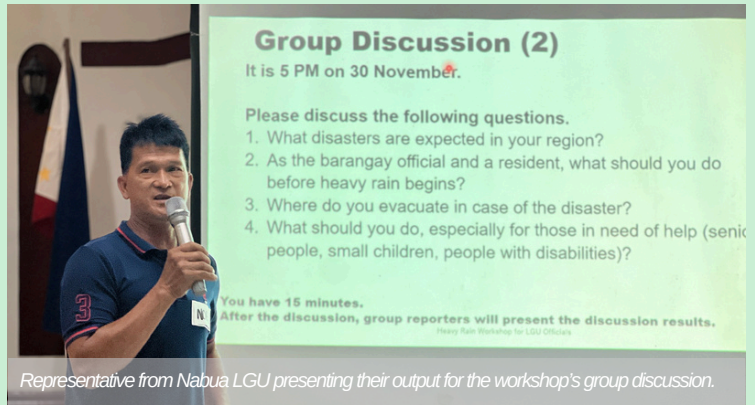
Read the  
full story here:



## JICA AND PAGASA BOOST LGUS' CAPABILITY IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



Students from Nabua National High School participating in the workshop's group discussion.



Representative from Nabua LGU presenting their output for the workshop's group discussion.

The severe weather hazards especially increasing by the recent climate change prompted the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) to team up with JICA towards enhancing disaster preparedness capabilities of Local Government Units (LGUs).

At the recent workshop by PAGASA, in collaboration with JICA, for the Local Government of Nabua, Camarines Sur, both agencies underscore the importance of early warning systems and evacuation planning in times of typhoons, heavy rainfall, floods and other disasters. The workshop is part of an ongoing cooperation of JICA and PAGASA, the Project for Capability Enhancement for High Quality Weather Observation, Forecast, Warning, and Information in the Philippines or J-POW2.

The cooperation aims to reduce damages from extreme weather disasters in the Philippines through capacity development of Filipino weather specialists, improved satellite and radar observation, thereby enhancing disaster preparedness of LGUs and communities. Data showed that natural disasters in the Philippines heavily impact lives and economy, with about 75 million affected and P182.9 billion economic losses from 2005 to 2015. The World Risk Report 2023 shows that natural disasters and extreme weather are the Philippines' top threat, ranking first among 193 countries with the highest disaster risk.

The project's first phase already trained 175 PAGASA personnel and the second phase is expected to enhance the way LGUs and communities use weather information from PAGASA.

This year, aside from workshop in Camarines Sur from February 21 to 22, the project also held another one in Baggao, Cagayan on March 1 to 2. ▣

Read the full story here:



## JICA HAILS 10 YEARS OF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF FILIPINO JICA SCHOLARS AND TRAINEES

JICA lauded the 10 years milestone of the JICA Alumni Association of the Philippines, Inc. (JAAP), one of the alumni networks of JICA scholars in the ASEAN.

JAAP was established with the unification of the three previous alumni associations under JICA: the Philippine-Japan Fellows Associations (PHILJFA), Philippine-ASEAN-Japan Friendship Association for the 21st Century, Inc. (PAJFA-21), and Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS).

This year marks the 10th anniversary of JAAP which supports the implementation of human resource development initiatives of Japan in the Philippines. They banner the theme "JAAP: Celebrating a Decade of Friendship and Success".

JAAP has launched corporate social responsibility projects in the Philippines, including disaster relief



JAAP officers and members with JICA representatives and guests.

operations for earthquakes in Mindanao, Cagayan, and Bicol as well as knowledge exchange through lectures on innovations like real-time flood forecasting and gender and labor issues.

Also called advocates and ambassadors of Japan-Philippine friendship, JAAP members assume roles in policy making and high-level positions in the government, private institutions, and non-profit organizations.

JICA sends hundreds of Filipinos for study and training in Japan annually. Since 1954, approximately 43,000 Filipinos have been recipients of JICA's training and scholarship programs. JICA said it will continue to engage and partner with Filipino alumni in carrying out its development cooperation in the Philippines. ▣

FULL STORY HERE



# SPOTLIGHT

## TRANSFORMING FORMER COMBATANTS INTO PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS IN THE BANGSAMORO REGION THROUGH TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING



JICA, in cooperation with the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity, Task Force for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities - Government of the Philippines, and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), is spearheading the Skills Development and Economic Empowerment for Bangsamoro project ("SEE Bangsamoro!"), which aims to equip decommissioned MILF combatants (DCs) with tools and knowledge for alternative livelihood opportunities.

Said project collaborated with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority and the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education – Technical Education and Skills Development to develop two training courses: Corn Post Harvest Management and, Safe Driving and Repair of Tricycles and *Payong-Payong/Habal-Habal* (motorcycles for hire), which will be piloted in Camp Abubakar communities in April 2024. The training courses are intended to provide DCs with practical skills that are in high demand in their communities, thereby contributing to their economic stability and social integration.

