

# LED Strategy for COMPETE - Philippines

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## **Introduction**

Communities, cities and governments around the world increasingly turn to Local Economic Development (LED) strategies in response to the challenges of globalization and the drive for decentralization. LED means more than just economic growth. It is promoting participation and local dialogue, connecting people and their resources for better employment and a higher quality of life for both men and women.

In order for Local Economic Development (LED) to be effective, a community needs to identify and consider its own economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and agree a shared strategy. LED strategic planning offers communities the opportunity to work together to improve the local economy and enhance competitiveness, thereby encouraging sustainable and inclusive growth.

The purpose of local economic development is to build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business and non-governmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation.

The success of a community today depends upon its ability to adapt to the dynamic local, national and international market economy. Strategically planned LED is increasingly used by communities to strengthen the local economic capacity of an area, improve the investment climate and facilitate an increase in the productivity and competitiveness of local businesses, entrepreneurs and workers. An understanding of the principles and practices of strategic LED planning will position communities to be able to improve their quality of life, create new economic opportunities and fight poverty.

Globalization increases both opportunities and competition for local investment. It offers opportunities for local businesses to develop new markets but also presents challenges from international competitors entering local markets. Multi-site, multi-national manufacturing, banking and service corporations compete globally to find cost efficient sites in which to locate. Technologically advanced growth industries require highly specialized skills and a supporting technology infrastructure. Local conditions determine the relative advantage of an area and its ability to attract and retain investment. Even small towns and their surrounding rural regions can develop local economic opportunities at a national or international level by building on their local economic strengths.

At the national level, macro-economic, fiscal and monetary reforms have directly impacted the economy at the local level. National regulatory and legal frameworks such as tax reform, telecommunications deregulation and environmental standards directly influence the local business climate, either enhancing or reducing the potential for local economic development. In many countries, national government functions continue to be decentralized thereby increasing the responsibility of municipal governments to retain and attract private industry.

Communities within and between regions often compete to attract external and local investment; however, opportunities exist for communities to collaborate with each other to help all their economies grow. They can do this for example, by supporting strategic infrastructure or environmental improvements that demonstrate a broad regional impact. An association of local municipalities or regional governments working together can serve to facilitate LED efforts by acting as an intermediary between national and municipal governments.

Businesses, both large and small, often choose to locate in urban areas because of agglomeration economies (the benefits derived from sharing markets, infrastructure, labor pools and information with other firms). The economic advantage of urban areas depends significantly

on the quality of urban governance and management, and on the policies affecting the availability of, or lack of, electricity, transport, telecommunications, sanitation and developable urban land. Factors affecting labor productivity in the local economy include the availability and quality of housing, health and education services, skills, security, training opportunities and public transport. These 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure factors are major determinants of a community's relative advantage. The quality and provision of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure forms the cornerstone of a successful local economy.

Metropolitan areas can offer many opportunities through agglomeration economies, economies of scale and effort as a result of the size of the physical and human capital available, as well as the size of its services and internal market. Uncoordinated and disparate institutional frameworks and planning bodies in metropolitan areas can serve to undermine area-wide economic growth.

Metropolitan-wide LED agencies, clusters and networks can be created to address these constraints. These innovative institutional frameworks, which represent the interests of different municipalities and partner agencies in the same metropolitan area, can bring benefits to the key actors of each municipality (public departments, business and civil society organizations). These frameworks can serve to unite the efforts of different localities and increase LED results, and can strengthen representation in higher levels of decision-making.

There are many ways in which municipalities can contribute to improving their local economies. The most important and effective local economic development activity that a municipality can undertake is to improve the regulatory processes and procedures to which businesses are subjected by the municipality itself. A survey of most municipalities would reveal a number of complex, poorly managed, expensive and unnecessary business registration systems. By reducing these, a municipality can quickly improve its local investment climate.

In most countries, economic growth is determined not only by the formal economy (the economic sectors that are legally registered and pay taxes) but also by the informal economy (those activities that are not legally registered). In some cases the size of the informal economy is greater than the formal economy, and it interacts with the formal economy by supplying certain goods and services. The linkages between the formal and informal sectors of the economy need to be understood and considered in the devising of a local economic development strategy, although this is often easier said than done.

