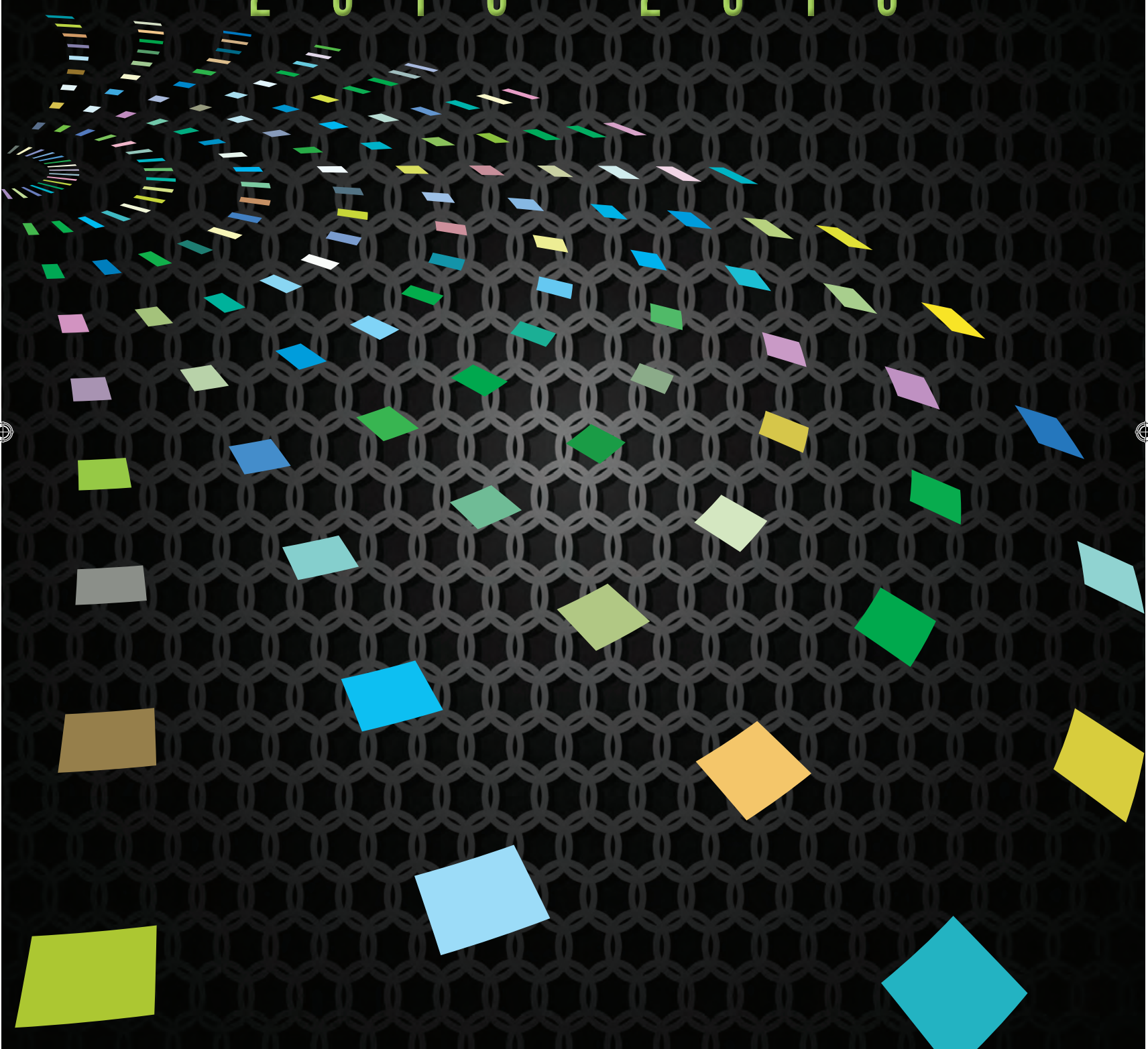


# M I L E S T O N E S

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Department of Trade and Industry IV-A CALABARZON

# M I L E S T O N E S

## 2 0 1 0 - 2 0 1 5

Department of Trade and Industry IV-A CALABARZON

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**Foreword** from the Regional Director

Marilou Q. Toledo

**I**n the past five years, the Department of Trade Industry, under the guidance of Secretary Gregory L. Domingo and Undersecretary Zenaida C. Maglaya, continuously implemented as well as introduced new programs that are innovative, meaningful, and impactful to our clients.

The years 2010 to 2015 revved up the DTI engines making us all, both staff and officials, step out of our comfort zones to tackle more challenges. Exhausting, yes, but very rewarding.

Our tireless efforts in SME development through the Shared Service Facility Project and other initiatives elevated productivity and competitiveness to the fore. The DTI “touch” has truly been inculcated in the hearts of our beneficiaries as many of them have felt and expressed, *“Ramdam namin ang pagmamalasakit sa amin ng gobyerno sa pamamagitan ng DTI.”*

The year 2015 highlights a milestone in consumer protection when the region scored a big catch while doing enforcement duties that preempted the proliferation and sale of uncertified and substandard products to the market, particularly to disaster-stricken areas. In addition, the region pioneered a unique advocacy through a consumer theatrical competition to impart consumer education to the public particularly to high school students. It is one of a kind in the country that has been going on for years that we had considered it a milestone as well. These and other stories you will read in this special compilation that narrate successes of our programs and gained milestones for the DTI CALABARZON Region.

These significant achievements and positive client feedback will further inspire us to do more to help business and enterprises thrive, and to protect consumers against unsafe products and unfair business practices and schemes.

Through this special publication, we hope that our milestone accomplishments will inspire others and be replicated.

As we congratulate our staff and officers for earning us in 2013 and 2014 the DTI-wide “Best” award, we also look forward to the new challenges and will do more so that we can serve the best interest of our stakeholders now and in the coming years.





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*SM Malls, Jollibee Foods Corporation*





# SHARED SERVICE FACILITY

## *The Shared Service*

***Facility** improves the competitiveness of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) by providing them with machinery, equipment, tools, systems, skills, and knowledge under a shared setup. Priority industry clusters of existing MSMEs improve the quality and productivity through the use of productivity-enhancing machinery and equipment. Sharing service facilities is a strategic means to reach the country's goal for inclusive growth and jobs generation.*

*As of December 2015, Region IV-A (CALABARZON) had 152 approved SSFs with a running total of PHP150.8 million. Of these SSFs, 133 are established projects while 19 are still for completion.*



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## BATANGAS

# Rags to wearables







## SHARED SERVICE FACILITY



Good intentions may never be enough when organizing into a group. Although each one may have similar interests or needs, sooner or later differences will arise. Without the proper management of expectations, the group might not go far.

In Barangay Laurel, Tanauan City, Batangas, 37 seamstresses founded the Bayanihan Multipurpose Cooperative and started with PHP20,000 paid-in capital shares. As a starter, their income-generating projects were making slippers and *buko* juice, two diverse outputs. As expected, the cooperative had rough sailing in its initial months and for those who led complacent lives, found the experience unnerving. To top it off, there was a problem with its leadership. In comes the community relations office of the First Philippine Industrial Park or FPIP to assist in promoting the products of group-owned entrepreneurial activities in



Barangay Laurel, one of the industrial park's host barangay.

The Batangueña spirit of the women kicked in which carried the group during its trying moments. They soon realized they had to shift to another product that still used their sewing skills if the cooperative were to survive. They saw the need of the FPIP for rags which they decided to pursue. Slowly but surely,

the cooperative began to rise. From supplying rags, they were also tapped to make the aprons, armslips, and headbands of the workers. Soon, they were sewing and supplying uniforms, shorts, blouses, and sports wear. All this time, they did not have their own production area. They worked through heat and rain in a cramped balcony with a makeshift ceiling and walls graciously lent by a co-op member. When it rained, the machines and their supplies were drenched.

The positive attitude of these women, above everything else, was the selling point of the cooperative. They looked at problems as challenges and they sought help when needed. Now the cooperative run by empowered elder women relying on their own steam are now attracting clients and looking forward to its own production center through the help of their congresswoman, Victoria Hernandez-Reyes.





## C A V I T E

# Shared roasting facility for Café Amadeo



The surge of coffee shops augurs well for the burgeoning coffee industry in the country. A lot of young coffee shop patrons may be surprised to learn that a couple of centuries ago, quality Philippine coffee was in demand the world over making it the fourth largest coffee-producing country in the world. But in the last quarter of the 19th century, coffee 'rust' decimated the industry.

The Philippines is reclaiming its rightful place in the world of quality coffee blend hence, in 2001, the Provincial Rural Industry Development Committee and the government of Cavite got together to revitalize the Cavite coffee industry. Of the nine coffee growing municipalities in the province, the municipality of Amadeo stood out in terms of hectareage planted, production, and number of coffee planters. On 28 June 2002, Amadeo acknowledged this by creating the Café Amadeo Development Cooperative with 15 members and PHP137,500 as initial capital. The cooperative started by selling premium green coffee beans and much later engaged in producing ground coffee.





Then, with subcontracted roasting services costing PHP12.50 per kilo, this easily spelled out a hefty PHP18,750 for roasting 1,500 kilos of coffee beans a month. The answer to deflect large expenses came in December 2013 when it got a roasting facility from the DTI worth PHP560,000.

Not only did the machine address the roasting needs of the cooperative, it also saved the group valuable processing time by subcontracted companies. The production process is now accessible, faster, and inexpensive.

Today, 80 local farmers and three millers benefit from the project. The original 15 members have expanded to 209 active



members. The cooperative used to produce 1,000 to 1,500 kilos of coffee beans a month; today, they produce 3,000 to 3,500 kilos a month. In 2012, it grossed PHP9,621,827 and netted PHP649,113 income improving further in 2014 with PHP14,483,082 gross income and PHP2,226,187 net.



As an enterprise, Café Amadeo has been growing with total assets of PHP8,663,653 as of December 2014. With aggressive promotion, diversification, and value proposition as marketing strategies, it is not farfetched that it could become a medium scale enterprise by 2016.



## L A G U N A

# Cabuyao enterprising seamstresses get a boost

In the city and elsewhere, you may have noticed that the tailoring or dress shops you have patronized for years have been closing one after the other due to the mushrooming of big stores, malls, and even markets that sell affordable wears and *ukay-ukay* stalls that offer clothes and linens at rock bottom or almost giveaway prices. But sewing is a skill that could be diverted to equally profitable ventures.

In the booming Cabuyao City in Laguna, 15 seamstresses bonded together to start a small rag-making business to augment their income. Making inexpensive rags use discarded cut cloth from garment factories; these are used in many business establishments, households, and by drivers of public transport. As time progressed, the group of 15 swelled to a viable 50 and tuned into the *Sipag Pinoy* Credit and Savings Cooperative. The prolific rag seamstresses had expanded their vision and skills to making garments and other items. The shift proved providential for after three years, the DTI assisted the

cooperative through the Shared Service Facility which allowed the group to use high speed sewing and edging machines which helped push the cooperative's garment production center. The improved and faster production increased the income of cooperative members.

The cooperative opened its doors to new opportunities. Employment rose to 81 direct and 200 indirect members. From the simple rags, doormats, and potholders, the garments center also churned out polos and blouses, ecobags and overall marine wear.

There is no doubt that the demand for *Sipag Pinoy's* outputs will also increase in the booming Cabuyao City where the cooperative is based. With the help of the SSF program, the cooperative is confident it will meet the demands of current and prospective clients that include institutional buyers and large companies in the Laguna Industrial Park.







## QUEZON



# Dairy farming in the cocoland



Who could have foreseen that lactose intolerant coco-farming locals would benefit from cow's milk? It could have been the most unusual produce that would save the future of farmers from Quezon, who, for decades, relied on coconut farming as its major livelihood. In the 80s, farmers groaned from the high cost of production, hence, when an opportunity for dairy production presented itself, the farmers rose to the challenge and never looked back.

Established in 1985, the Palcon Multi-Purpose Cooperative grew to 490 heads of cattle from the initial 25 heads. But dairy production was something new, there was so much to learn and in learning, there were so many pitfalls that they almost gave up. Financing was one of the major issues of the farmers. Then along came the SSF where equipment, tools, and machinery to be shared by farmers in producing milk and milk products were provided by the DTI.

With the machinery provided to Palcon through the DTI SSF Project costing PHP1.85 million, production increased from 1,000 to 1,200 liters per day for the first year and is expected to increase in succeeding years. There is also a generator that provides emergency power to ensure continuous production. The milking machines, milk cans, and milk analyzer ensure

that the milk collected is fresh and free from contamination.

Palcon supplies almost 60 percent of their production to the *Kalipunan ng Kooperatibang Maggagatas, Inc.*, a federation of cooperatives in the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, and Quezon and is the primary supplier of fresh milk to coffee shops like Starbucks and other specialty restaurants.

When asked what encouraged them to keep moving on, the indomitable Palcon manager Teodoro Panaligan voiced out the common sentiments of the farmers, "*Kung para sa kinabukasan ng mga anak, walang hindi kayang gawin.*" (There is nothing we will not do for the sake of our children's future.)



# THE STRENGTH OF SHARED SUCCESS

All you needed was a bolo to harvest bamboos. Used to roast pigs, skewer meat, make furniture and Christmas lanterns, bamboos are also widely used for construction scaffolding. Bamboo culm was used for cooking and pickling. There was no need for fancy equipment or carpentry tools to come up with other bamboo products. But that was then. Bamboo had evolved to meet the strict needs and tastes of buyers. Laminated, bamboo could be used as tiles, chairs and desks. Beautifully crafted bamboo under the hands of creative people can be formed a hundred ways to accessorize rooms, banquet halls, apartments, and even the earlobes of *fashionistas*.

Bamboo is now one of the focused industries of Rizal. Unlike wood or lumber, there is no fear of scarcity of materials with the fast-growing bamboo. Assured of the availability of raw materials for processing, the DTI established a bamboo secondary processing facility or “hub” under the SSF Project.

Three bamboo processing centers known as “nodes,” were set up in multi-purpose cooperatives in Barangays Balibago, Lambac, and Borgan in Talim Island to support the raw materials for the hub.

As the cooperator and hub for the project, the Cardona Multi-Purpose Cooperative was provided with mechanized

equipment that could manufacture engineered bamboo planks which is used to make tiles, school chairs, tables, other furniture and furnishings. It was further provided with bamboo pole cutter, twin rip saw, circular saw with sliding table, single spindle molder with feed, jointer and thickness planers, band saw, dust collector, arm saw, bench drill, wide belt sander, spray gun and air compressor, universal sharpener for circular saw, and grinder for planer knives.

