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3 German groups decide to merge to be more efficient in projects

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By Mia A. Aznar
Sunday, May 22, 2011

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THE merging of three German organizations is expected to improve the way the vast number of development projects are being implemented, officials assured.

Although the Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED) GmbH (German Development Service), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH (German Technical Cooperation) and InWent Capacity Building International, Germany have been collaborating with their projects, the merging of the three organizations into the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Giz) GmbH formalizes things.

Giz deputy country director Philipp Quitmann that it was "humbling" for them to go through the merger, after advising governments on how to do things efficiently for many years.

With one main organization, Quitmann believes they can be more efficient and better advisers if they are one big organization.

Giz was established last January to bring together the expertise of the three organizations. The federally-owned enterprise, which supports the German government in international development cooperation, has been working in the Philippines for over 30 years.

In Central Visayas, it has seven programs in place, in partnership with national government agencies and local government units.

For officials of Giz, most of their programs have resulted in improvements in the business climate and good governance.

The Private Sector Promotion Program implemented by Giz and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), has improved the environment for investments in the region, they said.

The program enabled local government units to adopt systems that would streamline processes, reducing processing time, the number of requirements and the number of signatories needed to accomplish business permit applications.

DTI 7 Director Asteria Caberte said that they have made a lot of headway with the nine-year partnership they had with Giz.

She said they have introduced the value-chain approach for sectoral competitiveness, with 37 local government units following easier steps.

The collaboration of the Decentralization Program and the Private Sector Promotion Program with the DTI, Department of Interior and Local Government and LGUs began with the pilot municipality of Barili, which now takes just 30 minutes to renew business permits, compared with the three days before the program was implemented.

According to Giz, business tax revenues rose 55 percent from 2008 to 2009. The program is now being replicated throughout the region for faster business application processes and greater transparency.

The success of streamlining of business permit and licensing systems in the region has also led the Aquino administration to launch it nationwide by reducing business steps from an average of 15 to just five and a single unified application form replacing a handful of paperwork.

Other projects they are implementing in the region are the sustainable economic development program, community-based forest and mangrove management project, the solid waste management for LGUs project of the Environment and rural development and the strategic corporate-community partnerships for local development program.

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