

2ND QUARTER OF 2021 JUNE 2021 | ISSUE 2

VIRTUAL LEARNING EVENT ON BUSINESS PLANNING FOR SMALL SCALE WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS (SSWSPS)

The Learning Event via Zoom

The learning event aimed to improve the capacity of SSWSPs in preparing or updating their Business Plan, increase their understanding of the effects of climate change on their operations, integrate climate change impacts into their Business Plan, and deepen their understanding of the importance of providing sanitation services including low-cost technology options.



The program was opened by **Ms. Elsa D. Mejia**, National President of NAWASA Philippines, and **Dr. Seville D. David, Jr.**, NWRB Executive Director.

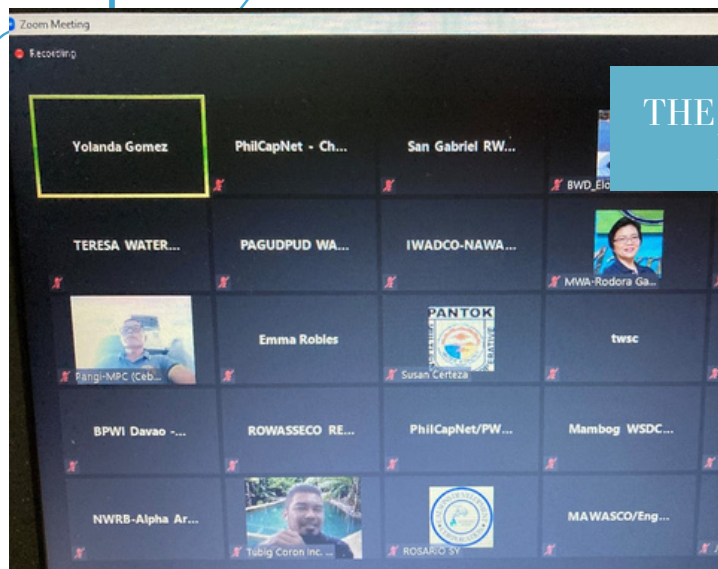


Ms. Mejia stressed that a climate-resilient business plan will serve as their “Bible” to guide them on how to operate and manage efficient and cost-effective water utilities in small communities. Dr. David, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of dialogue or feedback as a valuable tool for the growth and improvement of the water service providers.

Dr. Ma. Cecilia G. Soriano, PhilCapNet President, presented the learning objectives and monitoring timetable for the learning event. She said that PhilCapNet focuses on the delivery of training and other capacity-building activities to improve water governance and strengthen partnerships with global and regional networks and other repositories of knowledge and experience.

News and Highlights:

PhilCapNet, in partnership with the Philippine Water Partnership (PWP), National Water Resources Board (NWRB) and National Water and Sanitation Association (NAWASA) of the Philippines, successfully held a virtual learning event on **Climate-Resilient Business Planning for Sustainability of Small Scale Water Service Providers (SSWSPs)** on 10 June 2021.



THE WEBINAR FEATURED THE FOLLOWING RESOURCE SPEAKERS AND TOPICS:

Ms. Eloisa E. Ramos, Head of Corporate Planning Department, Baliwag Water District – Basic Concepts and Principles in Business Planning; Ms. Crisanta I. Martelino, Public Utilities Regulation Officer II, Water Utilities Division, NWRB – Business Planning as a Requirement of NWRB Permit Issuance; Dr. Marcelino Q. Villafuerte II, Weather Specialist I, Climatology and Agrometeorology Division, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

(PAGASA) – Understanding Climate Change and Its Impacts on Water Utility Operations; Engr. Rachel M. Beja, former General Manager, Cagayan de Oro City Water District – The Importance and Role of Vulnerability Assessments in Climate-Resilient Business Planning; and Engr. Jay U. Tecson, President, Global Water Solutions, Inc. (GWSI) – Sharing of Experiences in Preparation of a Business Plan with Focus on Sanitation and Technology Options. The PowerPoint presentations may be downloaded from the Resources section of the PhilCapNet website (www.philcapnet.org).