Support came from multiple sources. Cardona cooperative received PHP1 million working capital from the Department of Labor and Employment while the Balibago and Borgan cooperatives received PHP300,000 worth of





## SHARED SERVICE FACILITY



additional equipment each under the Department of Science and Technology grants-in-aid project. Furthermore, partnership with other government agencies particularly the Cooperative Development Authority, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Agriculture, and business support organizations were being harnessed to assist the project.

The Shared Service Facility had opened up self-employment opportunities and served as income generator in the rural areas. In addition, with the establishment of the SSF in the E-Bamboo Production Center, three more nodes have been created that add up to the existing three thereby increasing employment in Cardona. What a long way from the primitive bolo!





# BOTTOM-UP BUDGETING

The bottom-up budgeting is the government's strategic approach in preparing the budget proposals of agencies that takes into consideration the development needs of poor cities and municipalities as identified in the local poverty reduction action plans. These plans are formulated with strong participation of basic sector organizations and other civil society organizations.

In 2014, the DTI became a part of the implementation of this approach providing a menu of programs and projects under its mandate that the local governments can avail from.







BATANGAS

# Yamang Nasugbueño



In the past, often left out in the crafting of economic programs were the supposed beneficiaries, so much so that in the actual program implementation, they were the ones missing out on all the action. They remained in the same dismal situation year after year engendering a jaded and hopeless people. It also created a listless economy in the countryside.

Then came the BuB approach that encouraged citizens to take active roles in articulating their needs to the government and express the kinds of projects that are responsive to their needs. Such an open attitude in governance empowered





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the people to effectively and rationally participate at all levels of social, political, and economic decision making.

The municipality of Nasugbu in Batangas, one of the priority municipalities for the BuB in 2015, identified various areas, among which were skills development training for condiment and *pastillas*-making (milk candy) and identifying raw material sources in producing new and innovative products. A seminar on entrepreneurial capacity building was also conducted to develop proficiency in handling businesses. This is a giant leap for the government-governed relationship. It bespoke of a caring and responsive leadership. In many ways it empowered every Juan, Maria, and Nene.

The launching of the Barangay Micro-Enterprise Development Program encouraged communities through organized groups like cooperatives and other civil society organizations that represent women, farmers, senior citizens, out-of-school youth, the physically challenged, and other sectors to start their own businesses. Hence, the DTI, Department of Agrarian Reform, the Cooperative Development Authority, and the local government in Nasugbu conducted entrepreneurial, managerial, and skills training to enable them to produce quality products at competitive prices. Nasugbu's mayor, Rosario Apacible, had this to say, "I fully support the BuB project because I know many of our *kababayan* will benefit from it."







CAVITE

# Where the seniors are *“Yamang Pinoy”*







Many senior citizens dread the day when they retire from service and become idle. The unemployed worry about the day they become old, still dependent, and unproductive. Financial security is a big problem for the seniors. They need money for food, clothing and health care. Most seniors feel unproductive and feel they are a burden to society.

Fortunately, the national government had set its sights in addressing this problem by involving those at the grassroots and senior citizens in the planning and budgeting process. This process effectively identified more suitable and gainful livelihood ventures that will help its financially challenged citizens to be productive.

In 2014, the municipal government of Tanza in Cavite

worked with DTI to look into poverty reduction projects under the *Yamang Pinoy* program. But first, there was the capability enhancement program, the Entrepreneurial Mindset, to develop the innate skills of the beneficiaries. Once this was established, the actual training and demonstration were conducted, in this instance, the senior citizens were taught how to make dishwashing liquid, fabric conditioner, and powder detergent – items a household is never without. Participants were provided with starter kits and capital that they may have something to begin with. To inspire them further, those involved in the program were given an opportunity to showcase their products at trade fairs like the one held in Imus, Cavite on November 2014. To make sure that they would have a steady clientele the year round, members in all 41

barangays of Tanza were mobilized to patronize the products. Senior citizens were assured that at least 6,000 bottles of their products sell per quarter.

This business venture was envisioned to ensure economic stability of seniors and make them an integral part of progress. The sound of regular income coming their way is music to the ears of the senior citizens like Angel Pamenter, 67, president of the senior citizen federation in Tanza. For Pamenter, the project has given the senior citizens not only the opportunity to engage in livelihood projects, but more importantly, they were given a sense of value and belonging.





## LAGUNA

# Angat Kabuhayan para sa mga Kababaihan



Using the BuB scheme, the DTI provided funds to local governments to prime up local industries and to assist small and new entrepreneurs become competitive.

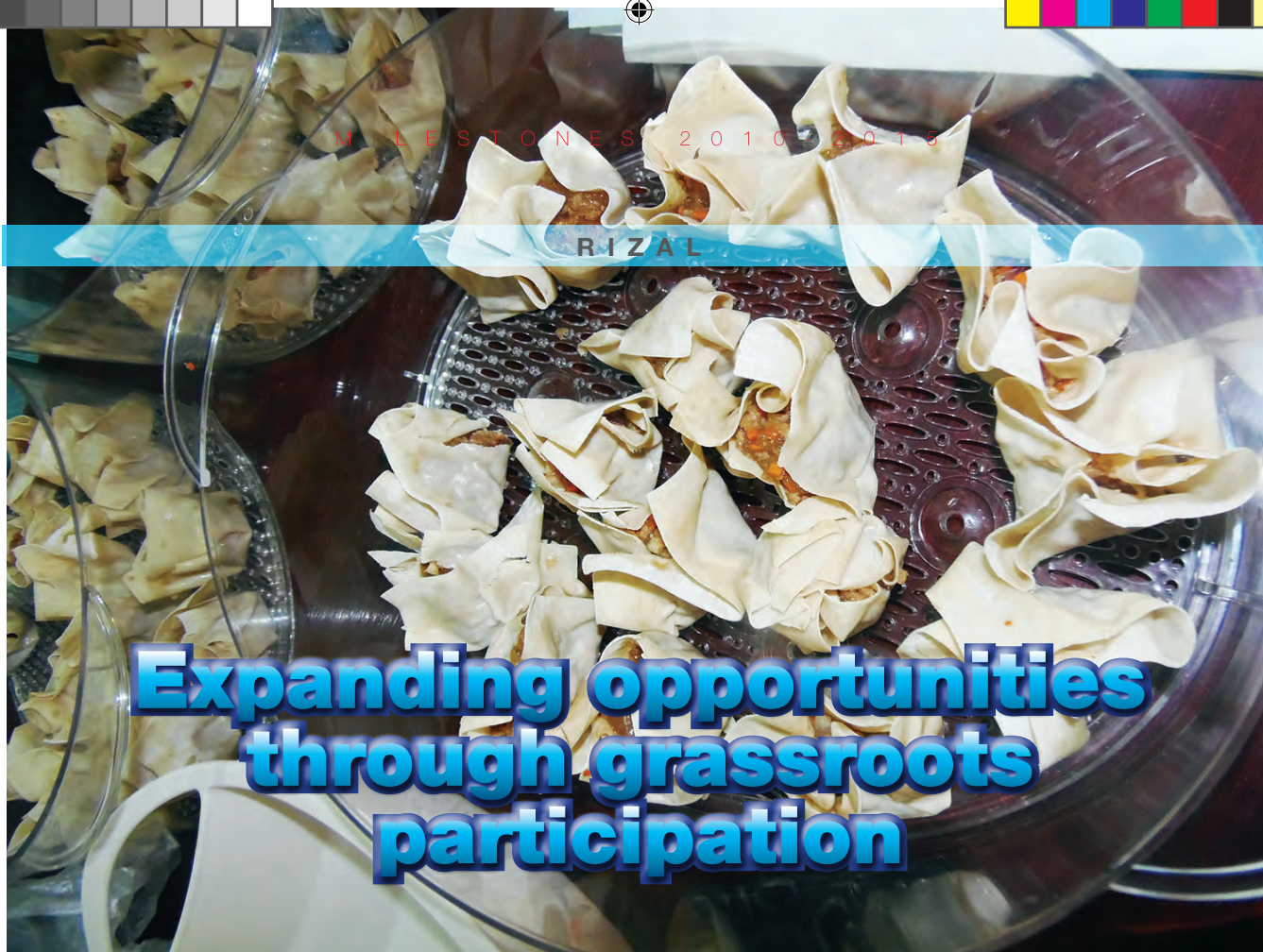
In 2015, DTI-Laguna transferred PHP33.9 million BuB funds to 18 local government units representing 22 projects. This amount represented 94.43 percent of the total BuB funds for the province.

One of the first LGUs to successfully complete the implementation of their projects using these funds is the municipality of Pagsanjan, where the magnificent Pagsanjan Falls is located. Year in and year out, the waterfalls never fail to lure foreign and local tourists, and corresponding to the increase in tourist arrivals is the increase in demand for souvenir items. Unfortunately, the municipality is not capable of producing new and better souvenir items.

Under the *Yamang Pinoy* Project, the “*Angat Kabuhayan para sa mga Kababaihan*” was conceptualized. This program aims to produce souvenir products and provide livelihood opportunities for the 245 members of the *Samahan ng mga Kababaihan sa Pagsanjan* in the 16 barangays of the municipality.

Pagsanjan received its BuB funds of PHP3 million from the DTI in August 2015. Without missing a beat, simultaneous capability-building activities were held the following months. The completed projects included bamboo souvenir items, silkscreen and airbrush t-shirt printing, resin making, fossilized leaves, and coconut handicraft. The womenfolk of Pagsanjan who underwent the different training were able to grow in terms of personal, social, and entrepreneurial skills. That is what happens when the beneficiaries themselves are involved in the planning process.





The pervasive poverty in the communities has always been a challenge in the country. As a fitting response to this condition, government and private resources were mobilized to alleviate and address poverty-stricken communities. As such, numerous ways were identified to make alleviation measures lasting and available.

The BuB, previously called Grassroots Participatory Budgeting, was adopted as a strategy to identify various programs and projects that address the development needs of municipalities and cities. Through BuB, the local government of San Mateo determined what appropriate projects are responsive to the needs of its people.

San Mateo is a first class urban municipality in Rizal, however, in spite of the abundance of business and industries, a number of indigent citizens are unemployed and lack economic opportunities. With the BuB, civil society organizations of women, youth, persons with disability, urban poor, farmers, and senior citizens are encouraged to take active roles in identifying and implementing local development planning and budgeting.

With BuB's guiding principles of convergence, participation and empowerment, San Mateo, through the local poverty reduction action team, prioritized the DTI's list of projects to be implemented in their municipality.

**Focus on women and youth.** In the latter part of 2014, the BuB Program was implemented in San Mateo. The identified CSOs were the women and youth sectors of the municipality. After a series of preparatory activities, the LGU and DTI-Rizal provincial office partnered to implement various skills training on food processing and garment production.







## BOTTOM-UP BUDGETING

Recognizing the active role of women in economic development, the Health Education Livelihood Program (HELP) Ladies Association was the co-operator in the implementation of trainings identified to benefit the women and youth in the municipality. With more than 500 members, HELP Ladies' supports the participation of women in these income-generation activities.

According to Rachel Marra, BuB focal person, there were skills training in chocolate and meat processing, and garments production, actively participated in by women from 15 barangays. The DTI provided 5 industrial high speed sewing machines and 1 industrial edging machine for garments production.

**BuB Impact.** Adhering to the BuB process is challenging and painstaking. Despite this, San Mateo and the beneficiaries are grateful that funds are now being downloaded. Although the impact of the program is not visible right after the training, Marra reported that training participants from the women and youth sectors evolved into micro entrepreneurs. Today, the trainings are held where the equipment for garments production and food processing are located.





# SMERA

## Small and Medium Enterprise Roving Academy

The SMERA is a training program for would-be entrepreneurs, SME owners, and managers of micro and small to medium-sized businesses. This initiative aims to provide a continuous learning program for entrepreneurs to help them step up their operations and improve their competitiveness for easier access to domestic and international markets.

SME development stands as one of the government's core strategies to achieve inclusive growth. As a strategy, SME Roving Academy hopes to contribute to this goal by ensuring that all sectors across the country participate in economic development by engaging local stakeholders in the development of programs and by establishing multilevel entrepreneurship development networks to improve SMEs' access to business development services at the regional/provincial levels.



## BATANGAS

# Cultivating entrepreneurial skills



Many are eager to start their own business but do not know how. Some engage in buying and selling which becomes a dead end because resources dwindle, and wares become redundant and trite. A few start on developing new products but come to a standstill when their suppliers dry up or fail to deliver. Still, a few get stuck with old designs or machinery and are not ready to adapt new technology. There are also those who do not know where to apply for a loan to expand their business. These are just some of the problems that arise when one is into business but pitfalls can be avoided had they known where to get assistance.

DTI enables people to engage in entrepreneurship. Each year, the DTI offers a buffet of activities, seminars, and trainings on technical know-how, business management, technology updates, product and packaging design, and other business-related innovations. People who are into business are made of sterner stuff – they have to possess nerves of steel not knowing if they will succeed or not. One thing is sure though, they envision themselves as entrepreneurs. The DTI trainings improve on what they already know, to equip themselves with the proper tools that will further develop their confidence in managing their business and eventually expand their operations.

In the province of Batangas, the DTI with the local government, lined up a list of topics for discussion: fair trade laws, entrepreneurial skills development, visual merchandizing, effective customer relations, and marketing. Eufrosina Brucal who owns a grocery, was fully appreciative and had this to say, “This was an eye-opener for us.” Indeed it was an eye opener for all who attended the course. Brucal learned she had to register her business, furthermore, she now knows that she can get financial assistance from government. The other participants realized that continuous learning, enhancement of skills, and adaptation to the modern environment is a big help in expanding their business and in targeting a wider market.





The local government of Kalayaan, Laguna through its chief executive, had been searching for various means on how to develop and improve the economic status of its constituents especially the farmers. Still, it took time for them to try other means of livelihood while waiting for harvest time. It was then that DTI-Laguna invited several farmers to attend the SME Roving Academy session on the business opportunities for the rubber, cacao and stingless bee production in February 2015 in Sta. Cruz, Laguna. The participants saw the prospects in stingless bee production.

The local government then requested for the SME Roving Academy to conduct “How to start a small business” and show other DTI programs and services that may further assist the MSMEs, farmers, and the womenfolk.

To support the livelihood project, the Kalayaan local government requested the roving academy to conduct a session on “Business Opportunities on Rubber, Cacao, and Stingless Bee Production” in March 2015 in Sta.

Cruz, Laguna. This was attended by 65 participants, among them farmers and women. After the training, they proceeded to a local study mission at the Mt. Banahaw Bee Farm in Dolores, Quezon for further training on how to start the stingless bee production. On 16 April 2015 they purchased the start-up beehive and materials.

Currently, five bee farmers have created and established one bee farm demo in Sitio Dahican with 25 colonies. They are targeting to have at least 100 bee colonies by first quarter of 2016.

With this new livelihood project, the farmers and womenfolk welcome it as another source of income. As a bonus, bee farming helps protect the environment since bees are also good pollinators.

