1. **Featured Project** ~ *Improvement of Water Resource Management for the Poverty Sector People through Strengthening Participatory Local Governance in Legazpi (Legazpi PLSD Project)* ~

The Technical Cooperation for Grassroots Project (TCGP) featured this month is the “Legazpi PLSD Project” which started last March 2005.

Since 1997, JICA has been offering a training program on “Participatory Local Social Development (PLSD)” which utilizes the experiences of community-based local governance in Japan. Participants from Asia, Africa and Latin America have commended the usefulness of this program because of its innovative and comprehensive theoretical framework and practical methods. Hence, the PLSD Approach was introduced in Legazpi City, Albay in order to contribute to the enhancement of local governance and poverty reduction efforts of the local government.

The objectives of the project are 1) To plan and implement a participatory project for effective and self-reliant water resource management, 2) To enhance the capabilities and consciousness of the LGUs, development agencies and NGOs on participatory collaboration in project planning and management and 3) To build functional synergy among LGUs, development agencies and NGOs in terms of collective decision making and management of area-based development activities.

Project activities include 1) establishment of water system facilities in two barangays in Legazpi City which will be managed by the LGU and the residents themselves, 2) development of PLSD training module and conduct of PLSD training to LGU and NGO staff and 3) exchange learning program which includes exposure tour and technical support.
between Iida City in Japan and Legazpi City.

The Faculty of Social Welfare of Nihon Fukushi University (NFU) is the Partner of JICA in this Project. Aside from social welfare development and information science, the Faculty also conducts a wide range of research and training activities focusing on the participatory local societal system for sustainable development together with LGUs, NPOs and local residents. NFU has also been collaborating with the College of Social Welfare and Community Development (CSWCD) of the University of the Philippines for joint research and education programs for the past ten years.

Project Site Map

2. NGO Desk Event ~ 5th NGO-JICA Study Session ~

The theme for the 5th NGO-JICA Study Session was “NGO Networking and Partnership Building for Sustainability”. It was held on June 8, 2006 at ISIS International Manila, an NGO located in Quezon City. 15 representatives from both Japanese and Filipino Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) as well as Government Offices (GO) joined the session.
Ms. Myrna Lim, Executive Director of Notre Dame Foundation for Charitable Activities, Inc. - Women in Enterprise Development (NDFCAI-WED) was chosen as the resource speaker because of their organization’s vast experience in networking and partnership building. NDFCAI-WED is based in Cotabato City in Mindanao and their main activities consist of providing literacy education and livelihood trainings.

The objective of the study session was to introduce or reorient the participants to the concept of networking. The speaker discussed the following topics: 1) definition of networking, 2) criteria of successful networking, 3) advantages and risks of networking, 4) elements needed to form and maintain a network, 5) stages of networking and 6) NGO sustainability after grant aids. Most of the participants are already members of either formal or informal networks so everyone was able to share their experiences in networking.

In order to strengthen the “network” formed by the participants, NGO Desk decided to create a mailing list called NGO INFORMATION EXCHANGE. This will be a venue for NGO and GOs alike to share information such as brochures, newsletters etc, ask NGO related queries and post announcements on upcoming activities. For those who are interested to join the mailing list, kindly contact NGO Desk at jicapp-ngodesk@jica.go.jp

3. Featured JICA Program ～ Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) ～

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) is one of the programs of JICA which was established in 1965. Over 24,700 volunteers have already been dispatched since 1965 in 77 countries worldwide to assist in the social and economic development programs of recipient countries. These volunteers are trained and qualified professionals in a variety of technical disciplines to work at the local level in recipient countries. Aside from technical assistance, the JOCV program aims to deepen the understanding of cultures and traditions in order to build genuine
friendships between the volunteers and host agencies. The volunteers generally spend two years living and working in the community doing various cooperation activities. It was in 1966 when JOCV dispatched its first batch of volunteers to Cambodia, Laos, and the Philippines.

Today, a total of 1,348 JOCV volunteers has already been dispatched in the Philippines, making it the country with the largest number of volunteer assignments worldwide. 3 batches of volunteers are dispatched in different regions in the country every year. However, no volunteer was assigned to Mindanao area since 2003 due to security considerations. The general fields of specialization served by the volunteers are agriculture, forestry, fisheries, manufacturing & maintenance, education, community development, health and sports development. As for department allocation, the Government Offices receive the largest share of volunteers followed by Universities, Local Government Units (LGUs) then Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

The Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) is the government agency that serves as focal point for the volunteer service program in the country. Among its mandates is to coordinate the deployment of foreign volunteers in sectors and areas that need complementary support in terms of management, technical skills and manpower. The procedure for filing and processing of requests are as follows: 1) Interested agencies/organizations should submit a completed Request for Volunteer Assistance Form to PNVSCA, 2) PNVSCA will conduct an assessment of the request to determine the merit and indicative timetable for volunteer assistance, 3) If the request is approved, PNVSCA will endorse it to JOCV and 4) JOCV will evaluate the request and if found acceptable, it will initiate the recruitment and selection of volunteer candidates based on the terms of reference provided in the request.

Dispatch of volunteers is one of the NGO Support Programs of JICA since JOCVs serve as partners to the activities of NGOs. Thus, NGOs who are in need of management and technical skills are encouraged to avail this program. At present, only 3 volunteers are assigned in NGOs and the details of their activities will be featured in the succeeding issues of the newsletter. For more information about JOCV program, you may contact JICA Philippine Office.
4. Directory

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~ Editor’s Note ~

NGO Desk would like to thank the participants of the 5th NGO-JICA Study Session for giving positive feedback on the activity and suggestions on how to improve the succeeding sessions. We hope to see all of you in the next session together with the new recruits.(M.B.)

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