The first pilot training session will be held among 50 DCs from Barangays Barira, Nabalawag, and Togaig in Maguindanao del Norte. Aside from the two courses, the "SEE Bangsamoro!" project intends to empower trainers by increasing DCs' self-esteem and developing training curricula.



From decommissioned combatants to skilled farmers and expert drivers/repair mechanics of motorcycles for hire, these individuals are building a better future for themselves and their communities in Bangsamoro, thereby promoting regional peace and stability. ▣

## JICA VOLUNTEERS ON FIELD TO BRING NEW IDEAS FOR RESILIENT PH COMMUNITIES

JICA's Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Program fields its 178th batch of volunteers, mostly millennials, to foster resilient communities in the Philippines.

JICA, in partnership with the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), regularly sends Japanese volunteers to partner communities and Local Government Units in response to a variety of development needs. The four newly arrived JICA volunteers now began working in areas of disaster education, agriculture, and advocacy and protection of disadvantaged children.



KINOSHITA Tsuyoshi is an agriculturist with research experience in Japan and Ghana, Africa. He will share his knowledge in organic farming, soil management, hydroponics, and postharvest technology with the teachers and students at President Ramon Magsaysay State University in Zambales, in collaboration with his counterpart.

MAEKAWA Miho has experience in promotions activities. She will work for the multi-platform marketing activities and others with non-profit group A Child's Trust is Ours to Nurture Incorporated (ACTION, Inc.). ACTION, Inc. promotes the rights and welfare of children and has been recognized by the Department of Social Welfare and Development and Japan Foundation for their positive impact in various key areas of child protection.

NISHIZAKI Kazuya is a professional in the field of customer relations and marketing having worked in a world-famous sports brand company in Japan and in the Tokyo Olympics Sports Village. He will also collaborate with ACTION, Inc. for various activities.

YAMAMOTO Shion is a skilled firefighter in Japan. He will work with the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office in La Trinidad, Benguet mainly to develop manuals on disaster preparedness and conduct emergency evacuation drills for grade school students in the area.

These four Japanese volunteers who joined the JOCV Program brought with them new ideas and innovations assisting communities in addressing various development challenges. ▣

FULL  
STORY  
HERE



## JICA PHILIPPINES PRESS RELEASES (JANUARY TO MARCH 2024)

- 2024.03.18 JICA hails 10 years of alumni association of Filipino JICA scholars and trainees
- 2024.03.11 Metropolitan Davao readies to become a model growth area with JICA's cooperation
- 2024.02.28 JICA and PAGASA boost LGUs' capability in disaster preparedness
- 2024.02.27 JICA volunteers on field to bring new ideas for resilient PH communities
- 2024.02.23 Japanese SMEs demonstrate their unique and high-quality products in the Philippines to address SDGs targets and to boost business opportunities
- 2024.02.19 JICA and DOH push for a stronger national health laboratory network for infectious diseases in the Philippines
- 2024.02.08 JICA and DICT team up to make cyberspace safe for Filipinos
- 2024.02.06 Japanese firms and Cebu spearhead a feasibility study on converting food wastes into fuel, soil conditioner, and animal feeds to boost circular economy and fight climate change
- 2024.01.31 JICA and DENR back upland communities as protectors of forests, turn over PhP 114M agroforestry facilities
- 2024.01.31 Davao LGU picks up solid waste management lessons from Japan's Kitakyushu City

- 2024.01.19 JICA and DA lead biz matching forum for Benguet and Quezon FVC stakeholders
- 2024.01.17 JICA and DPWH to update PH flood control strategy towards 100- year flood safety
- 2024.01.10 JICA sends PAGASA experts to Japan for training on improving weather forecasting in the Philippines

## SPEECHES OF THE CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE (JANUARY TO MARCH 2024)

- 2024.03.15 40th Joint Meeting of PHILJEC and JPECC [JPN]
- 2024.03.15 40th Joint Meeting of PHILJEC and JPECC [ENG]
- 2024.02.22 JICA's SDGs Business Supporting Survey Pop-up Event
- 2024.02.21 Expert Panel Meeting for Railway Masterplan and Operation & Maintenance with DOTr Officials, Japanese Officials and Experts
- 2024.01.17 Signing of Record of Discussions between JICA and DPWH for the Project for Enhancement of Flood Control Strategy in Prioritized River Basins

SCAN TO  
READ FULL  
STORIES:



SCAN TO  
READ FULL  
SPEECHES:



## 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](mailto: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 JPY 2,745 billion for JFY 2022 and a worldwide network of about 100 overseas offices including the Philippines.

### 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, Laurice Enriquez,  
Trish Mendros



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