Today, a number of farmers are more excited to increase their bee colonies after having a taste of their harvest. Now, the local government envisions the Kalayaan Bee Farm to be one of the tourist destinations in the area.



## RIZAL

EMPOWERING WOMEN  
THROUGH THE SMERA

**F**ilipino women, or *Pinays*, had been engaged in business long before there were seminars or courses in business administration. In the country, it is more comfortable to say *tindera* (lady seller) instead of *tindero* (man seller) since the presence of women sellers are more common. *Tinderas* are everywhere and almost always have never entered college or taken a single subject in business, hence, the dream to progress or to be well off often remains just that - a flighty dream. The effort, expenses, and time spent in buying and selling give little in return for many of them.

Government recognizes the role of women in entrepreneurship for *Pinays* are resourceful, trustworthy,

willing to learn, and as the Chinese saying goes, “They hold half of the sky.” Women-owned enterprises are important in our economy because of its potential to develop individual, social, and national productive activities.

In Rizal province, DTI conducted seminar-workshops and skills training through the SME Roving Academy. The idea is ingenious, of course, for it takes into consideration their capacity and social status. In this informal atmosphere, more *tinderas* or would be entrepreneurs were encouraged to participate.

In 2015, the DTI’s “Women’s Initiatives for Successful Entrepreneurship” or WISE forum series featured successful *Pinay*

entrepreneurs who inspired 150 women to take advantage of their productivity and go beyond than just doing the “usual” business activities. This value-added initiative meant giving some twists to their services or products that make their enterprises stand out from the rest. One of the speakers, Chiqui Escareal-Go, chief executive officer and president of Mansmith and Fielders Inc., narrated her personal experience as a businesswoman, sharing business ideas in the process. She revealed processes wherein you can spot business opportunities.

Rizal-based successful and budding women entrepreneurs - Marlane Villa-Real of Buena Mano Crafts, Inc., Margaret Campos of Maflor Home of Healthy Foods,





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Harriet Bayang of Bayang Candles, and Monaliza Vandenberg of Hot Mama Food Products shared the challenges they had to hurdle and their journeys as entrepreneurs. For sure their unusual approaches or

strategies in coming out with value-added goods and services attracted more and discerning clientele.

One of the 150 attendees was Carmen Perez, an accountant and entrepreneur who shared

her sentiment, “There are a lot of challenges for women entrepreneurs, but I was inspired by the experiences and successes of the speakers.”





QUEZON

## SMERA: All-in-One package



The SMERA is an innovative approach to assist MSMEs by offering trainings in entrepreneurship, marketing, management, financial management, skills development, and many other enhancement training for start up and existing enterprises.

Customer service and handling complaints, and skills training are part of the Stage 1 activities. Individuals from all walks of life come to DTI to ask, “What is the best business to engage into?” Business counsellors conducted trainings and seminars for the clients on marketing, Doing Business in Free Trade Areas, investments, Barangay Micro Business Enterprises, financing, and skills development activities like food processing and soap making.

Stage 2 includes the Green Economic Development, packaging and labeling, and food safety seminars. For a number of MSMEs, added training continued to be provided

to make their products market-ready. The enterprises under this stage were those that showed potential to increase their business operation.

The same businesses were also gathered under the Roving Academy program with a hope that the products would be competitive by training on visual merchandising. If the MSMEs applied the knowledge gained, they go under Stage 3.

There were 25 runs of SMERA training from the four districts of the province consisting of 960 participants, 694 of them women, benefiting from it. The SME Roving Academy will continue to be a force in the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises in the province.





# Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program

DTI-CARP is committed to improve the quality of life of beneficiaries in the countryside including cooperatives and associations of farmers, landowners, women, and the youth by helping them manage MSMEs using the battle cry *“Hanap Yaman sa Kanayunan.”*

It provides a comprehensive package of support services to stimulate agro-industrial activities in the agrarian reform communities including entrepreneurship development, technology upgrading, skills capability building, product and market development, industry development, and investment promotion.

As of 31 December 2015, there have been 82,367 farmer beneficiaries from 2013-2015 in Region IV-A.



## Harnessing wealth in the countryside

Just what exactly is the wealth (*yaman*) of the countryside (*kanayunan*)? Are these the resources? Are these the products? Or are these its people? You need not look far, for truth be told, “*Hanap Yaman sa Kanayunan*” is all these and more.

We still imagine that farmers plowed, tilled the land and harvested their produce the same way as their fathers and forefathers did. There was the piece of land, the carabao, the plow, and the middlemen who were part and parcel of farming. But in the 1980s, there was a critical change in the air with the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program or CARP. CARP was the redistribution of public and private agricultural lands to help beneficiaries survive as small independent farmers. In its initial years, what seemed so ideal and humane, was in real life more complex and problematic. The farmers had the same stock knowledge in plowing the land but they had little understanding on how to bring their produce to the market or how to deal with the direct buyers. They had their lands but where was the vaunted wealth?



Through the years, programs were created for the betterment of the lives in these farms, one of them to help in raising the knowledge of the new farm owners and buoy their self-esteem. A few years ago, another program dubbed Small and Medium Industrial Technology Transfer Development Program (SMITTDP) was formalized to promote and develop MSMEs in the countryside. In retrospect, among the objectives of CARP was to provide landowners equality in terms of income and opportunities, enhance the agricultural production and productivity, and provide employment to more agricultural workers - the same objectives that SMITTDP has. The bigger challenge was to be able to contribute in the quality of life by increasing the annual aggregate household income of target beneficiaries by 25 percent.

Its battle cry, *Hanap Yaman sa Kanayunan* helps the overall

objective of the program through rural industrialization. It will tap idle manpower of farmer-beneficiaries and immediate families for income-generating projects that will help increase household income and stimulate industrial activities in their communities. Harnessing the landowners' land compensation toward investments in viable agro-industrial projects in their respective communities will help spur local employment opportunities and ultimately stimulate countryside development.

According to Bonifacio Deleola, chairperson of Kamahari Agri-based MPC, “*Ilan sa mga naitulong sa amin ng DTI ay ang patuloy na pagbibigay ng iba’t ibang seminar na nagpapalawak sa kaalaman ng entrepreneur lalo na sa mga baguhan. Kami po ay nabigyan ng makinarya upang gamitin sa pagpapakape ng muscovado.*” The projects of government had gone a long way not only in urban areas but also in remote areas especially in the agrarian reform communities. Truly, *nahanap na ang yaman sa kanayunan* (the wealth in the countryside had been found).



## L A G U N A

# Transforming farmers into entrepreneurs

**T**he Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program without doubt is a landmark program in the country for it provided farmers their own land, something scores of Filipinos believed was not possible before. But to own land is one thing, making it productive and viable is another. Farmers who were basically tenant-farmers in the past were dependent on the owners of the land on how to run a farm. The CARP beneficiaries needed help in training, technology, and funding.

Enter the DTI whose role was formalized through the SMITDP. Its main responsibility was to develop strong and viable enterprises in agrarian reform communities or ARCs that would transform the lives of agrarian reform beneficiaries working as contributors and vital partners to economic development.

One such ARC is the Casile Guinting Upland Marketing Cooperative located in the upland of Cabuyao in Laguna. Most of the members of the cooperative are farmers whose common goal is the total agricultural development of the country particularly in the production of organically grown vegetables. Already a progressive cooperative, it has its own lot, building,

an office, and a production area with furniture, fixtures, basic machinery and equipment. The cooperative is fully operational with substantial supply of water and electricity.

The cooperative supports the thrust of the DA in raising and producing organic vegetables; it had also ventured into add-on values of coffee and ginger tea processing. The rich land allows for the planting of a multiple variety of coffee like Robusta, Excelsa, and Liberica beans. Although its office is already equipped with solar dryer, moisture meter, weighing scale, de-huller, de-pulper, roaster, and a multi-purpose grinder, it needed additional machinery and equipment used for the processing of coffee. The SSF on coffee processing program of DTI has the needed equipment of the cooperative.

The program further helped the cooperative in establishing a packaging and processing center, in intensifying the current production capacity, and in improving the quality of the finished product. To top it off, DTI had handed over two machines – a dosing coffee grinder and an espresso coffee machine - which will be followed with a coffee packaging machine and a heavy duty ginger extractor to the Casile cooperative.

Furthermore, 107 members of the cooperative benefited from the marketing training and incubation activities of the synchronized DTI-DAR interventions. It also profited from other government programs like the up-valuing product project of DAR; and the business and marketing aspects from DTI that pushed the cooperative into joining local and national trade fairs which exposed their products to the public. The Kalakal Trade Fairs and the Rizal Exporters and Manufacturers Fair gave the cooperative the venue to expand their network.

The all out support of government also included the inclusion of the cooperative in the bottom-up budgeting that resulted to additional entrepreneurial and business management training, business plan preparation, skills training on coffee production and processing, and in market linkages and other coffee business opportunity seminars.

Obviously, the CARP program had made a lasting impact on the Casile Guinting Upland Marketing Cooperative not only in terms of local development, but also in the social and cultural wealth of its members.



# FISHING FOR MORE SUCCESS

**G**ive man a fish and he will eat for a day, so the saying goes. Find ways to process fish and discover the limitless opportunities to help himself and others.

And that's just what the officers and members of Sipsipin Multipurpose Cooperative (SMC) are realizing today.

Located in the lakeshore municipality of Jalajala, the SMC is one of the people's organizations formed and being assisted by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Implementing Team of Jalajala Agrarian Reform Community. It now has 149 members, mostly agrarian reform beneficiaries whose passions are fishing and farming. It was organized in 1983 and was registered with CDA in 20 October 1998.

The cooperative was organized to generate income and development activities to enhance its growth and to improve the social and economic well being of the members and their community. Thus the cooperative, mostly comprised of farmers and fisher folks, engaged into lending, consumer store, and *Botica ng Bayan*.

Just like any other people's organizations, the cooperative experienced initial drawbacks and challenges. The cooperative, however, with its strong membership continues to improve their management methods and techniques.



**Fishing for business ideas.** Because it is situated along the shoreline of Jalajala, fishing is one of the major sources of livelihood for the community. Fish production in aquaculture operations, fishpens, and fishcages make Jalajala abundant in different species of fish, particularly *bangus*, *tilapia*, carp, and also the endemic species such as *ayungin*, *biya*, and *kanduli*.

Surplus supply of the fish, with very little demand, pinned the price down for as low as PHP7 to 10 per kilo. Taking advantage of the copious supply, the cooperative worked together to develop and promote fish processing.





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**Hook, line, and sinker.** This income-generating project was made possible with the active convergence support of the provincial offices of the Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Science and Technology and the DTI. These agencies provided the community with appropriate technology and skills training to utilize its resources and maximize the skills and potentials on fish processing. Aside from the national agencies, Jalajala supports this village-level income-generating project with the intention to strengthen the fish industry in the municipality.

During these technology-transfer initiatives, the participating agrarian reform beneficiaries became skilled on producing fish products such as smoked and dried fish, burger patties, fishballs, kikiam, embotido, fillet, and fish noodles.

To ensure the high quality of food safety of their products, the cooperative underwent skills upgrading training and product development specifically in label and packaging development. Other productivity and managerial training and seminar workshops such as current good manufacturing practices/ hazard analysis critical control points, food safety, manufacturing, accounting, and marketing were actively participated in by the groups.

The business prospect motivated the cooperative to research and learn more on fish processing. It set up its processing plant with the help from the assisting government agencies and went into operation in January 2011. The following year, the cooperative became the recipient of package of



fish processing equipment and machinery from the national government agencies. A total of PHP1.88 million-worth of equipment and working capital was given to the cooperative to boost its operation and processing.

With this income-generating business operation, the cooperative provided stable employment for its production staff. During its peak operation, Amalia Berania, SMPC chairperson, cited the employment of additional workers from the community in addition to extra workers hired for fish cage operations.

**End of the hook.** With the operation in full swing, The cooperative envisions to bring processed fish not only to the local markets but also to the national market. Berania says that, "The cooperative would like to be actively involved in the government's continuing efforts of providing additional income opportunities for the agrarian reform communities."





# trade fairs

Trade Fairs are exhibitions organized by the DTI to showcase native, well-known, and trademark Filipino products. For years, it has become an effective strategy to help MSMEs sell and promote products by bringing them close to markets. For other MSMEs, it paves a way for market expansion by determining market potential, examining recent market trends and opportunities, evaluating competition, and initiating joint ventures. Trade fairs are also a means of promoting regional products to help boost tourism. While the usual trade fairs and exhibitions can be very costly to MSMEs, the DTI subsidized the participants by covering booth rental expenses.

In CALABARZON, several provincial trade fairs are being organized such as the “*Ala Eh Festival*” of Batangas, REMAI or the Rizal Exporters and Manufacturers Association, Trade Fair of Rizal, *Niyogniyugan Festival* of Quezon, Anilag Trade Fair of Laguna and Provincial *Kalakal* of Cavite.

In September 2014, the DTI staged the Regional Trade Fair dubbed *KALAKAL CALABARZON: Mga Produktong Natatangi* featuring products of the region.





## Kalakal CALABARZON: A regional showcase

The DTI has been aggressive in conducting trade events and selling fairs to strengthen the marketing efforts of MSMEs in the countryside.

While DTI has joined and participated in various international and national trade events, they had not conducted a trade fair since 2006 during the time of “BARAKALAN” – the regional trade fair for CALABARZON and MIMAROPA. After that, DTI initiated the conduct of CALABARZON One Town One Product (OTOP) Congress which was backed up by an OTOF trade fair solely for OTOF SMEs in the region.

DTI recognizes the participation to and conduct of trade fairs as one of the effective marketing strategies to promote the local products in the region. Thus, after almost 10 years, DTI IV-A mounted the first “*Kalakal CALABARZON 2014: Mga Produktong Natatangi.*” With DTI provincial offices, the fair showcased various products that included gifts, decors, housewares, processed food, handicrafts, fashion accessories, and more.

This event featured a special corner on the various products which had undergone product development sessions from the Association of Region IV-A Designers. DTI boasts of its pool of local designers who help MSMEs enhance their craftsmanship and creativity through developing innovative product designs and executing new prototypes. Participated in by 48 exhibitors all over the region, this fair generated a total of PHP9.6 million cash and booked sales.

With its evident success, DTI once again mounted the Kalakal CALABARZON 2015 with the same tagline, “*Mga Produktong Natatangi.*” “I do not know how to inspire you because being here is already an inspiration,” said Teresita M. Leabres, chairperson of the CALABARZON Regional Small and Medium Enterprises Development Council, during the opening ceremony. The ten-day exhibit supported the promotion of green economic development through the greening advocacy of MSMEs to contribute to an environment-friendly and climate-smart economic development. The 2015 Kalakal was participated by more than 80 local SMEs from the region, and generated almost PHP10 million cash and booked sales.







