



UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES INC.

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World Bank and ULAP Engage in Productive Dialogue to Strengthen Local Governance in the Philippines

Taguig City, Metro Manila — Senior officials from the World Bank and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) convened on 6 May 2024 to explore potential engagements to strengthen support for local governments in the Philippines and identify avenues for deeper collaboration.

The meeting, held in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, provided a platform for meaningful exchanges between key World Bank officials led by Mr. Ndiame Diop, Country Director for Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand, and Ms. Anna Wellenstein, Regional Director of Sustainable Development Practice Group for East Asia and the Pacific, and ULAP representatives led by its National President, Governor Dax Cua. Joining Gov. Cua were Gov. Arthur “Toto” Defensor of the Province of Iloilo, Gov. Emmylou “Lala” Taliño-Mendoza of the Province of Cotabato, Mayor Alfredo Abelardo “Albee” Benitez of Bacolod City, Mayor Germelina Singson-Goulart of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur, BM Jessica Dy of Brgy. San Fabian,

Echague, Isabela, BM Ma. Martina L. Gimenez of Brgy. San Miguel, Tanauan, Leyte, and Undersecretary Odilon Pasaraba of the Department of the Interior and Local Government. Also present during the dialogue were the ULAP Secretariat, Quezon City Local Economic and Investment Promotions Office Head Jay Gatmaitan, League of Cities of the Philippines Executive Director Veron Hitosis, and League of Municipalities of the Philippines Deputy Executive Director Vingaye Pizarro.

The agenda featured World Bank's presentation of its sustainable development programs in the country particularly on urban resilience and disaster, water, agriculture, and environment, natural resources, and blue economy. Meanwhile, ULAP National President Governor Dax Cua outlined ULAP's activities and programs, local government programs, challenges, and opportunities. Governors and mayors present also shared firsthand experiences and strategic priorities from their respective local government units, enriching the dialogue with practical insights.

Mr. Ndiame Diop shared insights into the World Bank's interventions, stating, "Our goal is to help design projects that truly meet the needs of local communities. Development is local, and we are committed to supporting initiatives that have a strong local impact."

"We look forward to identifying synergies with ULAP to scale up successful projects and empower local governments in driving sustainable development," Ms. Anna Wellenstein added.

The dialogue also discussed challenges faced by local governments, including infrastructure, disaster response, water management, agriculture, and environmental sustainability. ULAP emphasized the need for capital investments, technical expertise, and direct partnerships with the World Bank to address resource constraints and enhance service delivery.

"We are encouraged by the productive dialogue with World Bank today and look forward to advancing our collaboration to empower local governments and drive sustainable development outcomes in the Philippines. The local government units are your partners in national development. The future is local!" remarked Gov. Cua.

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ULAP is the umbrella organization of all leagues of local government units and local government officials in country, serving as the focal representative and mouthpiece of the subnational government in all policy and program platforms to amplify our unified advocacy towards the strengthening of LGUs into able partners in nation-building.

Learn more at www.ulap.net.ph.