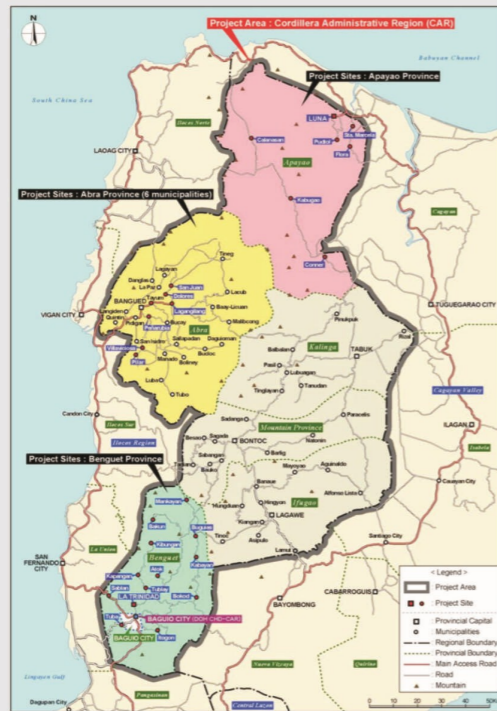
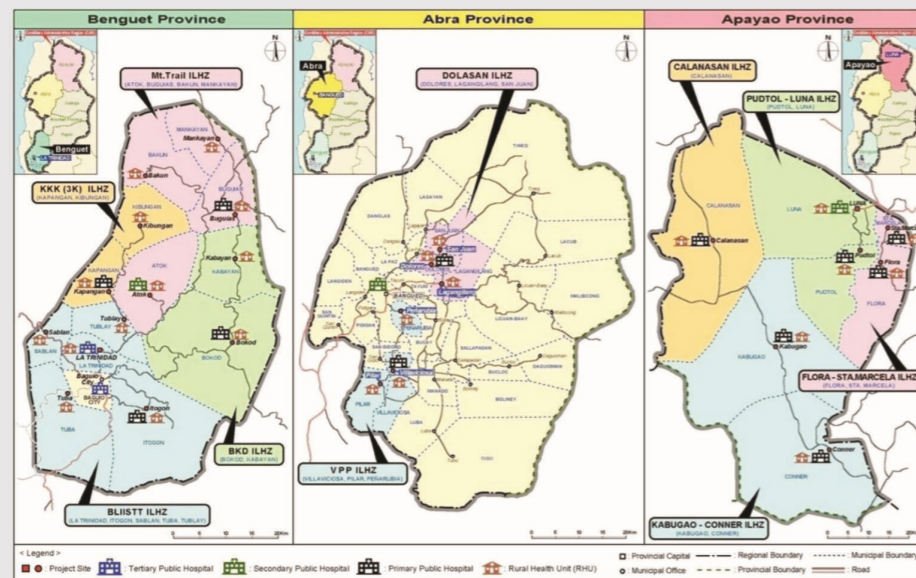




### Map of project area



### Map of project sites



JICA - SSC Office, 3rd floor  
Regional Training Center,  
CHD-CAR, BGHMC Compound,  
Baguio City  
Telefax: (074) 422-0239

## JICA handover birthing equipment to Apayao province

By JICA -MATA

"I sincerely hope this project will achieve its intended purposes to protect the health and well being of mothers and newborns..." said by Minister Akio Isomata from the Japan Embassy during the Equipment handover ceremony held at the Buenvenido Verzola Gymnasium Luna, Apayao last January 24, 2013.

Said equipment will be used by pregnant mothers during and after delivery and the newborn as well.

The provincial government of Apayao headed by Governor Elias C. Bulut Jr. spearheaded the conduct of the equipment handover ceremony. This occasion was graced by the following guests, Minister Akio Isomata and Dr. Junichi Nita from the Embassy of Japan, Undersecretary Gerardo Bayugo from the DOH Central Office, Ms. Martha Pareas from JICA-Philippines, staff from the Regional Health office CAR headed by Director Valeriano Jesus Lopez, staff from JICA-SSC led by the Chief Advisor Dr. Makoto Tobe and Deputy Chief Advisor Ms. Fude Takayoshi and friends from the media.