## Trade fairs are not just for fruits and sweets



Remember the time when trade fairs featured vegetables, fruits and sweets from the provinces and footwear and dresses from the urban areas? Almost yearly, these trade fairs were held simultaneously with town carnivals or *ferias*, fiestas, the Christmas season, or other events in the provinces. In recent years, DTI

stepped in to help MSMEs by training entrepreneurs on how to enhance their outputs by improving their content, taste or design. It also helped in promoting and marketing the improved products.

With the interventions, the products of MSMEs had become

competitive, creative, and value-laden. Then came promotion and marketing. Of course there are always the reliable trade fairs where people looking for goods and foods make a beeline for.

In Batangas, the DTI sought out sponsors to help MSMEs in showcasing







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their products in booths or stalls by organizing the *Ala Eh! Festival* held every Christmas season. This festival is one of the highlights during the province's Foundation Day celebration, undeniably a big event. The local trade fair attracted 59 exhibitors in 2013, 44 in 2014 and 46 in 2015 with total sales hovering at a million-peso mark every year.

The Festival showcases the best of Batangas' native, well-known, and trademark products, goods, and services, especially the well-known *kapeng barako* (strong

coffee). According to Emily Katigbak, provincial head of the Department of Tourism, "*Isa sa pagkakakilanlan ng Batangas ay ang kapeng barako. Barako, ibig sabihin, strong. Pag inihalintulad mo sa isang Batangueño...ibig sabihin determinado, handang harapin ang mga hamon sa buhay, at kahit saan, angat.*" (One of the things Batangas is known for is its *kapeng barako*, meaning strong coffee. Like a *Batangueño*, it means determination, willing to face all odds, and above all, outstanding.)







## Expanding markets through trade fairs

It is a sorry sight when one day, you notice business establishments near you closing one after another after only a few weeks or months of doing business. Handlers or owners of micro, small, or medium enterprises may not be aware that there is such a thing as marketing. Perhaps all you know is to open a business in the community without any knowledge of promoting your wares, be it service, food, or products. Marketing, a gap that the DTI is addressing, is part and parcel of doing a business.

Marketing development and sales promotion are part of the growth strategies for any business. Marketing is a continuous activity that enables entrepreneurs to know their customers well and how to meet their needs. A number of several decade-old businesses are stunted, catering to a select clientele and content to be at that stagnant level. Expanding business means serious marketing of goods and services.







Marketing offers opportunities for growth, increased sales, and diversified markets. Think of SM that started with selling shoes that now had diversified to every product, service, and food there is.

An effective promotion and marketing strategy that DTI undertakes is organizing trade fairs. Fans, clientele, and new buyers at trade fairs know that a DTI-organized trade fair is where you can examine recent market trends and opportunities. It is where they expect to find new products not available elsewhere which lends an air of exclusivity. Also DTI carefully monitors such events - no shortchanging or unscrupulous sellers.

A trade fair is also where companies present their products or services in a pre-structured set-up, usually a in booth which is adjacent to other potential suppliers. Generally, it has a larger number of participating exhibitors and brings together related industries. Trade fairs provide insights on the buying capacity of consumers, establish familiarity with the marketplace, and fill the critical gaps of the unknown market.

A number of Laguna based businesses grew after participating in fairs organized by DTI. A few of these are Oryspa Spa Solutions (rice-bran beauty products), Choco Vron Global Corp. (chocolate-coated polvoron), *AngTindahan ng Itlog ni Kuya* (salted eggs, Peking ducks), CSM international Corp. (bone china

handicrafts), Ai-She Footwear (sandals, wedges, doll shoes), and Jhaz Footwear (wedges, espadrilles, doll shoes). They started on the provincial level and rose to sell in international fairs.

Oryspa Spa Solutions Corp. is one of the most outstanding beneficiaries of these trade fairs. It participated in the BARAKALAN Regional Fair in 2002 and joined the National Trade Fair in 2004. Later, in 2010, it ventured to health and wellness products and joined the One Town, One Product National Fair. Oryspa has ventured into franchising and has now 16 outlets. Recently, it bagged the Excellence Awards for the Most Promising Filipino Franchise, Retail: Small Store Category; ASEAN Woman Entrepreneur of the Year; and ASEAN Priority Integration Sectors Excellence Awards for Healthcare. The former newbie is now a household name and has shown that home-grown brands can compete globally.



# Paving the Market through Collaboration



**S**urely you know of someone whose business had fallen through? What seemed so promising on the planning board had proven disastrous on its first months of operation. Could it be the design, the taste, the location, the finances, the supplier, marketing strategy, or could it be your management style? Businesses that go on their own face great risk for unlike years ago, the competition today is fiercer, unrelenting, and aggressive. To run counter to such stance courts failure.

In Rizal, a surefire strategy to go forward lies in the strong and binding cooperation of many sectors. Seasoned entrepreneurs now know that even if your product or service is unique, the best, or even inexpensive, going at it alone means encountering many challenges. To top it off, location and timing are also keys to exposure and sales. And so, in partnership with the DTI, the Rizal Exporters and Manufacturers Association, Inc. (REMAI) institutionalized the mounting of bi-annual marketing events in Rizal. Buyers anticipate these occasions knowing that products and services offered here have the approval of the DTI.

The highly anticipated events are “*Alay sa Lalawigan*” held every June and “*Pamaskong Handog*” conducted every November. In these trade fairs, the marketing strategy is to regularly expose the housewares and holiday decors, bags and leather products, fashion complements, wearables, furnishing, furniture, health and wellness products, and fresh and processed foods to consumers not only from Rizal but from other provinces and regions as well. These events will eventually pave marketing exposure to products and services from neighboring places too.



On December 2015, the DTI and REMAI in partnership with the Rizal MSME Development Council, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Rizal provincial government, and SM City celebrated the 15th provincial fair consisting of 70 micro and small producers and manufacturers that showed their best products and finest produce. This public-private partnership, through numerous well-crafted programs, was successful in helping entrepreneurs improve and market their products.





According to REMAI president Josefino Eustaquio, "The MSMEs greatly benefit from this marketing support. These entrepreneurs launch their products here, eventually meet institutional buyers, tap new markets, and maintain existing ones."

These trade fairs also highlight the collaboration of other strong sectoral associations in Rizal such as the Taytay Sash Contractors Cooperative for woodwork, the *Samahan ng mga Rizaleño sa sektor ng Agrikultura at Pagkain*, and

the Association of Rizal Tourism Related Services, Inc. for tourism. Through these marketing events, REMAI has extended assistance to nonprofit organizations like the *Tahanang Walang Hagdan*, Unbound Scope, and even to persons with disabilities and inmates of the Rizal provincial jail.

Such are the ties that bind the private and public sectors that extend not only on business collaboration but also in social commitments.







## The humble noodle is now for export

There are noodles and there are Noodles. You may have tried a few of the famous and well promoted brands in the market, but somewhere along the way, the taste just is not the same as you remember.

A noodle manufacturer from Lucena City is gaining fame and fortune because her noodles are tasty, unwaxed, and consistent. The New AM Miki Factory, a noodle manufacturer, is managed and operated by Eleanor Canlas who has been producing noodles for years. The fact that she has been doing this for more than two decades speaks volumes of the quality of her products. Her noodles are so good that she makes sure these are on sale in trade fairs promoted and organized by the DTI. She has been exporting her noodles for quite sometime now.

Canlas joined for the second time the International Food Exhibition or IFEX the biggest and most respected export-oriented show in the country. For six months, she prepared for this event knowing that this year's IFEX



is not like any other since it served as an official parallel activity to the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade Meeting. IFEX showcased a wide-ranging array of foods and the hottest trends in the food industry in the 21 affiliate economies of APEC, the reason why Canlas had to put in extra attention to her products.

Canlas introduced her new noodle variant, called "Aunt Galles," which is an easy-to-cook version of pancit Lukban, a first of its kind and unwaxed like other noodles in the market. She even designed the packaging to cater to international consumers. During the IFEX, both domestic and foreign buyers expressed deep interest in her noodles because of its potential. A big multinational company is negotiating to carry her product. Aunt Galles pancit Lukban is currently her best seller locally. She has already sold PHP300,000 worth at PHP15 apiece. And to supplement her noodle, Canlas has come up with a soya-based condiment called Eleonor's Soy Seasoning which is under market testing.

Indeed, this humble noodle manufactured in Lucena City has come a long way from its small space in a trade fair booth to the gates of a multinational market.





## QUALITY IS THE NAME OF HER GAME

Other businessmen would be happy if even one of their products is a best seller, but Maura Pasciolco is not just any businessperson - she is an entrepreneur with true grit and vision. Since the early 1990s, she had been venturing in producing *nata de coco*, once the darling of exporters. She engaged in processing tropical fruits and vegetables specializing in natural products like coco vinegar, coco jam, and virgin coconut oil, now the sweetheart of exporters and health enthusiasts.

Pasciolco AgriVentures is a single proprietorship registered in 1996 and it is owned and managed by Maura Pasciolco. This year, 2015, she, like other true blue entrepreneurs, did not miss the chance to flaunt her products at the IFEX since this year coincided with the APEC summit held in the country. This year was a good opportunity to expose Filipino products to an international market and show what good quality food really is. Pasciolco knew that other palates would love the variants of her coconut jam. At the IFEX, she introduced the different coco jam variants like coco jam with mango, coco jam with ginger, coco jam with vanilla, and coco jam mixed with the local cacao.



Maura Pasciolco had become famous because of her unorthodox approach to food production. This latest development in her kitchen had proven a hit and with orders for her virgin coconut oil from the international market, she is now expanding into a much bigger and semi high production process. Joining the IFEX has been significant because currently, she had been exporting her coco jam variants to Canada, the USA, Japan, and several Middle East countries. For her coco jam alone, she had sold more or less USD 60,000 worth to different markets. For Maura, quality in food products spells a big difference in expanding her market.





**W**hen overseas, how does it feel when you enter a store and see that there are products made in the Philippines? You'd feel ecstatic naturally. And these products are not only exported to the US but also found in the shelves in Japan, Canada, Israel, and Europe!

The QUEPEA or Quezon Producers and Exporters Association, Inc. aims high for their products; their main goal is to penetrate not only local but international markets and their world class products exude professionalism and integrity.

These products are the result of persistent participation to training and seminars, product development and marketing by the manufacturers.

They have exposed their products to the scrutiny of buyers in a number of trade fairs where their items had sold remarkably well.

QUEPEA offers a variety of products such as coconut food products, cakes and pastries, home decors, novelty items, *buri* products, herbal products, the world-known *lambanog* (coconut wine), and *longganisang* (sausage) Lucban. It also offer fresh organic vegetables. The *lambanog* is a cousin to vodka and it is 80 to 90 proof while *longganisang* Lucban is famous for its garlicky and slightly sour meat.

This association is composed of 12 manufacturers assisted by DTI in marketing and product development. It is the cooperator of the Quezon

Trade House, one of the Shared Service Facility project of the DTI. This trade house sells an average of PHP40,000 worth of products a month locally and still growing. QUEPEA members display their products at the Quezon Trade House and it is here where QUEPEA members conduct business meetings and joint ventures.

QUEPEA continues to be world class as they have what it takes – core value of professionalism and integrity, providing high quality products, and strengthening the support system among its members. When overseas, the next time you see a product “**Made in Quezon, Philippines,**” on its label, you are also looking at the achievement of QUEPEA, and the achievement and pride of every Filipino.



# Industry Cluster

Industry clustering enhances industry competitiveness, develop and expand exports, generate investments, and create jobs. An industry cluster is a group of competing, collaborating, and interdependent businesses within a value chain that has been recognized as an effective approach in industrial development and promotion of small and medium enterprises as it encourages competitiveness. Industry clustering and value chain development approach is a key strategy to MSME development.

The clustering process operates upstream - raw material suppliers, production inputs, and downstream - logistics, value adding, packaging and marketing economic activities to support the whole value chain.

Components include training, product development and technology promotion, marketing and investment promotion and facilitation, and monitoring.

One of the strategies in industry cluster development is capacity enhancement. The National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project or NICCEP is a joint project of DTI and the JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). NICCEP's overall goal is to facilitate increase in the contribution of the selected priority industry clusters to the national economy particularly in terms of creation of jobs, development & strengthening of SMEs, increase in value-adding, improvement in the business environment more importantly impact on the poverty. Its objective is to enhance the capacity of selected industry clusters throughout the country and improve competitiveness. JICA's intervention includes dispatch of experts, counterpart trainings in Japan, training, workshops, monitoring and local activities of target clusters.

Under the NICCEP, DTI CALABARZON identified ICT (information and communications technology) as a pilot industry program which aims at making the Region the premier ICT hub of the Philippines and the preferred investment destination for the Offshoring and Outsourcing Industry. To achieve this goal, incentive programs, intensified promotion and close academe-industry linkages are being pursued.





The contribution of the business process outsourcing or BPO industry to the Philippines translates jobs for 1.03 million Filipinos at the end of 2014. The industry is expected to reach 1.3 million in employment and \$25 million in revenue by 2016.

Given these statistics, the DTI, in cooperation with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), carried out the three-year program of National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Program (NICCEP) for ICT from 2012 to 2014. Its aim is to adopt the industry cluster approach for ICT to develop a roadmap that would address gaps under the following strategies:

- Talent development
- Promotion and marketing
- Infrastructure and support services
- Business development

One of the activities included was the creation of specialized subjects like computer literacy, business communication, and English proficiency for college students, specifically for Sta. Rosa, Laguna (a Next Wave City), to strengthen the country's future IT BPM workforce.

Another activity that focuses on the development of MSMEs is called the Technology Business Incubator. Here, technology-based MSMEs and entrepreneurs are supported to develop into profitable businesses by receiving support for a sound operational

foundation. Once successful, the TBI will foster economic growth in Laguna, making it the premier technology business location in the Philippines.

Also notable, is the pursuit of the establishment of TBI facility that is now a reality. It was a pilot project that showcased the effectiveness of implementation with collaborative efforts, a way of ensuring sustainability of the development plan. With this facility in place, the first batch of 25 students were trained for basics in 2D animation from June to September 2015 with the Genesis Animation Training Center, commissioned by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. Intervention programs will be formulated so that they could potentially be employed in the IT BPM industry.

According to Mr. Ermin Lucino, Department Head of the City Planning Office, they look forward to training the second batch in early 2016. He also said that they hope to be able to conduct the training three times a year to make the facility self-sufficient by yearend.

Sta. Rosa is proud to have the city listed again in the Tholons 100 cities as choice BPO destination from no. 84 in 2013 to no. 82 in 2014. It is again an APEC-recognized TBI Accelerator in its directory for 2014. The feasibility study of their Santa Rosa Community College is focused toward developing its curriculum on courses that are geared towards IT talent development.



