

Message



From the Ombudsman of the Republic of the Philippines

We have good reasons to be glad, as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary. Monitoring our own performance, I do observe a marked increase in our favorable output. And the increase is noticeable in all areas of our mandate.

Over the course of the last year, we filed more cases with the Sandiganbayan and the regular courts than in any other year in the past. We had meted out more dismissals than ever before. Our conviction rate surpassed even our own pre-set target. We produced good results in the prosecution of three (3) so-called big fish. The names and figures associated with all these are set forth in the various articles spread within the pages of this journal.

On the side of corruption-prevention initiatives, we conducted more seminars designed to give government officers and personnel an increased understanding of what accountability entails. We conducted more values-formation workshops and trainings for the youth.

The International Donor Community has not failed to notice our renewed efforts and good output. As a result, friendly agencies like the Millennium Challenge Corporation have found new reasons to offer their assistance so that our country could better fight poverty through sustainable economic growth.

And therein lies our greater challenge, because we have to provide this growth with a congenial environment, which are people and institutions working together for the common good and not engaging in corruption. For corruption sabotages economic growth and it is one big reason why our country is poor.

We should therefore not sit on our laurels. There is more work to be done.

For the real test of our success is not found in us being able to provide just a series of nice data for the statistics books, but in being able to infuse confidence in our people that right in our homeland there is real promise and hope for the future.

Therefore as I congratulate you - all the men and women of our Office - and share your joy for a job well done, I must also tell you to gear up - so the fight could be continued.


Ma. Mercedes N. Gutierrez

Philippines Eligible for MCC Compact

Ombudsman Gutierrez leads the Presentation of Anti-Corruption Reforms

BY ANNA MARIA S. SANCHEZ

The Philippines has been selected by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) as eligible to apply for an MCC compact, after the Philippine team led by Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas N. Gutierrez successfully presented to the MCC Board of Directors during its Board meeting held in Washington, D.C., a comprehensive report on multi-sectoral anti-corruption gains the country has achieved during the past year in the government's serious efforts to stamp-out corruption in the country.

As a result, the country may now apply for a large-scale grant funding for a five-year program to reduce poverty through sustainable economic growth.

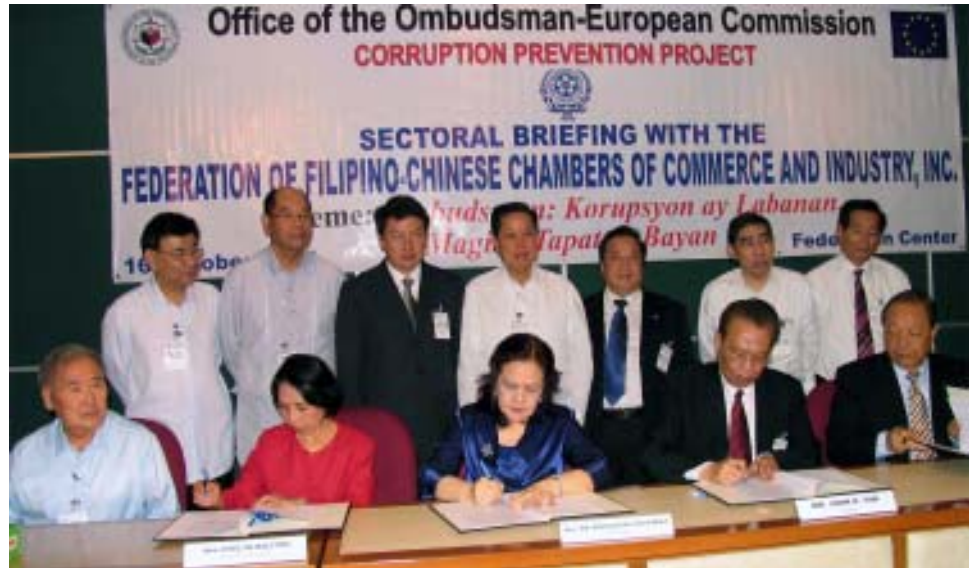
Included in the report was the notable increase in the conviction rate before the Sandiganbayan, from 19% in 2006 to 55% in 2007. This include the conviction of former President Joseph Estrada in a plunder case, which decision was promulgated in September 2007. Also, 1,200 public officials and employees were penalized for administrative violations from 2004-2006.

2007 Accomplishments

In addition to the accomplishments cited in the MCC Report, Ombudsman Gutierrez has ordered the filing of a total of 678 cases before the Sandiganbayan and the regular courts for the year 2007. She also imposed the penalty of dismissal from the service and other administrative sanctions to public officials and employees in 447 administrative cases for the same period.

To ensure speedy disposition of cases, the Anti-Graft Chief formed Task Forces which will focus on specific complaints: Task Force SAPAK (Samamang Pagkilos Laban sa Katiwalian Para Sa Kabataan) for education-related complaints; Task Force Red Plate (TFRP) for complaints involving illegal use of government vehicles; and, Task Force Green Lane (TFGL) for lifestyle check complaints.

Last year, Task Force SAPAK has received a total of 408 complaints, 109 of which are now undergoing investigation. For the TFRP, it has conducted sur-



OMBUDSMAN MA. MERCEDITAS N. GUTIERREZ and Mr. John K. Tan, President of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (FFCCII) sign a Memorandum of Agreement which aimed to curb the deleterious effects of corruption in the country's business sector. Witnessing the signing are Assistant Ombudsman Evelyn A. Baliton and Exec. Vice President Tan Tiang Siong and other officials from the FFCCII.

veillance operation of government vehicles reported by concerned citizens and conducted Red Plate Check Campaigns, from January, 2007 to March, 2008. As a result, 37 government officials and employees have been charged for the illegal use of government vehicles and another 60 are now undergoing preliminary investigation for the same offense. On the other hand, a total of seven government officials have been placed under preventive suspension upon the recommendation of the TFGL which is now investigating a total of 97 complaints.