Communities and businesses increasingly recognize that a successful local economy requires social as well as economic, environmental and physical renewal or investment. In many cities, large numbers of low-income families work within the informal economy, however, these informal activities are often low-growth activities as a result of a lack of access to proper infrastructure and services (electricity, water, roads), regular means of financing, information and skills. The development of an LED strategy should recognize and accommodate the constraints and opportunities of the informal economy so as to broaden the impact of the strategy.

### **LED Strategic Planning**

*Ideally, the development of an LED strategy will be an integral part of a broader strategic planning process for a sub-national region, city, town or rural area. Effective strategic planning ensures that priority issues are addressed and limited resources are well targeted. The five-step planning process detailed should be tailored to complement, and correspond with, other local planning processes. The process is not prescriptive and should be adapted to meet the needs of the individual community.*

## **Stage One: Organizing the Effort**

A community begins the LED strategy planning process by identifying the people, public institutions, businesses, community organizations and other groups with interests in the local economy. This is often led by the local government, usually the mayor or chief executive. The skills and resources that each of these stakeholders bring to the strategy process provide a critical foundation for success. The identification of these individuals and organizations assumes some basic knowledge of the workings of the city economy. A resource audit is a necessary input to the strategy, and should include the identification of financial, human and other capital resources that can contribute to the LED strategy. Working groups and steering committees can be established to ensure that both formal and informal structures are in place to support strategy development and implementation. Other issues that need to be tackled in the early stages include establishing LED staff teams and appropriate political processes.

## **Stage Two: Conducting the Local Economy Assessment**

Each community has a unique set of local attributes that can advance or hinder local economic development. These include its economic structure, its human resource capacity to carry out economic development, and how conducive the local government investment climate is to economic and business activity. The aim of the local economy assessment is to identify the community's strengths and weaknesses including its human resource capacity, local government's 'friendliness' to all types of business activities from corporate to informal, and the opportunities and threats facing the local economy. The goal of the assessment is to create an economic profile of the community that highlights the basis of its comparative and competitive advantage in relation to neighboring communities and other regional, national or international competitors.

## **Stage Three: Developing the LED Strategy**

As part of the LED strategy, a shared economic vision for the community and LED goals, objectives, programs, projects and action plans will be developed. This process ensures that all major stakeholder groups are given the opportunity to define what is to be achieved, how it is to be achieved, who will be responsible and the timeframes associated with the implementation of the LED strategy. Most importantly, the LED strategy and action plans must be finely assessed against the staff resource capacity to carry them out, as well as the budgetary constraints. Ultimately, the strategy's action plans should be incorporated into the work and budgetary program of the local authority, and appropriate elements taken on by other stakeholders (business associations, utilities, educational institutions, etc.). The aim is to leverage strengths, overcome weaknesses, exploit opportunities and deal with threats.

## **Stage Four: Implementing the LED Strategy**

Strategy implementation is driven by the LED action plans. Ongoing monitoring is provided through the formal structures identified and created in step one, and evaluation of specific project outcomes ensures that the strategy continues to lead to the achievement of the LED vision, goals and objectives. In undertaking strategy implementation, it is important to identify and establish the appropriate institutions to carry out the plans.