## QUEZON

# Unifying the competing woodcraft manufacturers

Substandard wood, poor craftsmanship, wood rot, lousy customer relations, irregular pricing – these were just some of the issues facing the wood industry not too long ago. There is no rule or policy regarding the production and manufacturing of wood products thereby subjecting the buying public to poor quality, nowhere to turn to when there were complaints, and just utter desperation.

The makers and producers of wood products had their own problems – lack of creativity and technical knowledge; insufficient machinery, tools, and equipment; need of promotion and marketing knowhow; and the ever present need for financial resources.

Government stepped up its assistance in standardizing the policies and guidelines in woodcraft manufacturing. In 2014, the DTI initiated partnership with the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the provincial government in organizing the Quezon Wood and Bamboo Manufacturers Association or QUEWBAMA. The association is composed







of three multi-purpose cooperatives – New Gumaca Woodcraft, *Lingkod Banahaw*, and Coconut, Bamboo, and Wood and two organizations – Karaka Association of Quezon and Muebles de Candelaria.

After QUEWBAMA's registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission in August 2015, the DTI provided training in bamboo processing, kiln drying operations, and product development on new and better designs. The members were also taught how to cost, price, and virtually merchandise their products. Further, New Gumaca Woodcraft, *Lingkod Banahaw*, and Karaka were

provided with SSF equipment amounting to PHP4.95 million, PHPI.35 million, and PHP460,000, respectively.

QUEWBAMA went international by participating in the forum conducted by the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines and the European Union where it was briefed on manufacturing, combating illegal logging, and in improving forest governance. Surely, the producers and manufacturers of wood and bamboo from Quezon had deepened from just being a local participant, to national, and now, international level.



## RIZAL

## Creativity and Success Mix

Angono has more than its fair share of artists and creative people. In this small, bucolic town rose the National Artist for Music Lucio San Pedro and National Artist for Visual Arts Carlos “Botong” Francisco. It is also from Angono that the oldest evidence of art, the Angono petroglyphs are found. It therefore is no surprise that products from this particular place are way unique from other provinces.

Dubbed the art capital of the Philippines, this municipality churns out-of-the-ordinary shapes, be in art, music, literature, food, or handicrafts, translating these into unusual forms of art. Weaving creativity, innovation, and business, Angono is famous for its indigenous foods culling ferns, snails, ducks, and shrimps from the natural environment into various ethnic fares that reflect the rich culture and tradition of Angono.

One of the restaurants-cum-art gallery that serves authentic Angono dishes is the *Balaw Balaw*



Restaurant founded by Perdigon Verdigon, a prolific artist himself. The restaurant is now managed by the Balaw Balaw Food Corporation and its dishes like the *balaw balaw* or fermented shrimp, *ginataang kuhol*, fried *itik*, *kinilaw na puso ng saging* and many others will be brought not only to local outlets but also abroad with the assistance of the DTI.

At the onset, this food corporation became an active participant in various DTI local and national marketing events enabling it to connect with institutional and foreign buyers. Andre Vocalan, current owner of Balaw Balaw Food Corp. says, “During these marketing events, we were able to launch our products successfully. Various food companies and end-users became





interested in our products.” Their unique food selections were also featured on television, radio, and print.

These marketing exposures enabled Balaw Balaw to introduce Angono ethnic foods to a wider market segment. They had also started to penetrate market niches in the traditional and healthy foods. For several years now, *Balaw Balaw* had been supplying the Robinson’s chain of supermarkets as well as small chains of groceries nationwide.

To optimize the viability of their products, *Balaw Balaw* also opened a *Pasalubong* Center where indigenous products from Rizal province such as processed foods,

handicraft, fashion accessories, and souvenirs are sold. At the Center, micro and small enterprises from the *Samahan ng mga Rizaleñosa sektor ng Agrikultura at Pagkain* and the Rizal Exporters Manufacturers Association, Inc. also display their products for sale and order.

To further improve their products, the Set Up Project of the Department of Science and Technology, stepped in to improve the production of the corporation and to reduce rejects and spoilage.

Vocalan takes pride in their company’s contribution to the community and the environment by recycling wastes. Since the start of its operation in 1982, the company had been using local raw

materials from Angono and nearby towns. The *Balaw Balaw* is a good example of a small enterprise that has been doing great and paying forward by assisting people with disability, the youth and the women sector.



# Promotion of Green Economic Development (ProGED)

ProGED enhances the competitiveness of MSMEs by helping them adopt climate-smart and environmental strategies to prevent costly environmental degradation, climate change impact, biodiversity loss, and unsustainable use of natural resources.

Projects under ProGED implement environmental-friendly, climate-smart, and inclusive strategies and measures for MSMEs, as well as for government institutions that are relevant to economic development.

This initiative is a three-year partnership of the DTI-Regional Operations Group and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit or GIZ GmbH. The DTI Laguna now adopts the project influencing other enterprises to do the same.







LAGUNA

## MSMEs going green



Without due regard for sustainable development, natural resources are depleted leading to the degradation of the environment. In recent years, there has been a worldwide move to replace what has been used or destroyed. Nations are now more prudent in using their natural resources because it is an undisputable fact that a degraded environment contributes to climate change.

In the Philippines, MSMEs contribute significantly in the economic development of the country as these represent almost 99 percent of all registered businesses and employ 70 percent of the entire workforce. MSMEs consume significant portions of the country's water and energy, they have inadequate waste and wastewater management, and consequently emit high greenhouse gases.

Because of this, the government, through the DTI-Regional Operations Group, linked up with the







## M I L E S T O N E S 2 0 1 0 - 2 0 1 5

German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in the implementation of Promotion of Green Economic Development (ProGED). The project is all about technologies that allow cleaner production processes and about a growing market for products that consume less energy.

The Bureau of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development started the ProGED in the province of Laguna in July 2014 with three lines of intervention:

- Information and awareness on green economic development
- Green service facilitation and matchmaking
- Green framework conditions

As a highlight to the project, through the Provincial MSMED Council of Laguna (*acclaimed for its best practices in the areas of Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risks Reduction Management Systems*), the **Laguna Green Awards** was conceived to give recognition to private enterprises that have adopted greening initiatives to enhance business sustainability and competitiveness to protect the environment.

Last December 15, 2015, fourteen nominees for the First Laguna Green Awards were given recognition and awards. The event was attended by Dr. Volker Stegeirwald, Project Manager of GED/GIZ together with the Honorable Provincial Governor Ramil Hernandez. The major winners were Oryspa Spa Solutions owned by Ms. Sherill Quintana (Big Enterprises Category) and Junknot Handicrafts owned by Ms. Wilhelmina Garcia (Small Enterprises Category).

The Going Green theme was also adopted in the region's **Kalakal CALABARZON 2015** trade fair held last September at Festival Supermall Alabang.







# Local and Regional Economic Development

Local and Regional Economic Development or LRED is a participatory, action oriented, and implementation process wherein both the public and private stakeholders work together to improve the local conditions that will propel economic growth and engender employment. LRED mobilizes people and makes them work together to effect change.

LRED promotes the emergence of vibrant and ecologically sustainable local or regional economies that will trigger pro-poor growth, and ultimately make living conditions better for the majority of the population.

It further complements LGU planning by providing a systematic approach for identifying economic priorities and formulating strategies in a participatory manner.





## R I Z A L

## MERGING INITIATIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT

*Reaping the success of the three-year implementation of the LRED is the Municipality of Cardona. One of the coastal municipalities of Rizal, Cardona is the pilot LGU supported under the LRED assistance that started in 2012. According to Mayor Bernardo San Juan Jr., “It is the determination, diligence, and unity of the people of Cardona that made LRED a success.”*



**Making linkages work.** Initially implemented in other regions, the DTI-Rizal provincial office pursued to upscale the model in the province recognizing the gains and successes of LRED implementation in other provinces and regions.

The Cardona technical working group, together with the local stakeholders, considered bamboo and water hyacinth as priority projects to be undertaken by the LGU and DTI Rizal in cooperation with partner agencies like DOLE, DOST, DA and CDA. A Cardona-based partner, Kakami Design, also became an active partner in both projects.

**Bamboo.** Bamboo became a priority industry identified during LRED activities and Bamboo Development Project utilized the Shared Service Facility of the DTI. Project beneficiaries from Cardona's Talim Island-based cooperatives were identified and a series of training on the preservation, treatment, and lamination of bamboo were actively participated in by people's organizations of Cardona.

In June 2014, the DTI provided the Cardona Multipurpose Cooperative with mechanized equipment to enable it to serve as the “hub” or secondary processing center to manufacture engineering bamboo

products such as planks, tongue, and groove, school chairs and tables, and other furniture and furnishings. With PHP3.3 million worth of equipment, the cooperative became the supplier of bamboo-based furniture and furnishing in the province.

Financial supports from line agencies propelled the enhanced operation of the different bamboo processing projects. The cooperative received PHP1 million worth of working capital from the DOLE while the two nodes, Balibago and Borgan KMPCs were awarded with about PHP300 thousand worth of additional equipment under the DOST-GIA Project.







**Water Hyacinth.** Meanwhile, the Water Hyacinth Livelihood Project is a joint undertaking of Cardona, DOLE, DTI, and DOST funded under DOLE's Integrated Livelihood Program. The DOLE package covers the establishment of the water lily livelihood project and set-up of common service facility. Project beneficiaries were the Looc Livelihood Association, Patunhay Livelihood Association, and the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging. In support to the development and promotion of water hyacinth, a series of capability training

were conducted. The training greatly benefitted housewives, fisherfolks, and out-of-school youths in Cardona.

The *Samahan ng Kababaihan ng Brgy. Patunhay Inc.*, was also assisted with an SSF. The association was provided with one unit of water hyacinth dryer worth of PhP0.63 million for the processing of water hyacinth stalks into semi processed raw materials used for finished products of gifts, décor, and housewares. Based on the monitoring of this project, a total of 85 gatherers and production workers were

provided income and employment opportunities.

On business enabling environment, projects jointly undertaken under LRED included the review and evaluation of revised Cardona Municipal Investment and Incentive Code; and, the monitoring and evaluation of Business Permit Licensing System Project, a joint project of DILG and DTI-Rizal that streamlines business registration procedures.





**S**mall towns usually have challenges of making themselves economically viable. Often, they are left out in the development of the whole province. Then came the government-initiated LRED, a holistic approach to development. This is the process wherein the public and private stakeholders in a locality jointly agree to improve the local conditions through a number of changes.

Lopez, Sampaloc, and Tiaong in Quezon were municipalities that lagged economically and politically but LRED was going to change all that. Through mutual consultation and agreement, locals identified the problems – it could be red tape at the munisipyo, stagnant economy, low employment - and came up with an action plan to address the issues.

The three towns, through LRED, were given new directions, and collective

efforts were activated to address economic issues and narrow development gaps. Things began to happen for the better.

In Lopez, the number of days for the business name registration process was reduced and streamlined substantially. The Lopez Trade and Investments Promotion Center and the Lopez one-town one-product Processing Center were established providing bigger opportunities and additional sources of income especially for women. Businesses was coming out of stupor enlivening the economy and as a result of all these, there was an increase in household accommodations.

In Sampaloc, the usually lackadaisical Bulihan Festival was institutionalized thereby assuring visitors to come yearly. The *buri* processing

center was established giving higher income for the processors. There is also a growing public and private support in the development of the buri handicraft industry.

Meanwhile in Tiaong, the LRED had been instrumental in the implementation of the new tax code of Tiaong in January 2015. The opening of the coco coir development project gave income opportunities to farmers and people in the coconut industry. The local Chamber of Commerce and Industry was organized serving as partner of the local government unit in pushing economic development in the municipality.

Indeed, the LRED plays a vital role in the uplift of small towns by assisting the LGUs carry on their plans and achieve their goals.



## Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO)

A Canadian non-profit volunteer-based development organization founded in 1967, CESO contributes to development by building capacity in governance and economic development among local clients and partners through the transfer of knowledge and skills by expert volunteer advisors. CESO bases its approach to development on the value of building and strengthening the capacity of local partners and clients.

In 2005, the DTI partnered with CESO in providing technical assistance and consultancy services with the Small and Medium Enterprises CALABARZON Region. The partnership allows a tangible transfer of high-level knowledge and expertise to clients while at the same time, share the Canadian business and government experiences and success through consultative training, coaching, and mentorship. CESO have imparted its work to 50 SMEs in the region.

*The following stories underscore the various partnering activities of CESO in CALABARZON.*





## THE RESCUER

With DTI's battle cry of "Enabling Businesses," the agency continues to partner with various organizations to help arm the MSMEs with the required skills and tools. One of these great partners is CESO whose trainings and seminars for DTI's clients prepare and arm the clients to face the challenges in starting up a business and making it thrive.

Over the years, the CESO has provided trainings on business plan preparation, cash flow and inventory monitoring, food safety management system, and beekeeping. Many of the MSMEs participating in these trainings have gained knowledge, and have used that knowledge to grow their businesses.

Annie-Nestor Food Products, a store in Nagcarlan, Laguna that specializes in espasol, was

one of the many MSMEs that availed of this service. Not too long ago the business was heavy in debt and the owner, Ms. Annie Montefalcon, was desperate for help. CESO volunteer adviser Douglas Johnson patiently guided and mentored her how to effectively monitor her cash flow with the use of an MSEXcel™ system, which led to Montefalcon's discovery that one of her collectors doctored receipts and the business lost PHP300,000 in a span of six months. After terminating the collector, she decided to collect the sales herself, and soon after paid all her debts. She now owns a new four-storey building which serves as a factory and office.

Another SME in trouble, Jhaz Footwear in Liliw, Laguna, sought CESO's assistance. Nepthali Moneda, the owner, also used to handle

his business operations causing the operations to cease whenever he had to go to Manila to deliver their items or take new orders. VA Robert Bourbeau helped Moneda draft a business plan focusing on operation expansion. The adviser recommended that Moneda hire personnel to handle production and other minor duties to enable him to focus on marketing. After two years, Jhaz Footwear opened a store in a big mall in Manila and purchased a van to speed up delivery.

In the verdant municipality of Dolores, Quezon another win for CESO emerged. Along with DTI and the National Apiculture Research Training and Development Institute, CESO recommended beekeeping as one of their priority projects in this highly agricultural town. In support, Municipal Councilor Rico Acuna bought two starter colonies. In the span of a year, his colony grew after his training on queen bee

production. In the first year, the beekeepers harvested 200 kilograms of honey that sold like hot cakes during the honey harvest festival. The visible increase in fruit and vegetable production in the municipality was attributed to bee pollination. All these contributed to the farmers' income rising to more than a hundred percent.

"DTI and CESO showed me new ideas and opportunities to improve my business operation. The CESO adviser patiently guided me in pursuing expansion plans and gave me lots of encouragement which enabled me to face the challenges that I encountered," enthused Mr. Moneda.