Believing that "prevention is better than cure," Ombudsman Gutierrez continued to strengthen the OMB's graft prevention mechanisms to ensure that government officials and employees are be-

ing reminded of their accountability and the consequences if they violate laws, with the end view of reducing corruption cases in the future.

She embarked also on various information dissemination activities meant to instill in the youth good values and educate other sectors about the mandate of the OMB and how they can help each other in the realization of a graft intolerant society.

From January, 2007 to March 2008, almost 2,000 students including members of the Junior Graftwatch Units (JGUs) benefited from different seminars conducted by the OMB's Community Coordination Bureau (OMB-CCB); around

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The OSP in 2007: Unleashing their Best

BY KAREN E. FUNELAS

THE YEAR 2007 SAW GREAT heights reached by the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) in terms of the number of convictions and the kind of personalities involved. For the first time, OSP got a conviction rate of 55% compared to 26% in the years 2005 and 2006. This is the highest since this Office came to exist. This even surpassed the target rate of 40% set by the Office of the Ombudsman.

It was not only on the increased rate of conviction but also on the kind and quality of convictions attained for the country for which OSP should be commended. In 2007, the OSP scored points against known figures in Philippine politics/society, the most notable of which is the conviction of former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada for Plunder on September 12, 2007. His case was handled by a panel of prosecutors namely: former Ombudsman Simeon V. Marcelo, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, Deputy Special Prosecutor Robert Kallos, then

Acting Deputy Special Prosecutor Humphrey Monteroso, and Directors Raymundo Julio Olaguer and John I.C. Turalba with the assistance of Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon and Prosecutor Perfecto Lawrence Chua-Cheng from the Department of Justice. It cannot be denied that the conviction of former President Estrada is a landmark case as it is the first criminal conviction of a highest official of the land handed down by a court of law. The said conviction gave a strong message to the populace that corruption is a high risk and low reward activity.

This judgment secured by OSP in favor of the government in the amount of more than P569M is another notable achievement for which the former must be credited.

Another feather to OSP's hat is the plea of guilt by Charlie "Atong Ang", a co-accused of former President Estrada in the Plunder case and his agreement to

return the amount of P25M to the Philippine government.

Likewise, is the conviction of former Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez for five counts of violation of Section 3(e) of Republic Act No. 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act. Mr. Joey Marquez is the first Metro Manila Mayor to be convicted by the Sandiganbayan.

Clearly, OSP's feat for the year 2007 is a manifestation of the dedication of its prosecutors to their sworn duty to fight corruption in the government despite the odds. It also exhibits the culture of excellence in the office and the selflessness of its "unsung heroes". Despite the meager salary, the prosecutors did not waver in unleashing their talents to realize the Ombudsman's constitutional duty as watchdog and champion of the people. Indeed, the achievement of the OSP for the year 2007 have put the Office of the Ombudsman at the forefront of the fight against corruption.

EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project Breaking New Grounds for Collaborative Action

BY FERNANDO M. MENDOZA & SALLY R. GIMPAYAN

THE END OF 2007 ALSO MARKED the closing stages of the European Commission (EC)-Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) Corruption Prevention Project in the country. When the Project started its inception phase roughly three years ago, it set out to reduce corruption in the Philippines thereby (a) improving delivery of basic services to the poor; (b) enhancing the country's foreign investment and international trade standing; and (c) eradicating the grievances and vulnerabilities (through corrupt public officials) that

contribute to terrorism and political violence.

Through the Project's four major components, it sought to generate and institutionalize the collaborative efforts of the OMB with partner stakeholders from other government agencies, the wider general public and organizations from the civil society. In addition, the Project provided substantial financial and technical assistance to strengthen the OMB's institutional capacities to ensure it had competencies and resources to

carry out its constitutional mandate.

Major milestones of the Project included a nationwide observers and monitors training and the development of tripartite code of conduct in public procurement. Both activities were initiatives designed to answer the massive and pervasive threat of corruption to the public procurement system. The Project also paved the way for the development and dissemination of anti-corruption publicity campaigns and the conduct of a coun-

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EC-OMB from P/5

try-wide multi-event competition, among other activities, to raise public awareness particularly among members of the youth sector. The coverage expansion of the integrity development review and mentoring of public middle managers, in turn, addressed the identified corruption vulnerabilities in the Project's 17 participating government agencies that include

the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). Moreover, the creation of an interactive OMB website and the internal organization within the OMB strengthened the anti-graft body's organizational and technical capacities.

Equally important were the lessons learned from this endeavor. The short duration for the implementation of many of its activities, coupled with the undue

delay in the substantially reduced budget and perceived lack of political will or sufficient capability on the part of the implementers reduced the effectiveness and impact of the integrity reforms that the Project sought to institutionalize in the public sector with the assistance of the civil society. These experiences should enable both the OMB and its partners to further improve the efficacy of similar communal work in the future.

A Successful Collaborative Undertaking

The Office of the Ombudsman has successfully consummated its collaborative efforts with the European Union through a joint financing agreement signed on 10 August 2004. The Project entitled EC-OMB (European Commission-Office of the Ombudsman) Corruption Prevention Project was under the programme "Improving Governance to Reduce Poverty," focused on access to justice and corruption prevention.

The Project's main objective was to prevent corruption in the Philippines, particularly improving delivery of services to the poor; enhancing the country's standing as a partner for foreign investments and trade, and removing both the grievances and opportunities that contribute to terrorism and political violence.

The OMB has successfully completed the implementation of the various activities under the four components,

namely: Component 1: Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations (CSO); Component 2: Cooperation with the Wider Public; Component 3: Collaboration with Other Government Agencies; and Component 4: Management Requirements of the OMB. Mr Tony Kwok, a former high official of Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in Hong Kong rendered his expertise as Chief Adviser of the Project. He provided technical assistance and services in the effective and efficient management of activities under the joint undertaking between OMB and EC.

