

PRESS RELEASE

PDRF, USAID launch new project on business continuity in Laguna

JUNE 30, 2023, STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and in partnership with the Provincial Government of Laguna, recently launched the Area-Wide Business Continuity Management (AWBCM) for Key Industries and Lifeline Utilities Project that aims to make the business community resilient by developing a harmonized framework for the continuity of operations of different stakeholders.



Ceremonial signing with AWBCM partners

Standing (L-R): Veronica Gabaldon (PDRF), Guillermo Luz (PDRF), Rebekah Eubanks (USAID), Aldwin Cejo (Laguna PDRRMO), and Dr. Cynthia Mamon (LCCI)

Sitting (L-R): Rene Meily (PDRF), Atty. Dulce Rebanal (Provincial Government of Laguna), and Atty. Rose Lynn Coloma (LCCI)

One of the event's highlights was the Ceremonial Signing of the partnership among the Province of Laguna, the Laguna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), and PDRF to represent the government, lifeline utilities, and the private sector involved in the project. The signed Memorandum of Agreement reflects the coverage of partnership in Laguna towards continuous improvement of service delivery through interoperability among key stakeholders.

The province of Laguna in Region IV-A has been selected as the target pilot site for this project because of its several economic zones, ranging from industrial zones to technological parks. With its proximity to Taal Volcano and several active fault lines, these economic zones have high exposure to hazards that may affect the supply chain and employees.

The PDRF network is also present in the province with several Ayala properties and lifeline utilities such as Meralco, First Gen, Smart Communications, and Globe Telecom.

Traditionally, businesses and organizations focus on their individual BCM efforts. While this approach is essential, it often falls short when disasters strike on a larger scale, affecting an entire area or community. This is where AWBCM becomes a game-changer because it will focus on the Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice sector with the components of Capacity Building and Training and Policy and Practice.

Moreover, AWBCM will enable better risk assessment and mitigation strategies because it considers the interdependencies and interconnectedness among various businesses and sectors within an area. It will also promote effective planning among different organizations in Laguna, enhancing the ability of businesses to recover quickly after a disaster. Lastly, it will foster a culture of preparedness, equipping businesses and communities with tools and knowledge to move forward from disruptions.

"We must adopt a proactive and collective strategy to strengthen our resilience and minimize the impact of these inevitable disruptive events. That's why the Area-wide Business Continuity Management Program is so important. It aims to upgrade the preparedness of the key public and private industries and lifeline utilities, including economic zones, through the synergy of capacities," said PDRF President Butch Meily.



AWBCM partners and stakeholders

During the event, project partners and stakeholders expressed their support and commitment to the project.

USAID Philippines, Pacific Islands, and Mongolia Acting Mission Director Rebekah Eubanks graced the event and gave her remarks. "The establishment of a strategic and sustainable partnership between the public and private sectors through the creation of an area-wide business continuity management system is an exciting and essential step forward in ensuring a more harmonized and holistic approach to disaster management," Eubanks said.

In a Keynote message, Laguna Governor Ramil Hernandez, through his representative Provincial Administrator Atty. Dulce Rebanal, said that the Provincial Government of Laguna will continue to 'find a way forward and cooperate in order to build a sustainable and resilient future for generations to come.' "May this project launch be a start of a strong partnership between PDRF, USAID, the local government units, and the private sector," she added.

PDRF calls on its partners and stakeholders, especially those in Laguna, to support the project and address its current challenges, including resource limitations, varying levels of preparedness among organizations, and more effective coordination and collaboration mechanisms.

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About PHILIPPINE DISASTER RESILIENCE FOUNDATION

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) is the country's major private sector vehicle and coordinator for disaster resilience. As an alliance of businesses dedicated to building the disaster risk management capabilities of the private sector in the country, PDRF aims to contribute to the sustainable development and the general welfare of the Filipino people. For more information, visit www.pdrf.org.



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PDRF-IMU-PR-01-00