"I will never forget CESO since they helped me improve my business situation! I was desperate. I was deep in debt and about to lose my business. It rescued me from bankruptcy!" Ms. Montefalcon exclaimed.

## BATANGAS

### Balanced scorecard approach

A training on business development and organizational effectiveness using the "Balanced Scorecard Approach" was the main topic of the seminar conducted in Batangas. Gerry O'Connor, CESO volunteer adviser and consultant introduced the easy and more understandable way of doing a five-year plan for businesses.

The balanced scorecard, developed by Drs. Robert Kaplan and David Norton, is a strategic planning and management system used extensively in business and industry, government, cooperatives, and other organizations to be able to align their business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization,

improve its internal and external communications, and monitor organization performance against strategic goals.

"We are very thankful to be one of the chosen beneficiaries of this program, the need to plan was justified by the coming of a foreign consultant and remind us the importance of good planning for us to be successful and remain in business," said Marie Anternor, a business manager. Aside from the training, each group was given the chance to consult with O'Connor to help the groups develop their five-year business plan.





BATANGAS

## Crafting business plans



When the CESO was introduced to DTI, many business organizations were fortunate to be given the opportunity to learn new techniques and systems in terms of marketing their business. CESO has worked with aboriginal communities, partnering with different agencies, firms and organizations across Canada to assist individuals, micro, small and medium enterprises, and community organizations to help develop the skills needed in supporting long-term economic development, good governance, strong community health infrastructure, and sound financial management.

In late 2014, selected Shared Service Facility project beneficiaries experienced a new training approach on marketing from an expert who comes from the other side of the world, Canada.

"We are very grateful to be part of this endeavor," says Celsa Tercero, chairperson of the Bayanihan MPC,



"particularly on the consultant's on-site visit to provide inputs on how to make a good marketing plan and where he briefed the board members of the value of the plan."

The CESO visit was an eye-opener for the small business group as they realized that local products has a place in many parts of the world. Jean-Pierre Rodrigue, CESO volunteer adviser and consultant, has become an inspiration to the participants who were encouraged to share and get involved in the crafting of business plan.





## L A G U N A

## Expanding partnerships in business

By international standards, the Philippines is still “poor” and may need help in certain areas for development. This is where CESO comes in – linking with the DTI for a five-year plan of cooperation in providing technical and advisory assistance to MSMEs.

In the third quarter of 2015, CESO lead volunteer adviser Bruce McPherson visited representative MSMEs in CALABARZON to assess its current needs and challenges and to look into where CESO and the DTI could assist. By identifying the needs of clients, McPherson would be able to design services around the specific skills and knowledge needed for successful operation. Like any collaborative projects, the Canadian adviser would be able to create a work plan that is comprehensive and effective.

In Laguna, he conferred with Marinas Technologies, Inc.; Sarilikha Handicrafts, *Rolyolikha at iba pa* Handicrafts; the Laguna Water Hyacinth Producers’ Association; and the Association of Laguna Food Processors, Inc. to get a fairly good look at the real situation facing these MSMEs.

“We want to know what specific type of business assistance you need. We are looking where we can support you. We’ve had success stories we hope to replicate,” Bruce would say at these conferences. The needs could be one or more of the challenges confronting MSMEs like training, strategic planning, production and operations, finance, strategic planning or a combination of these. Knowing the specific needs is crucial since it is from these that Bruce McPherson will be able to make a comprehensive plan. CESO, together with the DTI, was able to make an assessment and a five-year action plan. One of the basic needs embedded in the plan was the conduct of training for the MSMEs that was held in the fourth quarter in 2015. With the collaborative efforts of the CESO, DTI, and the targeted beneficiaries, the succeeding years are foreseen to increase the competitiveness of MSMEs and their expansion.







## QUEZON

## Co-operation is the key



CESO volunteer adviser Gerry O'Connor is one great consultant because not only is he knowledgeable in the business field but he also impresses clients by empathizing with them. The engagement with one or two SSF beneficiaries in the initial phase of CESO consultation with the DTI beneficiaries resulted to easy camaraderie with managers. He already knew about the company within five minutes.

Gerry saw that the Filipinos could operate their business without plans at all but they are profitable. Succession is also an issue because if the person with the grandiose plan in his mind dies, the plan dies with him.

While he worked with the cooperators, independently, he saw the need to engage the support of Filipino talents in the academe, chamber, and other consultants too.

Are there other concerned individuals that could implement

his recommendations? DTI has the talent but can they focus their energies on the SSF cooperators? These were questions at the exit meeting that raised a serious concern because he wanted a group that could pick-up the pieces from where he left off.

Addressing the predicament of the Canadian consultant, the DTI thus invited big universities, chamber of commerce, business professionals, business groups, and independent consultants.

In the presence of SSF cooperators and other stakeholders, volunteer adviser Gerry O'Connor presented his findings and recommendations. The Business Advisory Consulting Services (BACS) showed promise because of the enormous contribution from the deans, the university president, the independent consultants, and chamber members. The Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants or PICPA has chapters

in every municipality and they can help with the financial aspect of the business. Gerry made only one request, to make the system very simple and practical.

The Canadian consultant will be back in early 2016 to continue sharing his expertise in the field of business. He will help the MSME community achieve a mindset that will propel their participation in the international area. He will review the business system that BACS will introduce to MSMEs to ascertain its simplicity and practicability.

DTI's next move is to organize the BACS, conduct brainstorming about BACS's role in assisting MSMEs, particularly the SSF cooperators that were assessed by the CESO adviser. In the final analysis, the Canadian volunteer adviser assisted the business cooperators to identify the weak spots but the good news is, there are Filipino experts that are willing to help.





## DTI extends partnership with CESO

As part of this continuous collaboration, the Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development (DFATD) of the Canadian government has approved the proposal of CESO to operate in the Philippines for another five years (2015-2020). As an initial activity, a memorandum of understanding was signed in May 2015 which specifies the Partnership Planning Mission wherein the CESO volunteers will work with DTI. The extension highlights a five-year partnership action plan through the strategy called STRIVE or “Strengthening capacity through Innovation and Volunteer Expertise.”

As a follow through, a Partnership Action Planning workshop was conducted in August 2015 with a purpose to draft a five-year plan specifically to identify the needs of SMEs and prepare a strategic assistance to address such needs.

“It is very timely to renew our partnership with CESO,” said DTI Director Marilou Q. Toledo as she underscored the strengthened collaboration between Canada and the Philippines as the latter enters the “sweet spot” demography. Bruce McPherson was quick to comment on how he is impressed with “the scope of DTI’s work and its relationship with CESO.”

During the workshop, the provincial offices gave importance on assisting the Shared Service Facilities cooperators in their overall operation. Aside from this, there are 12 other technical assistance and consultancy services lined up until 2020 including the “South-North” assignment to explore market opportunities in Canada for products of SMEs in Region IV-A.

The first CESO assignment under the extended partnership is scheduled from mid-October to early December 2015, to focus on business diagnostics and assistance in the audit/assessment of business operations of SSF cooperators.





## GREAT Women 2 Project

*Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women of GREAT Women 2 Project is a 6-year (2014-2020) \$6 million bilateral partnership with the government of Canada. The project will continue the previous GREAT Women Project that aimed to promote and support a gender responsive enabling environment for the economic empowerment of women particularly those in working in microenterprises.*

*The new project will merge the efforts of various government agencies (DTI, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, and the Philippine Commission on Women) and will target women microentrepreneurs in 6 industry clusters (cacao, coco coir, coffee, rubber, processed fruits and nuts, and wearables and homestyles).*





## Q U E Z O N

The **GREAT Women** in Quezon

**Y**ou may know Aling Flora who had been selling *chichiria* by the gate of your school from way back when. Or Lola Bening who wakes up early in the morning day in and day out to tend to her small *sari-sari* store. Or perhaps you are friends with Tania, the person with disability who gives manicures and pedicures on-call in the neighborhood. Many more women are engaged in micro enterprises that help their families live daily with dignity with the little they earn daily. These women who have meager resources, have little education, or have no other skill to improve their situation in life feel hopeless and forgotten although many may still feel hopeful that change or help will come.

Unknown to them, they can improve their lot with help or push from the government. Five years ago, in 2010, a project that bode well for them was started. Called GREAT Women, its mission is to support an environment that will push for women's economic empowerment. It is a combination of policies, programs, institutional mechanisms and similar measures that promote and facilitate the growth of women's livelihood activities and microenterprises to level up to small and medium industries. Not only is its goal to

help women entrepreneurs attain a higher level of economic freedom, but also aims to create more, better, and decent jobs for both men and women.

There is a lot to be thankful for, for these women in the towns of Lucban, Real, Infanta, and Candelaria in Quezon for in the five years since it was launched, women entrepreneurs engaged in food processing have greatly benefited from the GREAT Women project. Help came in the form of training, marketing, product development, and enhancement of their skills through the DTI. The project is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency or CIDA and executed by the Philippine Commission on Women.

With the implementation of the GREAT Women project, DTI has enabled women microentrepreneurs to use different available services. It linked them to government programs, access to equipment and common service facility, business planning consultation, participation in trade fairs, to nutritional analysis, barcode registration, and marketing support. What a long way to go from that stagnant site by the school, the *sari sari* store, or cleaning toes and nails.



# BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATION SYSTEM

Registering business names ensures that the operating businesses are registered legally and avoids duplication of business names. The new business registration processes uses the state-of-the-art system where an applicant is issued a DTI certificate in 15 minutes or less. Business registration protects consumers with the regulated use of names in business transactions.

For the year 2015, 65,642 business name applications were approved, 53,476 of which are new applications.





## **Government service in 15 minutes**

Way back, applying for a business name needed carbon papers for the tedious duplication process in addition to the time-consuming transmission or carrying of these papers to the DTI head office for verification.

With the new system in business name registration, a client with properly filled up forms and required documents can bring home his/her Business Name Certificate in 15 minutes. On-line applications also allow clients to apply without going to a DTI office. In CALABARZON, there are DTI offices that bring the service close to the people through business name registration caravan in different localities.

This new techno-modality is a great example of how using on-line methods can boost the efficiency of government services.

Liwayway Delos Reyes of Batangas, Francis Gavino of Cavite, and Lawrence Salazar of Laguna shared the same experience at the DTI CALABARZON office. "What a big change in the system of securing business name! In the past, it took three days to obtain our certificate, now, we don't even have to leave the building and no more long wait. Only a few minutes is needed and you can get your certificate," Ms. Delos Reyes said.

Mr. Gavino noted, "It's my first time to apply for a business name at DTI and I never expected to have a smooth processing. Finished my papers in 10 minutes. Keep it up!"

Mr. Salazar also commented that his registration only took few minutes.

Meanwhile, John Philip Salvan of Quezon Province commended the frontline service providers, he noted, "Staff are very accommodating. They are knowledgeable and professional. Best public service and place, so far."

Noel Mesoza of Paete, Laguna and Ma-Ann Joy Castro of Taytay, Rizal could not help but compare DTI services to others. Ms. Mesoza hoped that, "*Sana ganito lahat ang serbisyo ng mga government agencies sa Pilipinas. Mabilis ang proseso.*" ("I hope that the service is like this in all Philippine government agencies. The process is quick.") "Great Job. Hope other government offices will be like you," Ms. Castro commented.



## CSC awards the Citizen Satisfaction Seal of Excellence to DTI CALABARZON



Frontline services are government mechanisms to reduce red tape and exhibit customer-driven response to efficiently deliver public service. Frontline services influence the public's perception of government services. These services represent the organization to its customers, the public.

Anchored on Republic Act No. 9485 or the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) of 2007, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) devised the Report Card Survey to get feedback on offices' compliance to the Citizen's Charter provision. The survey also obtains information of hidden charges incurred by clients to access frontline services that may include but is not limited to bribes and payment of fixers.

Among the government offices nationwide that were covered by the ARTA's Report Card Survey was DTI CALABARZON through its arm, the National Economic Research and Business Assistance Center or NERBAC which handles business name

registration, knowledge management, and investment promotion. Averaging a 93.43 per cent score, the DTI CALABARZON-NERBAC was awarded the Citizen Satisfaction Seal of Excellence Award on March 6, 2013. The award was presented by CSC Chairman Francisco T. Duque and DTI Undersecretary Zenaida C. Maglaya along with a PHP 75,000 cash reward in a ceremony at the DTI main office in Makati.

The five major areas covered by the survey were compliance with ARTA provisions, frontline service provider, service quality, physical working condition, and clients' level of satisfaction. The Report Card's ratings of services are categorized into 90-100 as excellent, 80-89 as good, 70-79 as acceptable, and 0-69 as failed.

Offices that failed to obtain a passing score underwent the Service Delivery Excellence program and were subjected to another survey and evaluation by the CSC.





## B A T A N G A S

# Your business name is our business



What's in a name? Years ago, two international brand names sued what they considered an infringement on their trademarks. Hamburger giant, McDonald's, sued a local business that called itself Mang Donald that used on its billboards the same fonts and color scheme as that of McDonald's. Sony, the electronic giant also used legal means for a Filipina businesswoman to cease and desist using the Sony trademark with the same font and color in her business outlet. Such is the proprietary attitude of businesses built on the name recall of their brand names. And they have every right to be possessive of their business names. For trademarks evoke quality, professionalism, integrity – think Jollibee, Rustan's, Unilever, Del Monte, San Miguel.

Thinking of putting up a business? Register your business name with the DTI. Today, you can check online if another business has the same name you are thinking of. Your business name becomes an intangible asset or may become synonymous to quality, professionalism, and integrity. It also carries with it the customers who remain loyal to your name, saving millions of pesos in advertisement.

Business name registration is one of the primary services of the DTI, now an on-line, hassle-free, and convenient process anyone can do without leaving home. For those who choose



to go to a DTI office, the entrepreneur can get their business name certificates that legalize the identity of their enterprise in a matter of 15 minutes. Gone are the days where a business name registration takes days or even weeks.

The business name registration system is a good example of how using on-line methods can boost efficiency of government service taking away the dread of waiting while making it easier to start and do business.

Sitting in front of the business name processor, Liwayway Delos Reyes says, "What a big change in the system of securing business name. A few minutes is all you need and you take home with you your certificate."



## L A G U N A

# Advocating for business name registration



Every business establishment worth its salt should be proud of its chosen business name since it is that **name** that clients identify business for its good service, good products, or good food. Whether by word of mouth, by tri-media, social media, or whatever form of advertisement is used, this spreads the good news about your establishment. So it is important that the owner must choose a name apropos to what it sells.