The fusion of two entities - EC and OMB with the end view of creating an environment that is intolerant of graft and corruption and improving the quality of life of the people, especially those who are in the marginalized sector, achieved the following results: (a) greater account-

ability as a result of CSO monitoring; (b) greater public confidence in the administration; (c) less corruption and fewer opportunities for corruption in government agencies; managers and staff well-informed about corruption risks, their expected behavior and channels of report; and (d) strengthened OMB management - OMB staff better trained, more motivated; reports and complaints handled fast and well; and continued OMB activity in these areas using own staff to train others and build necessary contacts.

The Office of the Ombudsman is fortunate to be given a rare opportunity to forge partnership and establish linkage with supportive donor community such as the European Union whose vision is congruent and parallel to the Office. With the culmination of the activities under the EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project, the OMB sees it not as an end of the partnership, but only the start of a more fruitful and cohesive collaborative effort.

OMB Street signage to be installed

BY IMEE P. LOPEZ

TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS and create a roadmap of the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) in the major thoroughfares of the metropolis, Ombudsman Ma. Mercedes N. Gutierrez initiated the OMB Street Signage Project.

The project was conceptualized by the Honorable Ombudsman herself, realizing a need to make the OMB visible and accessible to the commuting public who seek its assistance.

In Office Order No. 08-132 dated 18 April 2008, Overall Deputy Ombudsman Orlando C. Casimiro directed a team

of 14 OMB officials and employees to implement the installation of signages in various strategic locations. Initially, the team will focus on putting up OMB directional signs within the 500-meter radius of the Office to mark its immediate perimeters and environs. This includes the Agham Road, North Avenue, Quezon Avenue, Quezon Memorial Circle and Epifanio delos Santos Avenue.

Headed by Assistant Ombudsman Mark E. Jalandoni, the team currently coordinates with officials of the concerned agencies on the construction of

signboard structures, such as the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), and the Local Government of Quezon City. The installation within said areas is scheduled for completion in the first week of May, this year.

The OMB Street Signage project is based on an initial feasibility study conducted by the team. In said research, different locations in the entire Metro Manila were proposed as strategic sites

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Cagayan Mayors and Vice Mayors Undergo *Ehem! Aha!*

BY EDITHA D.R. DIZON

AFTER HAVING CONDUCTED SEVERAL *EHEM! AHA!* Seminars for the past three years, OMB-Luzon predicted that one question would be asked for sure by the participants: “Why don’t you give this seminar to the top officials of our government?” With that question in mind, OMB-Luzon attempted to do what it had not done before, i.e. giving *EHEM! AHA!* to the Mayors and Vice Mayors of Cagayan Province.

It was a rainy morning on September 12, 2007. Twenty-two Mayors and Vice Mayors of Cagayan gathered at the ballroom of Prince Plaza Hotel in Baguio City for the opening of the *EHEM! AHA!* Cultural Sensitivity Seminar. At first, the Ombudsman Team could not believe it was happening because it was our first seminar where all the participants were high ranking officials.

Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, Victor C. Fernandez, warmly welcomed the participants in his opening remarks. The seminar then kicked off with the participants giving one adjective to describe themselves. The objective of this activity was for all to get more acquainted with one another and to make each one feel at ease. One participant bravely describing herself as “boyish or tomboy,” and we informed her that gender was not an issue.

Surprisingly, all the participants gave their fullest cooperation and attention throughout the duration of the seminar. Module 3, Reflection, given by Atty. Cynthia Vivar was much applauded and appreciated.

Undoubtedly, I can say that the seminar was successful because the participants have been true to themselves by freely acknowledging that corruption really existed in their respective offices. Unforgettable was the challenge given by one of the participants: “ALAM NATIN NA NANDYAN NA TALAGA ANG CORRUPTION, DAPAT ISIPIN NATIN KUNG ANO BA ANG SOLUSYON PARA KAHIT PAANO AY



(Upper photo) Mayors and Vice Mayors of Cagayan Valley with the EHEM! Team of Luzon. (lower photo) Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Victor C. Fernandez and GIPO II Cynthia V. Vivar seated at the extreme left together with the participants.

MABAWASAN ITO.” This challenge hopefully will continue to inspire us in the government service in helping minimize corruption in the bureaucracy.

OMB Luzon’s attempt to reach out to high ranking officials was not in vain. They were as responsive as any other participants, and as eager and anxious to find a solution to corruption. And we from OMB-Luzon are now convinced that THERE IS STILL HOPE.

**LIFESTYLE
CHECK
HOTLINES:
927-4102
927-2404**

Signage from P/6

where the OMB signages could be situated. The major thoroughfares identified include the Epifanio delos Santos Avenue, Quezon Avenue, Don Mariano Marcos Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, North Luzon Expressway and South Luzon Expressway.

This project is part of the OMB’s public information campaign system which aimed at improving public awareness on the existence and functions of the Office. Other undertakings consist of the airing of Infomercials, putting up the Lifestyle Check Hotline, conducting Integrity Shows as part of the EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project handled by the OMB-Project Management Office and other information dissemination activities initiated by the Public Assistance & Corruption Prevention Office.

MSACC Multi-Sectoral Anti-Corruption Council

Nurturing a high integrity Philippine society

BY NIDA AVENO-GRUTA

“WE ARE WILLING TO WORK hand-in-hand together to create for our country and our children a future full of good possibilities, promises, and hope.”
- Lady Ombudsman Mercedes N. Gutierrez

As protector of the people, it is natural for the Ombudsman to envision and ceaselessly work at reducing graft and corruption to such extent that it can not prevent the Filipino people from securing for themselves the blessings that come from a society characterized by independence, democracy, peace, integrity and abundance. But the Office of the Ombudsman with its limited resources and overwhelming responsibilities, needs direct support from all sectors of the Philippine society to sustain anti-corruption initiatives in all levels of the bureaucracy. The signing of a memorandum of agreement among sixteen representatives from various government agencies and non-governmental organizations which created the Multi-Sectoral Anti-Corruption Council last March 1, 2007, as witnessed by key personalities of the donor community, is an answer to this need. It is also a prominent example of “people power” (even in a limited scale) being utilized and developed into a bigger and stronger force to fight corruption.