The province of Apayao is a recipient of the JICA assisted project entitled Cordillera-Wide Strengthening of the Local Health System for Effective and Efficient Delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services which is geared towards saving the life of mothers and babies.



Hand-over ceremony in the province of Apayao.

For project year 1(February 2012-March 2013), the province of Apayao received medical and non-medical equipment for the birthing facilities particularly the 6 hospitals and 3 Rural Health Units. JICA will complement the equipment support to the other 17 BHSs proposed as birthing facilities while the DOH through its HFEP will provide infrastructure support in project year 2(April 2013 – March 2014). "Of the 2013 HFEP budget, Apayao will take 2M infrastructure support intended to rehabilitate 5 RHUs and 4 District Hospitals" Undersecretary Bayugo said.

One of the highlights of the occasion was the adoption of Minister Akio Isomata, Dr. Junichi Nitta, Dr. Makoto Tobe and Ms. Fude Takayoshi as sons and daughter of Apayao through a provincial resolution. They were dressed with the Isnag attire and required to dance the Isnag native dance.

In response Bulut conveyed his sincerest gratitude to JICA and the Embassy of Japan. He further recognized the collaborative efforts of the DOH, provincial government and the municipal government who allotted their own funds as counterpart to the project and the community people themselves who volunteered free labor and materials just to make the birthing facilities ready. "I hope and exhort our province mates to work hand in hand as we have shown in this project to continue addressing the remaining stumbling block" Bulut said.

Witnessing the affair are 223 participants clad in ethnic attire from the 7 municipalities of Apayao represented by the provincial officials and employees, municipal officials, barangay captains of the birthing facilities, head of partner agencies, Chief of Hospitals, Chief Nurses, Municipal health Officers, Public Health Nurses, Midwives and CHTs. Also, among the witnesses are the members of the Inagkawan choir who sang the invocation, our Philippine National Anthem and the Japanese Anthem-Kimigayo beautifully. Dressed in the Isnag attire, the Inagkawan performing troupe also welcomed the guests and participants through the beating of the gong and Isnag dance.



Equipment recipient's hospital personnel on loading their recovery tables and IV stand for Calanasan area (Apayao).

Further, to provide a clearer picture of the project, Provincial Health Officer II Dr. Thelma Dangao presented the status of the project activities while Dr. Teresita Pasiwen, Municipal Health Officer of Conner shared how the community of Conner actively involved themselves in the preparation of the birthing facilities. Dr. Makoto Tobe in his Japanese Kimono also presented the equipment given to the province of Apayao and the activities for project year 2. A photo exhibit area was also staged at the back side of the gym where the members of the ILHZ Technical Working Group acted as the tour guide to give highlights to the viewers about the photos displayed.



## News from Abra

### **366 PhilHealth Advocate and Knowledge Officers in Abra Trained**

By: Maritess B. Beñas

BANGUED, Abra, (PIA) -- The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) – Abra Local Health Insurance Office had successfully completed the training program for the PhilHealth Advocate and Knowledge Officers (AKO) in Abra.

The PhilHealth AKO Training was carried out as a strategy to push the advocacy to attain the thrust of PhilHealth for the Universal Coverage by 2013 by conducting a massive information education campaign for more membership in the PhilHealth.



Mrs. Manuela F. Munar, JICA-SSC FC from Abra with Mayor Robert Victor Seares Jr. during the stakeholder's meeting at Dolores, Abra

In a report made by Ms. Leonora A. Sobrevilla, the Officer-in-Charge of PhilHealth-Abra, she expounded that the AKO Training specifically aimed to train and orient at least three (3) Philhealth AKO per barangay, most of whom are barangay captains, barangay health workers and barangay kagawad, public health nurses and the municipal links of the 4Ps program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The AKO Training program also attempted to equip the AKOs with adequate information regarding the benefits and programs to efficiently handle queries and clarifications from both PhilHealth members and non-members.

Through the AKO Trainings, the AKOs were guided and prepared to recruit non-members into the National Health Insurance Program especially those in the self-employed sectors.