The business name registration system is a must for several reasons. First, the system discloses to the buying public who owns the business and the real identity of those running the business. This way, the public is warned if the business has ever engaged in anomalous transactions. Second, the name registration prevents confusion of establishments having the exact same name and avoids misleading the people into thinking that the two establishments are run by the same set of owners. How would you feel if, after so

many years, you have established your business through hard work and persistence, then here comes the new kid on the block with the same name as your business? Not only does it confuse the customers, it also gives undue advantage to the new establishment without even lifting a finger. Third, the certificate of business name registration is issued only on successful compliance of the requirements. This certificate will be valid for five years from date of issuance.

DTI Laguna stepped up its advocacy and campaign for business registration by conducting a series of Business Name Caravan in different municipalities like Sta. Rosa, San Pedro, Nagcarlan, Bay, and Liliw. The caravan, a mobile team of DTI staff, brings the services to where the registrants are to fill the basic information needs about business registration process and to assist them in other DTI services.





# BPLS

## Business Permit and Licensing System

The BPLS streamlines processes to make business start-up easier. The system reconstructs current business permits and licensing systems of LGUs for the purpose of simplifying and making them more efficient by:

- Adopting a unified form
- Reducing the number of steps
- Reducing processing time
- Reducing the number of signatories



## Implementating BPLS in the CALABARZON Region

**A**mong the DTI's various transparency and governance initiatives is the nationwide streamlining of the Business Permit and Licensing System in partnership with the Department of Interior and Local Government.

In 2015, in the CALABARZON Region, 123 LGUs or 87 per cent of the total 142, had streamlined their system as a result of the joint monitoring and evaluation by the DTI and DILG.

A monitoring approach adopted is the BPLS customer experience survey. This is a nationwide online survey of businesspersons who were asked to comment on their business renewal experiences to determine the satisfaction level and assess the performance of the LGUs on mayor's permit renewal. The survey is usually administered annually from the months of January and February and results are posted at DTI's National Competitiveness Council (NCC) website at <http://www.competitive.org.ph/>. Out of the 3,515 respondents nationwide, 203 were from CALABARZON. The 2015 BPLS customer experience survey result had 89 percent overall compliance rates.

Another strategy is the academe's field monitoring and evaluation conducted among clients belonging to LGUs that have reported as having streamlined the system. The field visits validate reports submitted by the LGUs as well as customer satisfaction surveys conducted in the area. The monitoring team interviews LGU officials in charge of the process and businesspersons who have either renewed or filed for new business permits. The DTI tapped the assistance of Batangas State University for this strategic monitoring project. The survey covered 15 LGUs across five provinces in the region: Batangas – Lipa City, Rosario, Bauan; Cavite – Tanza, Kawit, Imus; Laguna – Alaminos, San Pablo City, Calauan; Rizal – Angono, Taytay, Rodriguez; Quezon – Padre Burgos, Agdangan, Unisan. In each of these LGUs, 20 respondents were interviewed; 10 who applied for new business permits, and the other 10 who renewed business permits. Most of the LGUs have a moderate to average level of customer satisfaction index in terms of services offered in business permit application or renewal.

Those LGUs that had not complied to the standard number of steps and processing time may be mended through a more visible and active information dissemination campaign and a vigilant inspection and monitoring system by concerned agencies.





## B A T A N G A S

# Quick business registration called the BOSS

Putting up a business requires true grit and stamina for it does not only entail the planning and processes of setting up an enterprise but will need expenses for a host of paperwork too. Whether you have a small or big business, the needs are the same, it only becomes complex as it expands. All enterprises must be registered for it to be recognized by government as a legal entity. Being registered means that you and your clients are protected - you, from low life scammers who will milk your business dry once they learn you are not legit; your clients, from illegal businesses that may not offer the right services or products as required by law.

In the past, entrepreneurs were apprehensive in registering because of the many steps involved. Different LGUs had different forms for filling up in addition to the long waiting period. Because of the onerous system, the government streamlined business registration called, aptly, BOSS or Business One Stop Shop, where business permits are processed quickly. In Batangas City, the goal is to provide total quality service in a professional manner and business-friendly environment to people seeking permits. Through this system, the Business Permit and Licensing Office or the BPLO provides clients with a quick and computerized processing that shortcuts application in two steps from the 22 steps of yesteryears. In addition to the stress-free process, the fast system leads to more business taxes, attracts more investments, and creates a healthier government-entrepreneur relationship.

Based on an interview by *The Filipino Connection*, the improved system delighted many registrants and Marife Boja, a fish seller, has this to say, “*Mas maganda at mas mabilis po ngayon kaysa dati.*” (It’s much better and faster now compared before.)



# CONSUMER PROTECTION

The Consumer Act of the Philippines states that it is the policy of the state to protect the interest of the consumer. DTI's success is anchored not only on global competitiveness, but also on social responsibility and consumer welfare as its platform. In fact, one of the agency's missions revolves around consumer empowerment and increasing the consumers' level of awareness on their rights and responsibilities. The DTI's program to protect consumers involves the following;

- Consumer Welfare Desk
- Bagwis Program
- Timbangan ng Bayan
- Accreditation of Service Repair Shops
- Alternative Dispute Resolution

DTI IV-A, as part of its consumer education programs, has been conducting the Tanghalang Pangmamimili since 2010. The DTI-Batangas spearheaded this program of having high schools present and perform consumer laws in creative and entertaining ways.





## B A T A N G A S

## Ensuring consumer safety A never-ending responsibility

**H**ow often have we heard of fires caused by substandard electrical products? Or of people who were hospitalized due to food poisoning? Or of faulty brakes that caused the untimely deaths or disability of unsuspecting passengers?

Safeguarding the protection and rights of consumers all over the world are the eight basic consumer rights spelled out by the United Nations. On top of the list is the right to safety or the right to be protected against the marketing of goods or services that are hazardous to health and limb. In addition, the Consumer Act of the Philippines ensures that consumers are protected from unscrupulous business practices and to unfair and unconscionable acts and practices.

In Batangas, part of the aggressive campaign of the DTI, in partnership with industry associations and the LGU, is the strict implementation of the product standards law. One measure is the deployment of teams who monitor if products bear the required labels and markings in accordance with the Consumer Act and the Price Act. The team also monitors compliance with the safety



and quality requirements of the Philippine National Standard. Products that do not bear the PS/ICC Quality and Safety mark are confiscated to prevent the proliferation of inferior and unsafe goods. Offenders are fined or even lose their license to sell.

The strict implementation of fair trade laws may seem like a band aid solution when you consider what the consumers and the DTI are up against. The huge amount of imported and local products and services are getting harder to monitor. With

the current demand for products and services, the DTI adopted innovative ways in combating the perpetrators by empowering consumers by educating them, by increasing their awareness and vigilance, by letting them know that as buyers, they have rights and responsibilities. On the other hand, DTI also informs businesses of applicable trade laws and updates manufacturers, importers, distributors, and retailers of their responsibilities and liabilities.







## CONSUMER PROTECTION



From 2010 to 2015, more than a thousand business establishments - hardware and grocery stores, wet markets - in Batangas were monitored on their compliance to fair trade laws. Eight establishments were found selling products without the required Philippine Standard or Import Commodity Clearance and therefore uncertified. These unsafe products were confiscated and properly disposed off. Consequently, administrative charges were filed against these erring stores for violating the Product Safety Certification Scheme of the DTI. Appropriate fines were also imposed.

According to Atty. Victorio Mario A. Dimagiba, Undersecretary of the Consumer Protection Group of the DTI, "Product safety has always been and will always be a priority of the DTI."







## Instilling consumer rights the unconventional way



With the new and constantly evolving technological tools, who would have thought that *dulaan* (theatrical play) would still be an effective medium for social awareness and entertainment?

Now on its 14th season, the *Tanghalan ng Batangueñong Mamimili* is traditionally the culminating activity for the celebration of the Consumer Welfare Month in Batangas held in October. The celebration disseminates consumer information to both public and private sectors, including media on subjects impacting consumers.

The Jollibee Foods Corporation has been DTI-Batangas' primary partner since the first season. As part of the food chain's corporate social responsibility, it also sponsors the regional level contest vied by the provinces. Similarly, DTI-Batangas' media partner, ABS-CBN Southern Tagalog contributes to the exponential growth of the consumer welfare index in the province through its media coverage of consumer-related activities including the *Tanghalan*.

In 2014, the provincial contest was successfully held at The Events Center, SM City Batangas with the theme, "*Sapat na Impormasyon: Susi sa Wastong Paggamit ng Enerhiya*" won by the Batangas National High School. The group took home a trophy, cash prize of PHP10,000 and Jollibee gift certificates and represented the province at the regional contest.

In 2015, the consumer welfare month celebration theme was, "Consumer Protection in the ASEAN Economic Community," aligned with the regional call for cooperation on enhancing consumer protection in the Southeast Asian region relative to the integration of ASEAN markets. Batangas State University won the province's *Tanghalan* trophy.

The *Tanghalan's* core message was summed up by the late DTI Provincial Director Ruel Gonzales, "The best protected consumers are the well informed consumers. Always be vigilant. *Maging mapanuri para hindi kayo maloko.*" (Let us all be vigilant for our protection.)



# Tanghalang Pangmamimili:

## EMPOWERING THE CONSUMERS THROUGH THEATRE



Different strokes for different folks. Reaching the younger audience is the *Tanghalang Pangmamimili*, or theater for the consumers. The *Tanghalan* is a light play or skit performed by high school students combining pantomime, dialogue, dance, and song incorporating messages on consumer rights and responsibilities. Soft performed presentations, instead of lectures, appeal to all ages, is easily understood, and mentally retained as useful information. Presentations are usually done at a mall event where people gather to watch and learn.

*Tanghalan* is open for all theater groups or drama clubs of public and private schools in the region. The activity gives young people the opportunity to showcase their artistry and advocate for consumer protection. This theater media advocacy originated in DTI Batangas in 1998, headed by the late Provincial Director Ruel Gonzales, and was then called the “*Dulaang Pangmamimili sa Batangas*.”

Owing to its unparalleled success as a campaign vehicle for consumer education in Batangas, it was replicated in other provinces until it became a regional event where the provincial winners perform and compete for the regional win. The team who performed best in acting out scenarios revolving around a theme and is most effective in imparting the messages of the importance of consumerism was declared champion.

For its fourth season in 2015, the Tanghalan's regional event's was “Consumer Protection in the ASEAN Economic Community” parallel to the celebration of the consumer welfare month. This was also aligned with the regional call for cooperation on enhancing consumer protection in the Southeast Asian region relative to the integration of ASEAN markets. Regional winners were the Sariaya Institute Inc. (Quezon) - Champion; Batangas State University (Batangas) - 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up; Munting Ilog National High School (Cavite) - 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner Up; Antipolo National High School (Rizal) - 3<sup>rd</sup> Runner Up and Pedro Guevarra Memorial National High School (Laguna)- 4<sup>th</sup> Runner Up.





## C A V I T E

# Advocating for consumer rights



Well-informed, forewarned, and empowered consumers are happy and satisfied consumers. This holds true whether they are buying from the sidewalk, *tiangge*, at eBay, in a mall, or from an airline counter. A well-informed and alert public keeps at arm's length would-be cheaters and unscrupulous businessmen. The consumer may be rich or poor, young or old, a student or literacy-challenged, the objective of DTI-Cavite is precisely to prevent violation of every consumer's rights.

Although there is hardly any report of rampant cheating in the province of Cavite, DTI decided to conduct training and seminars as part of consumer empowerment through information dissemination



and advocacy campaign. Consumer advocacy covers a whole gamut of subjects: fair trade laws, basic consumer rights and consumer responsibilities, and other customer-related matters. These training and seminars totaling 78, had been

held in schools, malls, and other establishments in the province since 2013. The audience included consumers, the youth, and even the retailers themselves.

Meanwhile, DTI-Cavite's consumer advocacy brought them to







these various areas: The District, Imus; Anuling National High School, Mendez; Bagong Buhay Elementary School, Bulihan, Silang; The District, Dasmariñas; Bagong Pook Elementary School, Trece Martires City; Maragondon National High School, Maragondon; Bacoar Private Drugstore Owners Assn, Bacoar; Tinabunan Elementary School, Imus; Palico Elementary School, Imus and Munting Ilog National High School, Silang all in Cavite; Cavite State University, Indang, Cavite, LGUs – Imus and Trece Martires City. Consumer Advocacy was also conducted at public markets in Cavite where *Timbangan ng Bayan* were distributed.

During a seminar held at the Munting Ilog National High School, on 9 March 2015, a student said: “The seminar was very informative and it gives us the needed information about our rights and responsibilities. DTI should conduct this in every barangay. It helps people to become vigilant consumers.”



## Tamang Timbang, Tamang Presyo



When people are in a hurry and looking for a bargain, they tend to buy from sidewalk vendors or from a cart. Most often, these sellers are itinerant vendors and have no fixed place where the buyer can return to complain. Most of the time, cheating using defective scales happens here.

DTI addressed this issue by installing weighing scales enclosed in steel bars and hanged in strategic locations within the market areas. Wary buyers may check if the goods they bought are weight-accurate by using DTI provided scales.

In April 2015, the provincial office of the DTI Cavite distributed 52 calibrated-analog weighing scales in 23 LGUs through its program, *Timbangan ng Bayan*. The cities of Bacoar, Imus, and Dasmariñas, identified as major trading centers, got four each while the rest of the 20 LGUs received two each. These served as checks to tinkered and defective scales.

An agreement between the DTI and the LGU specifies that DTI supply the calibrated scales while the LGUs will take care of the installation, regular calibration, and maintenance. These scales are expected to halt the deception of the public of the right value, the right weight for their money's worth. In November, such types of weighing scales were replaced with digital ones. Consumers in these places are now confident that they got what they paid for.





## L A G U N A

# The pride of the Bagwis Seal



There are loyalty cards and rewards for consumers who patronize business establishments. There is also a Bagwis Seal of Excellence for establishments that uphold the rights of consumers and practice responsible business ethics where consumers get value for their money. In these business establishments,

there are Consumer Welfare Desks or recognized consumer welfare counters that provide information to consumers serving as a mechanism for speedy resolution of a complaint. The DTI created the Bagwis program that gives due recognition to these establishments.





## CONSUMER PROTECTION

Business establishments are aware that the Bagwis Seal of Excellence is a DTI stamp of approval. Hence, it is the business establishment that applies for the Bagwis Seal of Excellence and willingly submits to DTI scrutiny and hopefully bags the award. Applicants go through a thorough assessment procedure of the DTI which determines the awarding of gold, silver or bronze seals. The Bagwis Certification Committee on the provincial, regional, and national levels deliberate and evaluate all applicants to see if these passed the following criteria:

- Compliance to fair trade laws
- Sound customer relations
- Good store management/operations
- Good working relationship with government and participation in government national programs
- Alignment with five elements of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO 9001 14001)

Based on the above criteria, DTI-Laguna awarded three branches of SM Supervalu in Laguna with the Bagwis Gold Seal of Excellence for operating on the highest level of business ethics and for upholding fair and honest marketplaces through self-regulation and service excellence. It also awarded nine establishments with the Bagwis Seal of Excellence in October 2014 in recognition of fair business practices.