The most important role of the Council is to serve as a consultative and coordinating body for the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Program of Action or NACPA. Hence, its members necessarily come from the three main branches of government, the constitutional commissions, civil society groups, business, tri-media, inter-faith groups, youth, academe, government financing institutions, and non-governmental organizations. The Council, with the Om-

budsman as convenor, recognizes the utmost importance and urgency of setting into motion the wheels to achieve one of the developmental goals of the NACPA—that of facilitating the transformation of Philippine society into high integrity society.

Weeks after its launching, the Council with NACPA Secretariat, held its strategic planning workshop to put in writing its vision, mission, and goals, among others. The workshop was specifically designed to identify the most pressing governance and corruption issues that confront the country and plan strategies for addressing them. The participants developed a system of work and organized themselves into three thematic clusters—prosecution, prevention and promotion, to pursue anti-corruption projects and integrity development components of the NACPA. The Asia Foundation sponsored this strategic planning workshop which was smoothly facilitated by the Development Academy of the Philippines. The initial results of the MSACC strategic planning workshop include the following:

Vision - MSACC as unifying force building and nurturing a corruption-intolerant Filipino society that values and practices a culture of integrity and excellence

Mission - To provide direction for the National Anti-Corruption Program of Action through holistic integration, strengthening and monitoring of all anti-corruption programs of its multi-sectoral members

Goal - To unite all anti-corruption programs and promote integrity and excellence in public service

Through the system of thematic clustering, several projects were identified during the workshop, including those

aimed at improving the actual reality and perception of governance in the country. Since the completion of the strategic planning workshop, the Council, through its Promotion Cluster, has helped disseminate information on anti-corruption initiatives through its rallies for integrity and public service or multi-tract roadshows held in Quezon City last August 2007, Davao City last October 19, 2007, and Cebu City last March 14, 2008. Another roadshow is planned for Northern Luzon in June, 2008. Coordination is in progress with key personalities at Olongapo City, a model for utilizing the people for participative governance, to help host the event.

Highlights of the program of activities during the roadshows include dialogue between the Council, businessmen groups and civil society organizations; press conference with the Ombudsman and the Council members; and social services provided by certain frontline government agencies right there at the venue of the roadshow program. These rallies for integrity and public service were participated in by thousands of government officials and employees, students, civil society groups and private individuals who availed of various services readily accessible during the roadshows. The rallies for integrity have so far resulted in the creation of MSACC for Mindanao area and preparations are in full swing for the creation of MSACC for the Visayas.

The implementation of MSACC projects proposed by the Prevention Cluster is presently in progress. These include the expansion of Integrity Development Review (IDR) to cover more government agencies, the Bids and Awards

MSACC P/16

Lot for OMB Building Temporarily Used as Garden

BY EMMANUEL O. VERGARA

THE OFFICE PURCHASED from the National Housing Authority (NHA) a lot at the back of the Office building for the purpose of constructing another building to house new and existing office units which could hardly be accommodated in the existing building, and to provide space for functional areas such as for staff development and other functions. The lot has an area of 5,772 square meters and was acquired on an *is-where is* basis. Such condition of sale was due to the occupancy of said lot by 147 informal settler families.

From March 2007 to November 2007, an inter-agency consultative committee, composed of the Office of the Ombudsman, NHA, Quezon City Government, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Commission on Human Rights, Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor, Office of Congressman Vincent Crisologo, Quezon City Police District, and the Samahang Nagkakaisa sa Kahirapan, Inc., has conducted surveys of the families occupying the lot and has held consultation meetings with these families. The Committee likewise worked out for the relocation of 91 qualified families to Towerville, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. Qualified families were afforded a "tripping" to Towerville. In consultation with the affected families, the committee likewise planned for other benefits that the families may avail of, whether they are qualified or not for relocation.

The demolition was conducted in November 2007 with the assistance not only by the committee but by the Metropolitan Manila Development

Authority (MMDA), Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). Demolition day was described as orderly and peaceful, and the operation was organized and smooth, save for minor accidental cuts suffered by family members who by themselves voluntarily demolished their respective structures. Our medical staff and the PCSO medical team attended to those with minor wounds. Hot soup was served to all family members before embarking to the relocation site or to other destinations preferred by the families. The PNP, MMDA and the AFP provided "6 x 6" trucks and vans for these families.

Upon the arrival of families to Towerville, MMDA personnel helped the families in rebuilding their homes at their respective lots. The media captured the extraordinary service rendered by MMDA and the TV interviews show how glad the relocatees were on the gesture shown by the MMDA.

Despite the demolition of structures in the lot, debris remained, and with the assistance of the MMDA, the lot was levelled and provided with top

soil in preparation for the Project Green Team of Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas N. Gutierrez.

The Project Green Team aims to fully utilize the vacant lot for the organic gardening of vegetables and medicinal and ornamental plants, while the Office awaits the commencement of building construction activities. The Green Team designed a circular-shaped garden and facilitated the organization of 110 employees into 22 green thumb groups for a vegetable planting competition.

With the technical assistance of Barangay Holy Spirit, Quezon

City which boasts of an internationally-renowned model organic garden, and the National Capital Region Office of the Department of Agriculture, the Green Team and the green thumbs were trained in soil mixing and organic gardening. Armed with planting skills, the green thumbs planted pechay, mustasa, Chinese kangkong, radish, lettuce, okra and eggplants. The proverbial *masaganang ani* ensued in the months of April and May.

The Green Team with the assistance of the MMDA is currently preparing the areas surrounding the circular garden for planting of other vegetable varieties and another circular garden beyond the creek that traverses the vacant lot.