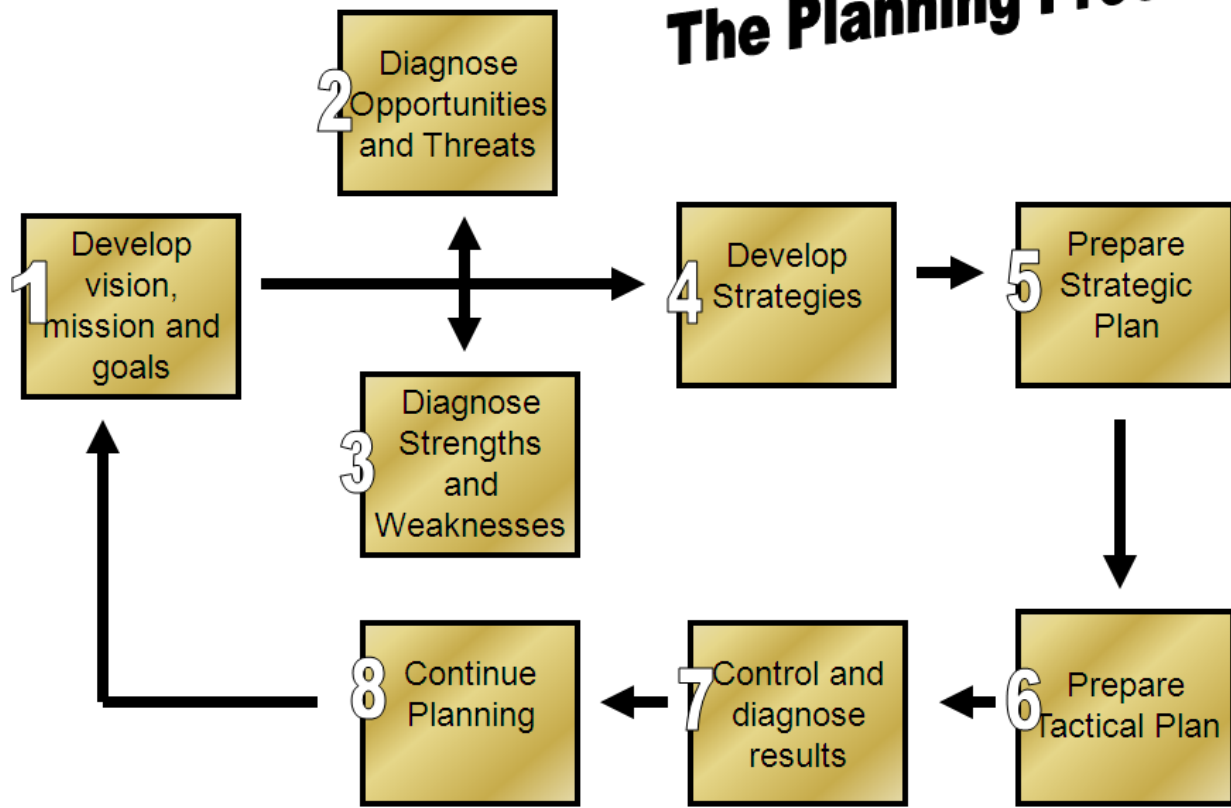
## **Stage Five: Reviewing the LED Strategy**

Good monitoring and evaluation techniques help to quantify outcomes, justify expenditures, determine enhancements and adjustments, and develop good practices. This information also feeds into the review of the complete LED strategy. The LED strategy should be reviewed at

least annually to ensure that it remains relevant. It may be that conditions have changed or that the initial assessment was incorrect to the local conditions. The LED strategy should evolve continuously to respond to the ever changing competitive environment.

<b>Specific Objectives, Results, Activities</b>	<b>Measurable Indicators</b>	<b>Means of Verification</b>	<b>Achievable Assumptions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time</b>
Objective 1						
Results						
Activity						
Activity						
Activity						

# The Planning Process



Step 1: Develop Vision, Mission and Goals: Provide Direction for LED Development.

Step 2: Diagnose Opportunity and Threat

Step 3: Diagnose Strengths and Weaknesses

Step 4: Develop Strategies

Step 5: Prepare Strategic Plan

Step 6: Prepare Tactical Plans

Step 7: Control and Diagnose Results

Step 8: Continue Planning

## The eight building blocks of the LED development process

- Initiating the process;
- Establishing the initial parameters and the scope of the LED development;
- Making an initial assessment;
- Formulating a vision;
- Identifying strengths–weaknesses–opportunities–threats (SWOT analysis);
- Setting strategic thrusts;
- Building awareness; and
- Starting the implementation.

## Initiating the Process

There is a need for high-level guidance and coordination among all stakeholders.