DTI gave the Gold Seal of Excellence to four branches of Sanford Marketing Corporation (Savemore) and to Toyota Incorporated in San Pablo. It also awarded the Bronze Seal of Excellence to two branches of Bargain City also known as Budget Lane, and the Bronze Seal of Excellence to Sukiko Grocer.

When entrepreneurs put consumers as their priority in doing business, shopping everywhere will be a breeze.





## QUEZON

## MULTI SECTORS SUPPORT CONSUMER WELFARE MONTH IN QUEZON



Schools, senior citizens, business, and media joined the DTI in celebrating Consumer Welfare Month in Quezon that featured advocacy campaigns, contests, and radio programs. The theme for year 2015 was Consumer Protection in the ASEAN Economic Community.

Lectures on basic consumer rights and responsibilities, product standards, and fair trade laws were held in private schools such as Calayan Educational Foundation, Lusacan National High School, Sariaya Institute, Maryhill College, and Sacred Heart College.

On top of the regular radio slots at Radyo ng Bayan every Monday afternoon, media interviews with DTI by media



personalities were aired in Majic FM, Radio City, DWLC, and Bay Radio.

The DTI, with its partner of 15 years, McDonalds-Quezon Avenue for 15 years, held its annual on-the-spot poster-making contest. This year, 14 students from both public and private schools participated. Winners are: First Place – Aaron Milca Jeus L. Dudas from Lucena City National High School – Mayao Parada

Extension; Second Place – Xena Mariz B. Fernandez from Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation; and Third Place – Iverson G. de los Santos from International School for Better Beginnings.

Co-sponsored by Jollibee Food Corporation, the DTI's *Tanghalang Pangmamimili* provincial level contest was held at The Event Center, SM City-Lucena wherein eight participating schools vied for the championship. Winners are: Champion – Sariaya Institute; First Runner-up – Sacred Heart College; and Second Runner-up – International Schools for Better Beginnings. Sariaya Institute joined the regional competition conducted at SM City-Dasmariñas, Cavite and won the regional crown.





# Transforming Western-style customer service

Clients will love the customer service of Western Marketing Inc. particularly at their branch at Sta Lucia East Grand Mall. At the store's Consumer Welfare Desk, the mood is upbeat and complaints are handled swiftly and with a smile.

But this wasn't the case several years ago. Then, the scenario was frustratingly slow, even dismissive. Whenever a customer would complain about a product, the policy of Western was to point the sole responsibility to the manufacturer. Or, when called on by the DTI to attend a mediation session, Western would not send a representative over, intent as they were on just "selling, selling, selling," as revealed by James Daniel Ravello, Western Marketing's human resource manager. To them, consumer welfare meant dealing with disgruntled costumers in their storage room amidst boxes of appliances, intimidating clients further. It also meant stuffing their written complaints in shoeboxes, presumably to be left to dust and oblivion.

Western had always been passing the buck to the manufacturers. But DTI-Rizal was resolute that such practice was anathema to doing business.



Western must learn a thing or two on how to do business effectively in particular, in dealing with customers. After a number of persuasive calls, Western attended a meeting where two agreements were reached: first, that Western Marketing attend mediation where the complaining customer, a Western representative, and a DTI Consumer Protection Division representative should be present; and second, that DTI-Rizal should conduct a seminar on the provisions of the Consumer Act of the Philippines and on Handling Complaints that must be attended by the store's high-level executives, office managers, legal team, and branch managers. Unbeknownst to many, this seminar will be a defining moment for all involved. As dealers, they are "participants in resolutions" and that mediation is not a "blaming game."

Although the seminar was an eye-opener, it was also a painful

one. "It seemed that we were encountering complaints left and right," lamented Ravello. Mediation ate into his work and was so time-consuming when these were arranged far from their place of work. It also seemed to be taking forever when adjudication is set in yet another place. Said the manager of Western, "Sometimes I had to leave very early to attend a nine o'clock in the morning mediation in Antipolo (Rizal)...*Tapos pag di nagkaayos, doon ang* adjudication sa Calamba, Laguna (then when we did not reach an agreement, the adjudication is scheduled in Calamba, Laguna)! Such birthing pains were to be expected.

Today, the transformation is still ongoing. Western rep sits down with their clients and discusses transactions and complaints and a representative handles sales concerns. Now, tracking complaints is a breeze with numbered forms and organized filing. A separate office for improving procedures had also been created. As Ravello puts it, "We are not just improving ourselves, we are improving the system."

At Western Marketing, efficient customer service is definitely here to stay.





## R I Z A L

# Weighing the benefits of the **Timbangan**ngBayan

Goods have gone a long way from being sold by the *tumpok* (heap), *tingi* (petty retail), or by the *tabo* (dipper). Today, goods are sold in accordance to the worldwide metric system.

Shoppers who go to big stores or supermarkets need not worry of defective scales or being shortchanged, they know that they are getting their money's worth since these establishments now use the metric method and are regularly monitored by the DTI. But thousands of customers who buy from the local markets suffer the anxiety of not getting their money's worth for although many vendors use weighing scales, most scales have not been calibrated by the LGUs.

Such was the quandary of consumers in Antipolo City. "For the longest time, the consumers' welfare have not been attended to.... there were weighing scales, but these were defective," divulged Amalia A. Engalla, officer-in-charge of the City Mall of Antipolo. The nomenclature is deceiving, despite it being a "mall,"

the market within still employs disadvantageous relationship with its clients. The result is a suspicious clientele who are always on their guard on getting value for their peso.

The Government had to approach the issue holistically - to take into consideration the welfare of the consumers and to address the attitude of the vendors in dealing with clients. DTI-Rizal packaged for those concerned a seminar that covered the Consumer Act of the Philippines, Understanding the Suggested Retail Price, and the Price Act.

The seminar not only clarified the rights of the consumers, one of which was to make available to them basic and prime commodities at affordable prices and of good quality. It also defined the role and responsibilities of the vendors and the sanctions that will be imposed from any fair trade deviation. Furthermore, consumers were urged to put up a *Consumer Welfare Kiosk* where complaints and grievances of buyers could be taken up and acted on. For good measure, DTI

gave three weighing scales to the city mall placed strategically where people can check if the weight of their goods are correct.

Surprisingly, the consumers and vendors took to heart the philosophy of consumerism. It seems that all are toeing the line with regards to correct metric measurement. As Myrna S. Egloso, a regular buyer and President of the city mall's Fish Stallholders Association Inc., attest, "We are happy with the *Timbangan ng Bayan* (weighing scale of the people), not only do buyers know that they getting their money's worth, it also validates the honesty of our vendors." Further, when consumers see the DTI logo affixed to the containers of the scales, buyers are assured that DTI monitors the area."

The level of consumer welfare advocacy in City Mall of Antipolo is a model to be emulated. So dedicated are the market officers that they even have three shifts to man the kiosk, from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m. everyday - Monday through Sunday - to attend

to consumer concerns. "Consumers really look forward to using the *Timbangan ng Bayan*," says Justin Batac, Consumer Welfare Officer whose shift starts on the earliest shift. The market head use as bases the complaints for formulating new policies and further improvement. The DTI Price List is placed right above the kiosk while two weighing scales are situated near each other and when a discrepancy is noted, this could immediately be reported and acted on.

Today, the City Mall of Antipolo boasts of many developments and one of them is the drastic plunge of complaints basically attributed to competent and trained employees. Although there's still room for improvement, OIC Engalla shares the communal dream of the City Mall of Antipolo, "To be efficient not just externally but also internally through shared responsibility, good governance, and a consumer welfare mechanism that really works."



# DTI stops proliferation of inferior construction materials to typhoon-hit areas

**D**o you remember the multi-storey building in Binondo that crashed to the ground? Have you read about firewalls that did not serve its purpose and fell on unsuspecting passers-by? And when you buy steel bars from the local hardware, are you sure that these were not made from inferior materials?

Under the Consumer Act of the Philippines, it falls on the DTI to protect consumers from unscrupulous merchants who pass on poor quality products to consumers. It may be food, service, products, furniture, materials and such that affect the security and health of the people.

Sometime in June 2015, acting on a call from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) Region IV-A, a DTI enforcement team was mobilized to back up the CIDG in serving a search warrant for steel products - angle bars and rolled bars of various sizes suspected to be uncertified or substandard - to a big time steel trader.

The joint team confiscated and recovered various steel products valued at PHP42 million confirmed uncertified by the DTI team and consequently hauled under DTI's custody.

The CIDG filed criminal cases against 11 of the perpetrators including the incorporators of said steel trading company in violation of the Consumer Act of the Philippines while separate administrative charges were filed by DTI against the steel trader.

Unsuspecting buyers are often unaware that construction materials have been faked, deliberately diluted in terms of incorporating other materials into steel products, roofing materials, paints, and others. It results to poor quality, poor construction, and short life span.

A devious scheme had been uncovered in areas that had been hit by natural disasters, and therefore wanting in construction materials. Here, heartless businessmen would channel substandard materials to people who are in dire need to rebuild their homes. After the devastating Yolanda typhoon that hit the Visayas area, it was noticed that there was a proliferation of substandard construction materials. Under the orders of the then rehabilitation czar, Panfilo Lacson, DTI Secretary Gregory Domingo conducted an investigation of materials shipped to Yolanda-hit areas.

It was confirmed that the materials were not only of poor quality but were even overpriced. It was the DTI that validated that indeed, the materials were uncertified and substandard.

A week before this happened, the CIDG also searched a warehouse in a Region IV-A province and this also yielded illegal materials worth PHP40 million. Furthermore, the police confirmed that the two warehouses, earlier raided by the police, were owned by the same people.





# MSME Congress



(From L to R) Batangas Vice-Governor Jose Antonio Leviste II, Senator Paolo Benigno Aquino IV, Oryspa owner Sherill Quintana, and Area Vice President for PCCI South Luzon Eduardo Nicholas III.

All over the country, micro, small, and medium businesses dot the landscape. Enterprising Filipinos have invested time, effort and money on these enterprises as a source of income and hoping too, to grow with the country as well. The government, for its part, considers the development of SMEs as a critical component that will sustain the long-term growth of the country hence DTI has come up with programs like the SSFs, the SMERA, and other programs that aim to help them. There is also the plan to simplify trade rules to assist MSMEs benefit in global trade.

Since MSMEs account for 96 percent of all enterprises, employ 50 to 85 percent of the labor force, and contribute 30 to

53 percent of the country's gross domestic product, these had been considered the backbone of economic development.

From 2012 to 2014, the Regional Development Council held a series of conferences to plan and help shape the destiny of MSMEs in the country.

The Congress in 2012 brought together members and delegates of different organizations to discuss and act on some issues and passed a resolution creating the CALABARZON Regional Micro Small and Medium Development (RMSMED) Council, and another that endorsed 17 industry clusters identified by the Department of Trade and Industry as priority sectors for industry clustering in CALABARZON.

On 28 September 2012, the Council formed the Interim Executive Committee with Cavite Governor Victor Remulla as the chair and PCCI regional governor Teresita Leabres, the co-chair.

As the country revs up for 2015 on the ASEAN integration, Cavite hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> CALABARZON Regional SMED Council Conference in 2013 with the theme "Priming CALABARZON MSMEs for the ASEAN." In this Conference, the Resolution to draft the CALABARZON Regional MSMEs Development Plan 2014-2016 was passed.

In September 2014, the initial draft of the 2014 - 2016 CALABARZON Regional SMED Plan which was based on the outcome portfolios of Business





(From L to R) Laguna Provincial Director Susan R. Palo, Quezon OIC Provincial Director Julieta L. Tadiosa, OIC Assistant Regional Director Marcelina S. Alcantara, Regional Director Marilou Q. Toledo, Senator Paulo Benigno Aquino IV, Regional SMED Council Chairman Teresita M. Leabres, Rizal Provincial Director Mercedes A. Parreño, ROG Undersecretary Zenaída C. Maglaya, Cavite Provincial Director Noly D. Guevara.

Environment, Access to Finance, Access to Market, and Productivity and Efficiency was presented. It was during this meeting that the Promotion of Green Economic Development and the Value of Business Continuity Planning for SMEs under SMERA were decided to be mainstreamed into the plan.

In October 2014, the Council passed a resolution reorganizing itself into a full council. Also, the establishment of Negosyo Centers in all cities and municipalities, and the inclusion of ASEAN integration Enterprises were agreed to be integrated into the draft SMED Plan.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> CALABARZON Regional SMED Council, with the theme “Positioning Micro & Small Enterprise in the Global Trade Arena”, was then conducted on 29 June 2015 at the Batangas City Convention Center where the final version of the 2014-2016 CALABARZON Regional SMED Plan was presented to all stakeholders. Senator Paulo Benigno “Bam” A. Aquino IV, principal author of the “Go Negosyo Act”, was the keynote speaker.

The next regional conferences will be conducted in the following provinces: Rizal - 2016; Quezon - 2017; and Laguna - 2018.

Next-steps include focus on strengthening the Council; continual advocacy on the green economic development, business continuity and resiliency; performance of oversight functions on the Negosyo Centers; enhancement of policies and networking support to improve the competitiveness of SMEs, and continuous support for industry clustering through the value chain approach.



# Negosyo Center: The Ultimate MSME One-Stop-Shop



Enabling business and empowering consumers is the DTI's mantra. The Consumer Protection Division ensures that consumers get their money's worth. But what of the businesses?

Republic Act 10644, or the Go Negosyo Act, made sure that Negosyo Centers be established in all provinces, cities and municipalities to promote "ease of doing business and facilitate access to services for MSMEs within its jurisdiction." Each Negosyo Center assists entrepreneurs with their businesses, starting from business name registration, to business advisory services, and finally in providing training and information campaigns.

Ma. Cleofe Tabangin of Biñan had this to say about the Calamba Negosyo Center: "The service was excellent. It exceeded my expectations."

As of December 2015, CALABARZON has 12 Negosyo Centers in the following areas:

- Lucena City, Quezon (launched June 17, 2015)
- Batangas City, Batangas (launched June 29, 2015)
- Gumaca, Quezon (launched July 24, 2015)
- Los Baños, Laguna (launched September 14, 2015)
- Bacoar City, Cavite (launched October 13, 2015)
- Taytay, Rizal (launched November 15, 2015)
- Antipolo City, Rizal (launched November 18, 2015)
- Trece Martires City, Cavite (launched November 19, 2015)
- Lipa City, Batangas (launched November 23, 2015)
- Victoria, Laguna (launched November 24, 2015)
- Tanauan City, Batangas (launched November 26, 2015)
- Calamba City, Laguna (launched November 27, 2015)

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