(Upper photo) The area subject of demolition (lower photo) the circular garden planted with vegetables after the demolition

OMB SOCIAL SERVICE CARAVAN

BY ATTY. JULITA S. MAÑALAC-CALDERON

The Office of the Ombudsman is always identified with the investigation and prosecution of criminal and administrative officials and employees involving graft and corruption. However, unknown to many, the Office has found a new role in public assistance. It is in this light that Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas N. Gutierrez conceptualized a project which the Office of the Ombudsman” primarily designed to bring the Office closer to the people and to promote greater awareness of the public

This project was launched in August 2006. And since the public assistance function of the Office is so broad, this project evolved into a much broader activity in the concept of a “one-stop-shop” called “OMB Social Service Caravan”. This will now serve as the arm of the Office in fulfilling this particular mandate by attending immediately to the grievances and concerns of the people in relation to the concerned government agencies as well as attending to the medical and dental needs of those who have less in life.

To date, the Office has already extended several medical and dental assistance as well as other much sought-after governmental services. The OMB Social Service Caravan had already provided its services to thousands of beneficiaries in Barangay Sta. Ana, Pateros, Metro Manila; Barangay Wawa, Balagtas, Bulacan; Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City; Barangay Tubahan, Rosario, Batangas; Morong, Rizal, Talaba, Bacoor, Cavite; Navotas, Metro Manila; Sta. Maria, Bulacan; Calamba, Laguna; Olongapo City; Sto. Rosario, Batangas; Cagayan De Oro City; Davao City; Cotabato City; Antique; and, Carcar City in Southern Cebu.

However, this project would not be as successful without the untiring support of our partner-agencies, the Philippine Air Force Medical and Dental Team, PAGCOR, PCSO, MMDA, DOH, East Avenue Medical Center, Rizal Medical Center, NBI, NSO, DENR, PDEA, DFA, and private companies and entities such as Nestle Philippines, Colgate-Palmolive Philippines, Lamoian Philippines, and Angel ng Masa of CRS, who are always there with us supporting our mission.

The Ombudsman give social services to various



RAVAN

Administrative offenses against erring govern-
or other major functions, one of which is
which was initially called as “Meet with the
public assistance mandate of the Office.

ous places nationwide



FAO: OMB's Partner for a Fast, Effi- cient, Effective and Transparent Delivery of Financial and Administrative Services

BY LYDIA O. RESURRECCION

THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRA-
tive Office (FAO) through its two operat-
ing services; namely, the Finance and Man-
agement Services (FMS) and Central Ad-
ministrative Service (CAS), provides the
Office of the Ombudsman including area/
sectoral offices stationed all over the coun-
try advice and assistance on matters relat-
ing to financial, budgetary, accounting, in-
ternal control, human resource manage-
ment, records, property and supply manage-
ment, general services, recruitment and
management improvement, among others.

Towards this end, there is a need to
strengthen the frontline services of the Of-
fice of the Ombudsman. Hence, some 558
new positions were formally created to beef
up its personnel complement. This facilitat-
ed the establishment of a Medical and
Dental Clinic to service the health needs of
our OMB officials and employees.

FAO's concern extends beyond
strengthening the frontline services. FAO
sought all available avenues and resources
to improve the working conditions of the
officials and employees through improve-
ments of their offices and grant of benefits.

Streamlining financial operations for a
fast delivery of services has likewise been
implemented to address delays. Hence, the
Resident COA Auditor is a living witness
to FAO's relentless efforts to unclog delays
in the submission of financial reports; up-
dates compliance with COA recommenda-
tions of prior year findings and implements
the much-awaited electronic New Govern-
ment Accounting System (e-NGAS) in the
OMB-Central Office.

FAO is a proven partner in the
government's thrust to cost cut on expendi-
tures and generates extra savings in terms
of savings generated in electricity and re-
duction of interest rates in our real estate
loan with the Land Bank of the Philippines
from P29,954M to P19,044M.

For this year, FAO's thrust will now

focus its resources in the computeriza-
tion of critical administrative and line
service areas. With the establishment of
a new Management Information Systems
Services (MISS), FAO looks into compu-
terization as a major step in moderniz-
ing its operations. Implementing ap-
plication systems and improving network
infrastructure are expected to strengthen
the capacity of the OMB in terms of in-
formation sharing, documents and data
management, and timely generation of
statistics/reports. FAO envisions to ac-
cess and explore the possibility of using
(a) web-based and server side applica-
tion systems for maintainability purposes;
(b) OMB intranet to facilitate informa-
tion dissemination; (c) free and open
source software (FOSS) to cut on license
fees; (d) voice over internet protocol
(VOIP) as an alternative to placing long
distance calls to regional offices for docu-
ment tracking and (f) biometric for per-
sonnel identificaton with a built-in pro-
gram for electronic computations of leave
credits earned.

In addition, FAO aims to provide the
Office with statistical data for policy in-
formation, planning and evaluation of
plans and programs. To attain this goal,
FAO intends to propose creation of ad-
ditional positions of statisticians with sta-
tistics degress and trainings. This pro-
posal will likewise enable the OMB to
monitor the submission and validation of
required reports such as accomplishment/
performance reports including other ad-
ministrative reports required from time
to time by the Ombudsman.

Together with the support of all of-
fices/bureaus/divisions in the Office of
the Ombudsman, the Finance and Admin-
istrative Office is committed to be the
***“OMB's Partner for a Fast, Efficient,
Effective and Transparent Delivery of
Financial and Administrative Services.”***

PAMO IN ACTION!

BY PAMO

THE PRELIMINARY Investigation, Administrative Adjudication and Monitoring Office (PAMO) which is tasked to conduct preliminary investigation, administrative adjudication and prosecution of cases is the essential arm of the Ombudsman in its role as "Protector of the People" and as Dispenser of Justice. The Office of the Ombudsman as an independent office and apolitical in nature the officials and employees are mandated to observe the highest degree of competence and integrity.

