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AFTER DTI, GTZ INTRODUCED LRED P1.5 B in investments have been poured in to Baybay, Leyte

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Calbayog City Mayor Reynaldo Uy delivers his inspirational message during the mass oath-taking ceremony of the city's newly-elected barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan officials held at the Calbayog City Sports Center last November 27, 2010. (Henry C. Puyat)

BAYBAY, Leyte—Some P1.5 billion in investments have been poured in to this municipality after the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) regional office and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) introduced the Local and Regional Economic Development (LRED) to the local government unit.

According to Baybay Tourism and Investment Officer Josephine Duterte, the LRED was part of the Private Sector Promotion Program of the DTI and GTZ that was introduced in Baybay in 2005 when the municipality was identified as one of the poorest localities in the province of Leyte.

“Aside from the P1.5 billion worth of investments, the improvement of our local business climate through LRED has directly created around 1,000 jobs,” Duterte said in an interview with Leyte Samar Daily Express.

Duterte said at least four companies have settled in Baybay which contributed to the local economy.

“One of them is SC Global Coco Products, Inc., which buys 250 metric tons (MT) of coconut and 30 MT of banana to produce coconut oil, banana chips and animal feeds daily. More than 1,230 farmers have been certified for organic production, and they now supply SC Global with their farm produce,” Duterte said.

“DTI and GTZ helped the participants of the LRED process to develop an action plan. One of the major initiatives was the creation of the Baybay Tourism and Investment Promotion Office (BTIPO) that systematized the dissemination of investment related information in Baybay and strengthened interaction among local business, local administration and supporting institutions,” Duterte added.

“The BTIPO published brochures presenting Baybay town as an ideal place for business and investment. It also contained important information for investors such as cost and availability of land and tax holidays,” Duterte added.

Duterte said she also gives personal advice and arranges meetings with local government officials.

“Constant communication has established an atmosphere of mutual trust and support, which has improved the local business climate brought companies closer to the local community,” Duterte said.

Duterte added the process of implementing LRED was not always easy as both local officials and the private sector had lessons to learn in their pursuit of a common goal.

“Participative processes are being adopted. The private sector was also invited to voice their concerns and offer advice in the local government unit’s legislative processes to make policy work for businesses,” she said.

By **REYan arinto, Correspondent**

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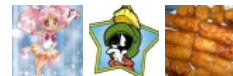
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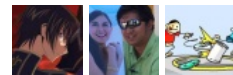
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