If the mayor or equivalent political figure is not seriously involved in the LED development process, it should be abandoned. The process should be guided by a *Key Stakeholders Group*, or equivalent body that represents key interest groups in the city. Although open-access input

from town meetings, radio call-in shows, and so on is useful, collaborative approaches to strategy development require a small but representative group (the key stakeholders group) to negotiate hard content.

### **Initial Assessment**

The city should be assessed initially by a team led by leading domestic and international urban analysts and supported by local urban researchers.

The speed of an initial assessment should, however, strike a balance between quickly meeting political processes and expectations and gathering enough relevant information.

The initial assessment employs a scan–scope methodology, zeroing in on spatial areas and substantive issues of particular concern. The initial assessment should, with a futures-oriented perspective, identify and assess core change drivers, such as demographics, technology, and the international economic environment. Clusters should be the basis of economic analysis, as traditional sectoral analysis is not geared to identifying trends and opportunities or understanding the informal sector and the “new” economic activities in technology and high-end business, professional, and design clusters.

### **Formulating a Vision**

The vision statement needs to be specific, internally consistent, and realistic but challenging. It should stress what is unique about the city and be short (experience shows that 60 words is enough) and easy to read. A vision is important because it aligns stakeholders’ energies so that the stakeholders work cooperatively and for the same goals.

A vision is not normally changed over the medium run (10 years); it is like a lighthouse, with a fixed position. However, in today’s fast changing and uncertain world, tactics need to change regularly to ensure that the city achieves its vision. Successful cities are flexible and adaptive in pursuing their visions, recognizing that traditional, especially rigid, static, or top-down, planning can be harmful. Many systems in a city are self-organizing, yielding positive outcomes if set within appropriate visions and policy frameworks, and prompted by strategic thrusts.

### **Identifying Strengths–Weaknesses– Opportunities–Threats (SWOT Analysis)**

The strengths–weaknesses–opportunities–threats (SWOT analysis) is undertaken in the context of the Vision, rather than in an open-ended manner.

The results of the SWOT analysis enable a city to build on and leverage its strengths and opportunities. Equally important, it enhances a city’s ability to avoid threats or to take actions to minimize them.

### **Strategic Thrusts**

Strategic thrusts are the heart of the LED development. They are cross-cutting, interlocking actions, delivered in many ways (for example, through direct investment by government or private–public partnerships), almost always involving more than one agency. Strategic thrusts deliver maximum impact cost-effectively. Because a city cannot focus on too many initiatives at one time, strategic thrusts are normally limited to five. Each strategic thrust contains, in turn, several actions. Strategies are based on hypothesized causal relationships between interventions and outcomes and are informed by international experience and the SWOT analysis. Identifying strategic thrusts is an iterative process. Once the strategic thrusts become

clearer—for example, a decision is made to pursue a convention-based tourism strategy—specialized technical expertise is needed to help formulate them. Strategic thrusts always need to be paired with a few powerful indicators:

### **Awareness Building**

A successful LED development process needs the support of most of the community, especially the key stakeholders.

Total consensus is never possible; in fact, it would be a sign of a weak LED development. The most effective ways of disseminating a LED development vary from city to city and rely on a mix of media, such as Internet sites and radio. Certain media—such as newspaper inserts, videos, posters, and models—work well across a wide spectrum of cities.

### **Implementation**

LED development is of no value unless implemented. Implementation Task Forces need to be established, responsible for each strategic thrust. The implementation task forces formulate more detailed action plans, clearly indicating responsibilities, timelines, milestones, and expected inputs, outputs, and outcomes (results or impacts). Indicators may need to be refined. Most important is a sustainable monitoring system to gauge success based on the identified indicators.

Monitoring systems are unsustainable because they have too many or unrealistic indicators and allocate no money for their ongoing operation. Thus, sustainable indicator systems are essential.

An important role of the implementation task forces is to identify, assess, and chase down sources of finance. To get the LED development off to a good start, emphasis should be on early implementation

### **Philippines LED Overview**

The purpose of local economic development is to build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business and non-governmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation.