The strong political will of Ombudsman Ma. Mercedes N. Gutierrez enables the PAMO to work hand-in-hand with its battle cry to make "corruption a high risk low reward activity." Indeed, PAMO undertakes to enforce the rule of discipline among public servants who deviate from the same, as well as, ascertain their respective administrative, criminal and civil liabilities and indict private individuals who conspire with them.

PAMO leadership had also reiterated its goal to resolve and prosecute cases circumspcctly. In 2007, PAMO had disposed a total of 2,116 cases where 49 cases are for filing with Sandiganbayan, 123 cases filed with the regular courts, 119 were dismissed from government service, 82 were suspended as a penalty while others were preventively suspended or reprimanded. PAMO has also

acted upon judiciously complaints involving tax scam, PCGG, lifestyle cases and other high-profile cases.

The wholistic approach employed by PAMO resulted in the aggressive disposition of cases and in increasing its conviction rate, it also caters to the concerns and welfare of its Graft Investigation Officers and staff by various capacity building initiatives and training programs, reform advocacy, strategic planning and continuing reengineering of the rules and procedures of the Office with emphasis on working as a team. To further boost the morale and to strengthen PAMO officials' and employees' teamwork and camaraderie, the group went to Covelandia Resort in Labrador, Pangasinan for the 2007 annual teambuilding. Without doubt, PAMO group won the Grand Prize in the OMB's 2007 Christmas Dance Competition.

At present, PAMO's organizational structure consists of one (1) Assistant Ombudsman, six (6) Bureau Directors representing PIAB-A, PIAB-B, PIAB-C, PIAB-D, PIAB-E and PAMB, with thirty-eight (38) Graft Investigation and Prosecution Officers, six (6) Associate Graft Investigation Officers and twenty-two (22) support staff members. Despite this meager complement, PAMO has always strived to work harder and even better to help the Office in the effective dispensation of justice and its fight to rid the bureaucracy of graft and corruption.

PAMO continuously adheres to the Culture of Excellence and Integrity of the Ombudsman where **O** stands for One Family, One Mission and Vision, **M** for Model of Excellence, **B** for Bravery with Compassion, **U** for Unwavering Integrity, Honesty and Dedication, **D** as Dis-

pensar of Justice, **S** stands for Service with 5 Es (Efficient, Effective, Expeditious, Excellent and Exemplary) **M** for Men and Women who are God-fearing, Honest and Credible, **A** for Apolitical and Independent and **N** for No Fear or Favor.



"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success!"

-Adopted Slogan of PAMO

PHILIPPINES from P/4

1,000 government officials and employees attended the Public Accountability Seminar conducted in the different government agencies by the same bureau. On the other hand, the OMB, through the financial support of the European Commission, has trained on government procurement about 400 trainers, monitors and observers consisting of representatives from the government sector and civil society organizations, to ensure more transparency and accountability in government procurement of goods, services and infrastructure projects.

Aside from prosecution

and graft prevention, Ombudsman Gutierrez gave equal focus to the OMB's public assistance function to monitor the prompt and responsive delivery of basic public services.

The OMB's Public Assistance Bureau (PAB) has received a total of 7,288 requests for assistance last year, 7,028 of which were provided assistance. The OMB Social Service Caravan, which provides medical, dental and other social services to poverty-stricken areas, has served almost 20,000 individuals nationwide.

Ombudsman Gutierrez admits that the OMB still has

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NACPA/MSACC Roadshow gains Visayans' support

BY MARIA IRENE L. PINTOR

“NOTHING CAN INSPIRE the Office of the Ombudsman as the support and the patronage of the public and private sectors so visibly shown in today’s gathering,” Ombudsman Ma. Mercedes N. Gutierrez remarked before the Visayan multitude who joined the NACPA (National Anti-Corruption Program of Action)/MSACC (Multi-Sectoral Anti-Corruption Council) Roadshow spearheaded by Ombudsman-Visayas at the Cebu City Sports Complex on March 14, 2008.

About ten thousand people marched from the Cebu Provincial Capitol to the Cebu City Sports Complex at 6:30 AM in support of the anti-corruption rally, which bears the theme, “*Katiwalian ay Labanan, Maging Tapat sa Bayan.*”

An Opening Program succeeded the parade where

the participants were welcomed by Cebu-North Representative Raul del Mar and Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña.

Meanwhile, USAID Representative Carlos Gavino commended the NACPA/MSACC Secretariat and the Office of the Ombudsman for the “overwhelming and impressive show of commitment.”

Ombudsman Gutierrez, exhorted the participants to continue to lend their invaluable cooperation for NACPA to succeed and for the Office of the Ombudsman to win in the battle against corruption. She ended her keynote address by leading the participants in the singing of “*Pilipinas Kong Mahal.*”

Other Roadshow high-



HON. OMBUDSMAN GUTIERREZ cuts the ribbon to open the “Express Serbisyo Publiko.” Assisting her are ODO Orlando Casimiro, Mayor Tomas Osmeña, Congressman Raul del Mar, DO Pelagio Apostol, and DO Emilio Gonzalez III.

lights were the “Express Serbisyo Publiko” where government agencies set up booths at the sports complex to render public assistance to the Cebuano constituents; and the Multi-Sectoral Forum and the Anti-Graft Stamp Design Making Contest, which were held at Parklane International Hotel and at the Ombudsman-Visayas Conference Rooms, respectively, on March 13, 2008. Mark F. Lepon of CSCST-Main Campus received the first prize, together with CSCST System President, Dr. Bonifacio

Villanueva. Altenee John M. Ecarma of Arcelo Memorial High School and Erth John Ruffi P. Cagang of Compostela National High School were the second and third placers, respectively.

The huge number of participants to the Roadshow strengthened the hope of the NACPA/MSACC and the Office of the Ombudsman that many Filipinos are still willing to do their share for good governance. It was a confirmation of the Visayans’ commitment to take part in the fight for a graft-free Philippines.

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to hurdle a number of challenges to realize her dream of a “Filipino society intolerant to corruption and where grafters or crooks do not thrive in our midst.”