The AKO training program likewise gave updates to the members of PhilHealth regarding its programs and operational status through the local media and encouraged prospective sponsors to adopt the “PhilHealth sponsored program through the stakeholders meetings composed of the six (6) mayors and 87 Barangay Chairmen within the project sites of the Strengthening of Local Health System for Maternal and Child Health Services project which is assisted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The AKO program covered not only the training of the AKOs but also conducted radio programs and stakeholders' meetings for more participation from the general public especially the support of the stakeholders particularly the local chief executives who are the primary sponsors of the non-members in the rural communities.

Ms. Manuela F. Munar, the JICA Field Consultant in Abra, emphasized the importance of Philhealth membership among the people within the project sites because this would help maintain and sustain the life and operation of the birthing facilities, hence the need to really promote the campaign for more membership to the Philhealth.

The JICA provided the project funds for the AKO which was implemented for six (6) months from July to December in 2012.

Meanwhile, PhilHealth – Abra is proposing to JICA to provide funds for the same program in order for them to continue their advocacy to campaign for more membership since they have yet to achieve their thrust of Universal Coverage in 2013. (MTBB/PIA-Abra)



Amarte Escala - Social Insurance Officer I of LHIO Abra processing the workshop output of participants during the AKO Training.

## News from Benguet

### **BKD ILHZ Holds Its First BHW/BNS Congress**

The Bokod-Kabayan-Dennis Molintas Memorial Hospital Inter Local Health Zone (BKD ILHZ) held its first Barangay Health Workers (BHW)/Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) Congress on December 5, 2012 at Benguet State University – Bokod Campus Open Gymn.

The event's theme was “Responding to Health Challenges through Volunteerism, Community Responsibility and Team Work”.

It was attended by more than 200 participants composed of the BHWs, BNS, and health workers from DMMH and from the different barangays of Municipalities of Bokod-Kabayan.

The congress was graced with the presence of Hon. Mauricio T. Macay, Mayor – Bokod, and Dra. Norma C. Pacalso – Provincial Health Officer I, Officer-In Charge ,Benguet PHO who both gave inspiring messages to the participants.



(L-R: Dr. Guinanan, Dr. Pacalso, Dr. Dulay, Dr. Velasco, Dr. Mangaltag)

The event's speakers who both hailed from Bokod-Kabayan District were Dr. Ryan Camado Guinanan, Executive Director, Doctors for Indigenous Health and Culturally Competent Training, Education, Networking and Governance (DITENG), Inc., and Dr. Mercedes Sanchez Calpito, Medical Officer IV, Department of Health – CAR and Benguet – Provincial Health Team Leader.

Dr. Guinanan lectured on “Rallying towards equitable health care in Cordillera”. He emphasized about volunteerism which has four elements – Reward, free will, benefit and commitment.

Dra. Calpito on the other hand talked about Efficient Barangay Action for Maternal and Child Health (EBAMACH) and the 12 key health messages. She further reiterated on the roles of BHWs/BNS in the community being the front liners of health services.



Dr. Calpito delivering her lecture, taken during the BHW/BNS congress

Also present were the Sangguniang Bayan for Health, Hon. Dan Guinsiman of Kabayan and Hon. Marian D. Calawen of Bokod who showed their support in this activity.

This program of activities was prepared through the effort of the BKD Technical Working Group especially the Municipal Health Officers, Dr. Lilian Velasco – Bokod; Dr. Felix Mangaltag – Kabayan and Dr. Meliarazon F. Dulay – Medical officer IV, DMMH and BKD Manager.

With the continuous support of the Benguet Provincial Government and Local Chief Executives of Bokod-Kabayan Municipalities, the different health activities of BKD ILHZ are being realized.



Barangay Health Workers and Health Workers doing activities facilitated by Dr. Guinanan.

Mrs. Regina A. Domis, Kabayan BHW Federation President gave a response expressing her gratitude to the organizers of the congress and the Local Chief Executives of the District for giving them an opportunity to learn and update their knowledge especially in the field of health being the front liners in the community. She wished that there will be more activities for them and hopefully this will not be the first but to have more BHW/BNS congress in the future.

This activity was funded by the BKD-ILHZ Common Health Trust Fund.