Poverty and unemployment remain the country's gravest economic problems. If the government is to win the war against poverty at the end of the decade, the economy must grow on a sustained basis and across all sectors, while generating the greatest employment. The industry and service sectors, which tend to grow faster in the course of development, offer vast opportunities for creating employment and for absorbing excess rural labor. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and high-growth business sectors that inherently draw on strengths in human resources such as information and communication technology and tourism, deserve attention for further development.

Macroeconomic stability is a necessary condition for sustained growth. Efficient investment and consumption decisions cannot be made in an unstable environment. Long-term stability is, however, being threatened by a large fiscal deficit and increasing public debt. Thus, the immediate task is to put the budget deficit of the national government under control. In a world where capital markets are integrated, fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies also need to be coordinated to tap the opportunities from global markets while addressing the perils that



come with internationally mobile capital. Sustained and equitable growth entails nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit and making industries globally competitive.

Hence, the government remains fundamentally committed to free enterprise and market reliance, and ensuring market-friendly regulation where indicated. To assist enterprises to become more globally competitive, the government will work to reduce the cost of doing business and remove key bottlenecks to investment. In this area, the government has already implemented various structural reforms such as the liberalization and deregulation of trade and investments and the restructuring of the power sector. However, reforms need to continue to enhance the competitiveness of Philippine industry by improving the state of infrastructure and upgrading the state of technology.

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#### ◆ Sector History

In most countries, economic growth is determined not only by the formal economy (the economic sectors that are legally registered and pay taxes) but also by the informal economy (those activities that are not legally registered). In some cases the size of the informal economy is greater than the formal economy, and it interacts with the formal economy by supplying certain goods and services. The linkages between the formal and informal sectors of the economy need to be understood and considered in the devising of a local economic development strategy, although this is often easier said than done.

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Generating new jobs is the key to winning the war against poverty. To enhance the capacity of the domestic economy to create jobs, competitive enterprises will be encouraged to flourish. Ensuring the stability of the macroeconomic environment is a must. A major challenge is ensuring that full-employment policies do not trigger inflation. A deficit reduction program will be pursued. Stable and low rates of inflation will be ensured through the shift of monetary policy to inflation targeting. A healthy external balance will be underpinned by a flexible exchange rate system.

In addition, the national government (NG) will implement an expenditure program that preserves a bias for education, health, agriculture and other services for the poor. Regulatory agencies will be strengthened to provide the institutional framework for preventing and resolving corporate failures, and to reduce the vulnerability of the banking and corporate sectors to sudden shifts in internationally mobile capital. The capital market will be further developed to raise national

savings including those required for the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This will be facilitated by regulatory reforms in the banking sector and equities market.

◆ Current Situation

To generate the one million jobs in agriculture and agri-related industries, a more meaningful pursuit of the agriculture and fisheries modernization program shall take place. Programs shall focus on increasing employment productivity to raise incomes. These programs shall be complemented by efforts to generate off-farm employment. Alternative livelihood activities shall be promoted for subsistence farm workers during non-planting and non-harvest seasons. The development and integration of farm workers in off-farm livelihood activities, where alternative sources of incomes can be realized, shall be explored and facilitated.

Agriculture shall be a priority in the allocation of budgetary resources to expand the construction of irrigation and postharvest facilities, farm-to-market roads and other infrastructure projects, credit facility, and research and development.

To enhance employment in industry and services, globally competitive industries shall be developed. The country's national competitive edge in tourism shall be maximized. *The government will focus its efforts on supporting the development of tourism hubs, such as Manila, Cebu, Davao and Laoag by upgrading airports, seaports, and roads, and securing greater involvement of local government units in tourism development.* The development of tourist destinations in the countryside will boost the growth in the retail trade sector and handicraft industries leading to increased employment and livelihood opportunities for communities and cooperatives.

ICT capabilities across a broad range of economic activities and income groups shall be developed. Operational tele-centers in all municipalities and public payphones in a cluster shall be established. Broadband services in cities, identified growth centers and priority areas shall be provided. The country's competitive niches in software development and e-services shall be secured and enhanced by seizing local and overseas market opportunities in developing strategic partnerships for major ICT development initiatives.