She says the MCC grant further fuels the OMB’s resolve to lead the government’s

campaign against the evils in governance.

The Anti-Graft Chief thus urges not only her OMB family to join ranks in the fight against corruption, but other sectors as well, emphasizing that this battle is the responsibility of everyone and not of the Ombudsman alone.

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ANG PROBLEMA NG KORUPSYON,
MALULUTAS LANG SA AKSYON!

Ombudsman-Mindanao: 2007 in Retrospect

BY MA. CLARISSA M. MUEGO

THE YEAR 2007 was another banner year for the Office of the Ombudsman-Mindanao. With the relentless dedication and unyielding commitment of its officials and employees, the Office more than sufficiently reached its goals and accomplished its targets in the areas of investigation, prosecution, public assistance and graft prevention.

In the conduct of its investigation and adjudication function, the Office disposed 686 cases out of the total workload of 1,454, this including the 684 that were carried over from the previous year. Out of these cases, 521 (68%) were filed in 2007, 208 (27%) in 2006, 36 (5%) in 2005 and only 3(0.4%) cases remained pending that were filed in 2004. This is in line with the thrust of the Office to give precedence and priority to the disposition and resolution of cases with earlier dockets.

The Special Prosecution Bureau (SPB) continued to actively prosecute Ombudsman cases filed in courts all over Mindanao. For 2007, the SPB actively prosecuted 254 cases. It secured 17 convictions where the charges included malversation of public funds, falsification of public document and violation of Republic Act 3019, among others.

The small and cohesive CPL Unit which performs the fact-finding functions of the office continued with the conduct of field investigations as it went on 58 fact-finding missions within

Mindanao, including Operation Red Plate. Out of the 1,374 CPL docketed cases, the eight-member unit disposed 585 cases or a disposal rate of 43%.

The function of rendering assistance, either done by walk-in clients or made thru correspondence, was done by the six-member team of the Public Assistance Unit (PAU). While they may lack in number, such does not diminish their ingenuity and versatility as shown by their accomplishment. Out of the total workload of 2,410 Requests for Assistance (RA), the PAU disposed 2,332 RA's or a disposal rate of 97%. They also spearheaded the medical and dental missions in Davao City and Cotabato.

The Graft Prevention Unit continued to implement the proactive corruption prevention policies of the Office thru various graft prevention programs such as the accreditation of 38 Junior Graftwatch Units (JGU), the designation of 25 non-organic Resident Ombudsman (RO) and the conduct of 20 Integrity and Development Accountability Seminars and 9 *Ehem! Aha!* Anti-Corruption Sensitivity Seminars all over Mindanao.

The Mindanao Regional Office in Cagayan de Oro City turned out an impressive output

with only over a year in operation. Aside from addressing requests for assistance and pursuing the project *OPlan Red Plate*, the seven people complement completed its first major project, the Topical Syllabi on Supreme Court Rulings on Ombudsman Related Cases. Medical and Dental missions were undertaken with the residents of the city as beneficiaries. Public Accountability Seminars were likewise conducted that were well attended by government officials in the region.

The year 2007 was certainly a significant year for OMB-Min as promotions were given out to deserving employees, the most notable of which was the promotion of Director Rodolfo M. Elman to Assistant Ombudsman. OMB-Min employees were sent to attend various trainings and seminars to enhance their skills and competence, this in line with the continued effort

of the Office to address the development and advancement of its personnel.

The successful conduct of the National Anti-Corruption Program of Action (NACPA) Multi-Sectoral Rally and Multi-Track Roadshow Project held in Davao City on 19 October 2007 and participated by about 4,000 people from the government and private sectors stands out as one of the major accomplishment of this area office. The overwhelming response and cooperation shown by the different sectors of society is indicative of the sentiment that graft and corruption truly has no place in our government.

With these accomplishments, OMB-Min will certainly not rest on its laurels. As it segues to another year, it will continue to strive hard to improve the delivery of services to the public in pursuit of the goal of an efficient, effective and responsive government.



DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN HUMPHREY T. MONTEROSO delivers a message to around 4,000 participants of the NACPA Multi-Sectoral Rally and Multi-Track Roadshow.

DOH Tops 2007 Ombudsman Integrity Scorecard

BY RAFAEL G. HIPOLITO

THE DEPARTMENT OF Health bested 10 other agencies in the 2007 corruption resistance review (CRR)-assessment done by the Ombudsman in partnership with the Commission on Audit, Department of Budget and Management and the Development Academy of the Philippines, which served as external assessors. DOH had a total score of 20, with 50 as the highest and a mode score of 3, meaning it was assessed at level 3 in 5 items out of 10. AFP-Philippine Navy ranked second, followed by DBM Procurement Service and LRTA. The level ratings are structured to bring the agency's integrity systems to maturity, with 0 as the lowest and 5 as the highest. Rating 0 denote absence of a systematic approach. Rating 1 indicates compliance with the basic requirements set by law, rules or regulations. Rating 2 is indicative of dissemination, deployment or access to pertinent corruption resistance policies. Rating 3 means existence of enforcement and a system of incentives and disincentives. Rating 4 shows integration and Rating 5 is indicative of cycles of improvement and a mechanism for evaluation of effectiveness.

The corruption resistance review- assessment is one of the two (2) major tools of the Integrity Development Review (IDR) Program of the Ombudsman. The other one is the corruption vulnerability assessment.

The CRR helps agencies assess their level of corruption resistance on ten (10) items, namely:

1. Leadership;
2. Code of Ethics;
3. Gifts Policy;
4. Human Resource Management;

5. Performance Management;
6. Procurement Management;
7. Financial Management;
8. Whistleblowing, Internal Reporting & Investigation;
9. Corruption Risk Management; and
10. Managing Interface with External Environment

It essentially articulates the argument that corruption in a government office has three sources, and they are:

1. The individual;
2. Organizational policies, systems and practices; and
3. External clients

AFP – Philippine Navy, PVAO, DAR, DENR, DOJ – LRA, BuCor, BFP, NIA, LRTA, and the DBM-Procurement Services participated in the 2007 Ombudsman IDR Program. This was made possible through the funding assistance of the European Commission (EC) under the EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project. As the Project recommendations get monitored by agency-based units

called Integrity Development Committees (IDCs), the IDR is a living testimony of government-civil society partnership in enhancing public service integrity as they work together in the IDCs.

