

Project Summary

Project Title	International benchmarking of food and water safety management systems in small enterprises and water utilities as study models for the Davao region, Philippines.
Main Activities	-Attendance to training in Lund, Sweden SIDA-sponsored International Training Programme on Sustainable Urban Water and Sanitation - Integrated Processes, October 12 to 30, 2009. -Conduct of round table discussions, meetings and visits to organisations and offices dealing with food safety, international standards for food exports and imports, and water supply and sanitation
Proponent	Department of Science and Technology Regional Office No. XI
Cooperating Agencies - Philippines	Consortium (LABCON) Davao Safety Team
Cooperating Agencies - Sweden	Lund University, Sweden
Cooperating Agencies – The Netherlands	Philippine Embassy in The Netherlands – Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC) Stichting ERCMOVE
Duration	5 to 30 October 2009 (Sweden) 31 October to 9 November 2009 (The Netherlands)

1. PROJECT TITLE: INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING OF FOOD AND WATER SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN SMALL ENTERPRISES AND WATER UTILITIES AS STUDY MODELS FOR THE DAVAO REGION	
2. PROPONENT: Department of Science and Technology Regional Office No. XI	
3. COOPERATING AGENCIES:	Southern Mindanao Analytical Laboratories
	Consortium (LABCON)
	Davao Food Safety Team (DFST)
4. DURATION:	October 5-9, 2009 (Sweden)
	October 31-November 11, 2009 (Netherlands)

5. BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Food safety is the assurance that food does not pose risk to human health. While there are government policies supporting food safety, MSMEs find it difficult to comply due to high cost of implementing food safety systems. However, food product quality had become a major criterion for market acceptability of the products, as assessed by the ASEAN Cooperation. The need to ensure food product safety has been imposed both by importers and exporters for protecting consumer safety.

The Department of Science and Technology is mandated to provide central direction, leadership and coordination of scientific and technological efforts and ensure that the results

there from are geared and utilized in areas of maximum economic and social benefits for the people. In the area of food safety, DOST assists in the development and implementation of food safety management systems in handling and processing of food to ensure its high quality and safety.

DOST had been sustaining relevant programs in support of the export industry of the country, through ISO 17025 & 9001 accreditation and upgrading of DOST Regional Laboratories and Research and Development Institutes. These programs aim to fully equip the DOST agencies for provision of technological assistance to SMEs by making available the required product quality tests (physico-chemical and microbiological) and capacitating laboratory personnel to conduct these tests. In addition, the DOST regional offices are presently implementing a program to develop food safety teams in the different regions under the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP). The food safety teams are expected to play an important role in imparting and disseminating information on food safety regulations and requirements to food handlers for the continuing improvement and production of safe, healthy and unadulterated foods for both the local and export markets.

However, there is no integrated or harmonized program on food safety in the whole department. Present initiatives related to food safety were developed and are being implemented by different agencies within the department with very little coordination and consultation with each other. The development of a holistic framework plan will provide a unified direction and coordinated efforts to address food safety related issues and concerns.

A less studied/considered but equally important concern is adherence of local government units in the country with the Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality (GDWQ) of the World Health Organization. Access to safe drinking water is a basic need and is one of the most important contributors to public health. The GDWQ outline a framework for safe drinking water. This framework includes Water Safety Plans, which can be implemented by those responsible for supplying drinking water to help improve safety of drinking water.

This project is expected to provide inputs for the development of a food and water safety framework plan for the Davao Region which can serve as template for other regions and support the implementation of SETUP in the region.

7. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Non-conformance to food safety requirements serves as trade barriers created by importing countries and affects economic stabilities of exporting countries. Not only is implementing food safety a concern to balance its economic impact on the country's food export industry, but it is also needed to address alarming events of food contamination.

The proposed project will capacitate the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), members of the Southern Mindanao Analytical Laboratories Consortium and the Davao Food Safety Team in developing and implementing a regional science and technology intervention plan that will address current and emerging food and water safety issues in the region. The project is expected to fully equip the DOST, and member-agencies of LABCON and DFST for provision of technological assistance to various stakeholders by making available the required product quality tests, training and consultancy services, policy advocacy, and other technical support in responding to food and water safety related incidents.

The goal of the project is to implement an integrated and effective food and water safety plan in the region geared to address current and emerging food and water safety issues related to domestic and international trade and assist the food industry and water utilities in complying with local and international trade requirements particularly in food and water quality and safety.

The program is intended to capacitate the DOST and member-agencies of LABCON and DFST with the information and skills to evaluate food and water quality and safety for both domestic and international consumption. The data obtained in the monitoring and evaluation of food and

water will serve as basis for technology interventions to manufacturers and distributors of food and water and their subsequent improvement to comply with global trade and regulatory requirements. The program is expected to result in enhanced capability of DOST and member-agencies of LABCON and DFST to develop, implement and manage food and water safety management systems.

8. PROJECT METHODOLOGY:

The program will entail the following methodology:

- Benchmarking visits to analytical laboratories (preferably food and water laboratories) and food science/food processing faculties/facilities in the Netherlands and Lund University in Sweden intended to provide a venue for information sharing, consultation and networking. Netherlands happens to be one of the leading destinations of food exports from the Davao Region. It is also the major entry point of Asian food products intended for the European market. Sweden on the other hand has one of the best national food safety management systems in Europe with processed food products as one of its major exports. As such, these two countries can provide valuable inputs and study models in the control and safety of foods and water.
- This activity will be conducted in conjunction with the International Program on Sustainable Urban Water and Sanitation – integrated Processes supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) to be held in Lund, Sweden on October 12-30, 2009 (See attached). Two members of the Davao Food Safety Team will be attending this program and will be tasked to undertake the benchmarking activity in the Netherlands and Sweden.
- Benchmarking visits to small-scale food processing companies and water utilities in Lund, Sweden and several places in the Netherlands to observe and study best practices, processes and procedures as benchmarks for local food processing companies and water utilities.

9. PROJECT OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

Outcome	Benefit(s)
1) Increased and sustained compliance of the food industry and water utilities with local and international trade requirements on food and water safety	Enhanced market penetration and profitability of local food industries Assurance of consumer safety
2) Immediate and appropriate response to food and water safety incidents/outbreaks	Mitigation of effects/ impact of food poisoning and water-borne disease outbreaks
3) Greater awareness and vigilance on food and water safety	Prevention of food and water safety related incidents
4) Integrated and effective implementation of food and water safety programs	More responsive to present and future needs of customers
5) Initiate policy or legislative action on food and water safety	Generate greater government support for food and water safety initiatives
6) Greater involvement and participation of DOST, LABCON and DFST in addressing food and water safety issues	Consumer/public health and safety
7) Built and sustained international	Synergy between DOST, LABCON and DFST

partnership and linkage with food and water safety institutions	and international institutions.
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9. SPECIFIC PROJECT TARGETS

The project is expected to accomplish the following targets at the end of its duration:

- One (1) international benchmarking activity conducted; and
- One (1) Benchmarking Activity Report prepared;