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## Altavas, Aklan gears for economic development

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 - The local government of Altavas is up for a regionwide economic development with its embarking on a program dubbed as Local/Regional Economic Development (LRED).

Altavas Mayor Kathryn Refol said that the LRED is in cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) led by Rhea Ledesma, the GTZ regional coordinator for Western Visayas.

"The Municipality of Altavas, a fourth class municipality, has high hopes of achieving a third class status in the months ahead. It has started looking at strategic focus and options where their resources can have maximum results," Refol said.

Through the LRED a public private partnership will be forged to promote holistic economic growth in Altavas. This LRED initiative is headed by Refol to enlist everyone's participation to come up with viable economic projects that will stimulate economic growth.

For her part, Ledesma said that LRED is an approach to bring people together from the private and the public sector to have a dialogue and discuss possible strategic interventions to identified problems.

"LRED involves the conduct of the Rapid Economic Appraisal (REA) to capture the local economic condition by conducting interviews with the private businesses, the academe, NGOs, LGUs present in the locality. The result of the REA is an important input as to how the action plans will be formulated, an output of the LRED planning process," she said.

LRED is also one of the major interventions in the SMEDSEP program (Small and Medium Enterprise Development for Sustainable Employment Program).

SMEDSEP is a development cooperation project between the Philippines and Germany.

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