The Sharing of Experiences

Engr. Marcelo Sumampong, Jr, representing the Mindanao group, is from Maragusan Waterworks and Sanitation Cooperative, Inc. (MWSCI) which operates in a far-flung area in Southern Philippines. He said that **“Our water sources are from the ancestral domain of the Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the critical watershed areas and are very vulnerable to the effects of climate change”**. He concluded that **“With regards to our business plan, we will include climate change adaptation and mitigation components because, in our new business plan, we had not included these”**.



*Photo from en.wikipedia.org
Subanon people posing in front of a waterfall*



*Manobo Indigenous people.
Courtesy of Glaiza Tabanao/ICCA Consortium*

Clearly, the MWSCI holds in high regard the IPs who live within the watershed that is the source of their water supply. They see the value of working closely with the IPs as effective partners in the protection of the water resources. Furthermore, the MWSCI now recognizes the adverse impacts of climate change on the watershed and the need to include climate change adaptation and mitigation measures as an integral part of its business plan.

Another challenge was reported by Ms. Lualhati May Lincaro, representative of Mactan Rock Industries, Inc., a private company in the Visayas. She stated that **“We already have a business plan, we just have to review if the measures presented a while ago are already present in what we currently have”**. She also discussed the flooding problem in their area brought about by several typhoons that she said:



Flood in Compostela Valley Photo by IDS Comval

“threatened to destroy our water point and contaminate our water sources”. This, she said, will have a big impact on their water supply. She added that, **“This needs an information drive not only for us because this should be a collaborative effort by the government and private sector and we as individuals”**. **“There is no successful plan without the support of everybody”**, she quipped.

Mr. Henry Flores, General Manager of Darasa Rural Waterworks and Sanitation Association, Inc., representing Luzon, is a long-time member of NAWASA Philippines. He said that **“Some topics were tackled way back in 2016, and they were very helpful. We have improved our operations on a daily basis and are becoming more mindful of the environment”**.

Another representative from Luzon, Mr. Ernesto Rueda Jr. of Teresa Waterworks, Inc., raised his concern on ordinances implemented by their city government in enforcing septage management where he said that **“As a small entrepreneur, we were made as the collecting arm only”**. He added that **“A tripartite Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was set up with the LGUs and Soliman septic tank service provider and us, but not only Teresa Waterworks but the ordinance also includes all other private water utilities kaya naguguluhan kami sa regulatory framework. The service provider is the one dictating the tariff. We are not mandated by NWRB to charge the septage fee.”** This was noted as a new case to be tackled in another session in consultation with NWRB and Water Solutions.

The closing message was delivered by Engr. Rodora N. Gamboa, Executive Director of Maynilad Water Academy (MWA) and past chairperson of the Philippine Water Partnership (PWP). The learning event was facilitated by Ms. Yolanda Gomez of the PWP.

Climate-Resilient Business Plans

The learning event familiarized the participants with the vulnerabilities caused by climate challenges and encouraged them to modify their business plans to include mitigation measures in their operating and capital expenditures.

Adapting to the impacts of climate change is a formidable challenge for SSWSPs. It must be met with innovation and expertise to devise a business plan that is effective and at the same time affordable.

SSWSP participants committed to do their best to deliver adequate water supply and sanitation services to small communities. The small contribution of every participating SSWSP group/organization will become significant in serving poor communities not being reached and served by the bigger water utilities in the country. All in all, the organizers of and participants in the learning event hope to bring about improvements in water supply and sanitation that can be felt by communities in different parts of our archipelagic country.

Call to Action and Cooperation

These challenging times call upon us all to think of ways and means, to innovate and to adapt, to build climate-resilient waterworks -- ones that can operate even in extreme weather and climate conditions.


We hope that better and continuous support services, bigger budgets and accessible financing, advanced technologies and sustainable systems, and responsive regulation will be given by the national and local governments. The SSWSPs should also continue to help each other and organize at the national level to share their experiences and to establish stronger partnerships with each other amidst the global pandemic.




THIS MONTH'S FEATURED ARTICLES

- The Learning Event via Zoom
- The Sharing of Experiences
- Climate-Resilient Business Plans
- Call to Action and Cooperation



Contact Us:

 3/F MWSS Engineering Bldg.,
489 Katipunan Ave.
Balara Quezon City 1105
Philippines

 Phone: +632 84411191
 Website: www.philcapnet.org
 Email: philcapnet@gmail.com