Labor-intensive activities in infrastructure development, particularly in the construction of mass housing, shall be further explored to increase employment generation. Self-employment shall be promoted as an important employment generation strategy. Self-reliant communities shall be developed by providing adequate and sustainable sources of livelihood for its members and their families. Likewise, full support for the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) shall be pursued. The government will implement programs for the informal sector to improve their access to productive resources, protection and social security. Micro-financing will be made available for 300,000 women entrepreneurs every year. Social safety nets, including the provision of emergency employment programs, shall be provided.

Municipal governments charged with the responsibility for local economic development since the decentralization of governance in 1991 are increasingly turning to the NGO sector to form partnerships that will foster local economic change.

The following case study shows the impact of one entrepreneur on the whole region. Projects usually do not prosper by default. It is a long-term challengeable process that requires having a vision and most importantly the desire to achieve the goals regardless the severe obstacles and complications.

Unlad Kabayan<sup>1</sup> began in 1994 as a project of the Asian Migrant Centre in Hong Kong to harness migrant savings for alternative investments. The idea was to direct the investments of migrant savings groups organized all over the world into productive enterprises in the Philippines.

“The community needs social enterprises; it does not simply need employment.” Over the past years Elsa<sup>2</sup>, the driving force behind the Matin-ao Rice Centre, has struggled with this statement.

Elsa's story exemplifies the tension felt by entrepreneurs who want to develop an enterprise that will generate a good return for a community of international investors and who are also pulled by the local community's needs and aspirations for a better life.

For Elsa and her group of migrant savers working in Taiwan the Matin-ao Rice Centre is an avenue of investment, a way to move from being an employee to being an investor and, for Elsa, a manager. For the Matin-ao community the Rice Centre has extended beyond a source of employment and trade in rice to become a focus of community life, meeting basic food and farming needs, with Elsa herself providing community leadership and counseling.

After the first rice harvest in 2003 the mill had losses. Elsa had underestimated the competitive environment into which she had ventured and the costs of overhauling an old mill to get it reliably operational. A business plan was developed with Unlad Kabayan. The planning process revealed that x “milling rice seasonally is not enough” to sustain regular returns. After visiting other rice mills to see how they operated Elsa began buying unhusked rice from farmers, stock-piling it and milling it throughout the year to be sold as processed rice wholesale and retail.

However, there wasn't always more rice to buy as rice farmers already had relationships with traders and Elsa did not have enough cash to out-price them. So in the second year of operation Elsa took out a loan, mortgaging and risking the entire enterprise. She also asked farmers “why aren't you coming to my rice mill?” Farmers told her about their indebted relationships with other commercial traders. Elsa responded by providing credit to farmers, especially for farm inputs. After talking to farmers' wives Elsa decided to provide credit in kind, so that cash wouldn't be diverted to gambling and drinking.

From the business plan and listening to farmers, Elsa knew that she needed to generate other enterprises. After accessing further investment, she opened an agri-vet (agricultural and veterinarian) supplies store and later, in the fourth year, a grocery store.

Elsa was confident in initiating these enterprises because she knew farmers wanted them. These new enterprises rented space from the rice mill, providing an income stream to the mill and generating a profit for investors. All of the businesses lacked capital so in 2005 Elsa returned to Taiwan to promote enterprise investment by migrant workers.

Economies of scale are critical to the viability of the rice milling business and this requires substantial capital. As a social enterprise, the Matin-ao Rice Centre has been able to draw on the relatively patient equity investment from Elsa's fellow migrant workers and soft loans from government and the NGOs. But Unlad needed to educate migrant investors to be patient as part

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.communityeconomies.org/site/assets/media/KatherineGibson/Matin-ao%20Rice%20Mill.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Elsa is a good example of an entrepreneur who was able to find practical solutions to sustain projects in the regions and think out of box. Simple and reliable solutions can be considered as the most innovative.

of their savings and investment mobilization work. Many migrants think that investment is something you put in and take out anytime, like savings in a bank. Others expect a quick return on investment and demand “instant and substantial” dividends.

