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Camalig Adopts Disaster Risk Reduction

As part of the collaborative project entitled *Partnership on Disaster Reduction on Southeast Asia (PDRSEA) Phase 4*, the Albay Public Safety Emergency Management Office (APSEMO) with the technical support of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), assisted the Camalig Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council (MDCC) in integrating Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) components and strategies in their Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and in enhancing early warning system and evacuation procedures at the barangay level. Considering its proximity to the foot of Mayon Volcano, the Camalig Municipality was identified as one of the high risk areas in Albay province.

Led by Mayor Caloy Baldo, members of the Camalig MDCC and Sangguniang Bayan participated in a 4-day (29 January-1February) seminar-workshop on “Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM)” held in Mytallic Hall in Camalig Municipality.



The Provincial Land Use Committee reviews and provides technical inputs to the Municipality's CLUP and document is subsequently forwarded to Sangguniang Panlalawigan for approval. Recently, the Camalig MDCC has included representatives from APSEMO who will provide expert advice to the Committee. Dr. Melgabal Capistrano of ADPC, Mrs. Crispina Abat of NDCC, and regional representatives from national government agencies (DTI, PHIVOLCS, MGB-DENR, and OCD) assisted the Camalig MDCC members in reviewing the Municipality's CLUP with the end in view of incorporating DRR strategies in the plan.

During the workshop, Engr. Pabia of Albay Provincial Planning and Development Office stressed that to give teeth to the CLUP, appropriate zoning ordinances delineating clear boundaries must be passed to ensure the strict implementation of the CLUP. PHIVOLCS representative, Mr. Ed Laguerta, also averred that the Municipality also requires a modern device such as a Global Positioning System (GPS) to substantiate risk analysis process in identifying risk zones.

During the Hazard, Vulnerability, and Capacity (HVC) assessment workshop, the participants considered flooding and volcanic eruption as the two major hazards of the Municipality. After his briefing on weather hazards, Mr. Cedric Daep, Head of the APSEMO, emphasized that the hazard map review, which was done during one of the sessions, derived inputs specifically on the proposed land uses by risk levels (high risk, low to medium and safe zones) and other policy recommendations. Mr. Daep highlighted that this move is consistent with the Albay Provincial Government's GUICADALE (Guinubatan, Camalig, Daraga, and Legazpi) disaster proofing development platform which is a holistic and geo-strategic integration approach that considers the inter-relationship of DRR, development planning and strategies, and environmental protection.

The last day of the seminar involved series of workshops that prompted the barangay chairmen to identify the hazards in their locality; estimate the population at risks; identify the kinds of warning instruments available and accessible; formulate warning levels/indicators and required actions; design warning advisories; establish communication protocols; and devise evacuation procedures. Barangay chairmen presented their outputs to the group and which were subsequently commented by Mr. Daep and Dr. Capistrano.

The group was also able to discuss the MDCC's institutional capacity development, specifically the need to create at the Municipal level a permanent division or office with organic staff that shall plan out and implement on disaster preparedness, safety management, information campaign, and address disaster-related issues including funding. To expedite the passage of the resolution at the local Sangguniang, a number of barangay chairmen who were participants in the seminar, signed a manifesto that supports the creation of Camalig Public Safety and Emergency Management Office.

A Training on CBDRM for Local Authorities was also held last November 2007 in Albay wherein which the group analyzed the potential hazards and vulnerable communities in Albay Province.

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