While they lack an understanding of mainstream business principles, they know even less about how an alternative economy might work and how they could be contributors to and beneficiaries of alternative wealth-creating and distributing businesses.

With additional funds, in 2006 the Rice Centre opened a farm machinery service in response to farmers’ requests so that they could plough early before the rains stopped. In 2007 it bought a hauling truck. Today the Rice Centre includes six affiliate businesses: the rice mill, a farm machinery hiring service, farm credit, an agricultural and veterinarian supply store, a mini grocery store and a *palay* trading business. In 2007 the business had a net worth of P 3.5 million (Aust \$ 91,000 or €91,000), annual sales worth P 4.4 million and made a net profit P 207,000 (Aust \$ 5,440 or €3,000). In the rural Philippines context these are sizeable amounts. The Centre employs 11 people full time, 1 part-time and 8 seasonal workers; services the needs of 129 local farmers; and is a focus of investment by 66 overseas migrant workers.

Elsa has the spirit of an entrepreneur. She has been “driven” to build up the Rice Centre as a business that attracts ongoing investment and has demonstrated that sacrifice, hard work and creativity are the key to new enterprise development.

#### ◆ Future Trends

In light of the greater integration of the Philippines with the world economy, the philosophy of free enterprise shall continue to underpin government policies and programs in stimulating business activities and promoting competition. Of particular importance is the promotion of technology that will be the foundation of the country’s future economic development.

The private sector will be the main driving force of the economy, playing a strong and leading role in generating productive employment opportunities and improving access of Filipino consumers to less expensive, more varied, and better quality goods and services. Government’s task will increasingly be to make markets work by simplifying bureaucratic procedures and promoting market-friendly regulations to reduce the cost of doing business, and protect the interest of consumers and sectors vulnerable to global integration. Sustainable development and gender-sensitive practices will be emphasized.

Shift to appropriate technology-based, labor employing, value added-driven agriculture and fisheries

1. Promote production and marketing technologies that will employ the sector’s abundant labor resources;
2. Continue the rationalization of the R&D and extension systems into a ‘one system—one program’, demand-driven component of agriculture and fisheries modernization;
3. Promote and encourage private investments in agriculture and fisheries R&D to complement public investments;
4. Activate an aggressive program to acquire promising and appropriate technologies from abroad, particularly those appropriate in harnessing abundant rural labor resources;

5. Develop, through proper and adequate stakeholder consultations, and implement transparent guidelines/regulations governing the safe and socially beneficial development, field testing and commercialization of products of modern biotechnology;
  6. Modernize and rationalize the technology extension system, under a devolved and decentralized regime of governance, in order to effectively promote modern technology, particularly modern genetic materials, knowledge-intensive farm management and cultural practices, processing and marketing.
- ◆ Potential Interventions (that can be recommended for future)

Majority of the poor are in rural agricultural areas and are engaged in subsistence farming and fishing. To reduce poverty herein, future interventions have to be committed to a comprehensive rural development based on productivity improvements, agrarian reform rural industrialization, and sustainable development.

Agricultural productivity must improve to raise rural household incomes. This calls for a meaningful implementation of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act. Farmers and fisher folks will have access to modern agricultural and fishery inputs developed through research and development. Rural industrialization with viable off-farm enterprises will accompany agricultural modernization. The development of infrastructure facilities like irrigation and farm-to-market roads will be accelerated. A well-functioning rural credit market is indispensable.

Asset distribution reform is a fundamental strategy to fight poverty. In this regard, land reform shall continue, along with more effective support services for agrarian reform beneficiaries. The Administration is committed to complete land distribution within the decade. To ensure the flow of private investments to agriculture, land-based issues, such as the reluctance of banks to accept land as collateral will be addressed.

As agriculture is modernized, safeguards will be put in place to ensure that intensified production activities do not undermine the integrity of the environment. The Plan espouses policies that promote environment-friendly technologies and sustainable farming practices that conserve natural resources.

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