The IDR is the Ombudsman's response to its legal mandate on corruption prevention. Section 13 (7), Article XI of the 1987 Constitution in relation to Section 15 (7) of R.A. No. 6770 (The Ombudsman Act of 1989) majestically emblazon a mandated Ombudsman corruption prevention function:

“Determine the cause of inefficiency, red tape, mismanagement, fraud, and corruption in the Government and make recommendation for their elimination and the observance of high standards of ethics and efficiency.”

It is auspicious that as the Ombudsman celebrates its foundation milestone, it is discharging its corruption prevention mandate with firm resolve, more than ever in its two decades of existence.

Innovations in the Office of the Overall Deputy Ombudsman

BY MARY RAWNSLE V. LOPEZ

WHEN HE TOOK THE HELM as the Overall Deputy Ombudsman, the Honorable Orlando C. Casimiro has since introduced innovations in the Office of the Overall Deputy Ombudsman (ODO).

The ODO's office has expanded thru an Office Order creating a Preliminary Investigation, Administrative Adjudication, and Review Bureau (PARB) as part thereof, in order to assist the ODO on cases assigned to him for preliminary investigation and administrative proceedings, including cases delegated to him as the approving authority thereof by the Ombudsman.

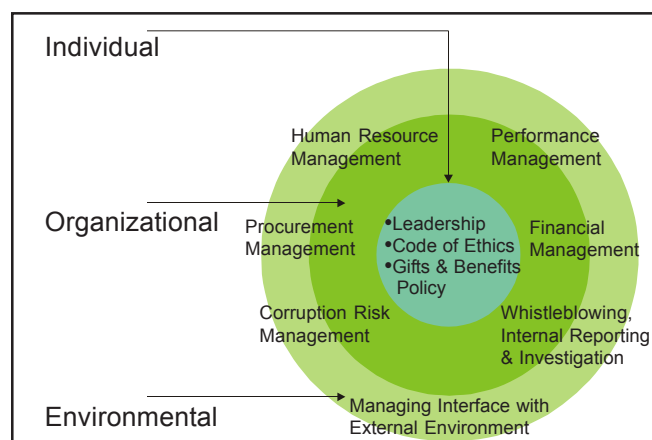
The physical appearance and structure of the ODO's office have likewise improved when separate spaces were constructed. One office is for the new bureau, and the other adjacent office is a conference room where ODO Casimiro holds meetings and conferences. Another office was constructed to accommodate the Ombudsman Security Coordinator. The space for his confidential staff has already been enhanced through the installation of low modular partitions.

The number of personnel in ODO's office has also been augmented through the appointment and hiring of new personnel to comprise his confidential staff. Hiring of additional lawyers has already commenced to complement the required workforce of the new bureau.

The Overall Deputy Ombudsman aims to further introduce other improvements in the office to make better, if not to perfect, the performance of the office in its various tasks and functions, and the delivery of service to the public in general.

The CRR framework is illustrated in the diagram below:

Integrity Development Framework



GCPE Teaching Exemplars in Focus . . .

BY MA. AMELITA P. GARCIA

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN has initiated various anti-corruption reform activities to prevent corruption. One of these activities is the enhancement of integrity education in school curriculum through the development of a comprehensive anti-corruption teaching exemplars which highlights the importance of integrity in all aspects of life. This is now known as the Graft and Corruption Prevention Education (GCPE) Teaching Exemplars.

This is aimed, among others, "to inculcate among the pupils and students in the elementary and secondary levels positive values such as honesty, integrity, professionalism, simple living and uphold of common good.

Conceptually, the design is to integrate the modules of the exemplars into the curricular activities of both elementary and

secondary levels. The Exemplars is likewise, geared towards the integration of norms of conduct enumerated in Republic Act 6713 otherwise known as the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, into the different subject areas in the curriculum. The sound values that will be taught to our children will serve as the foundation in becoming responsible citizens in the future, especially when they decide to enter public service.

The GCPE Teaching Exemplars is a joint project of the Office of the Ombudsman and the Department of Education (DepEd). The exemplars were developed and initially implemented in the year 2000. The teaching exemplars were subsequently revised in 2004 to conform with the new Basic Education Curriculum.

The revised edition consists of 52 modules both for the elementary and sec-

ondary levels. These modules were integrated in the MAKABAYAN subjects such as Araling Panlipunan, Sibika at Kultura at Edukasyon sa Pagpapahalaga.

There was a ceremonial turn-over of the Exemplars from Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas N. Gutierrez to DepEd Secretary Jesli A. Lapus in the presence of representatives from the developmental partners was made on 02 March 2007 at P. Bernardo Elementary School in Quezon City. Demonstrations on two modules, one for elementary and the other for secondary levels, were made by the teachers and pupils and students of the P. Bernardo Elementary and Secondary Schools.

Through the assistance of the European Commission and the Millennium Challenge Account, around 200,000 copies of exemplars were printed and distributed to around 44,000 public elementary and secondary schools nationwide.

MSACC from P/8

Committee (BAC) Observers/Monitors Capacity Building Seminars, Drafting of the Tripartite Code of Conduct in Public Procurement, Expansion of the Non-Organic Resident Ombudsman Program, and Establishment of Hotline/Help Desk System in all frontline government agencies.

The Prosecution Cluster has identified for monitoring the Continuous Trial Project being implemented by the SANDIGANBAYAN and the project on Profiling of SANDIGANBAYAN Cases decided in 2006.

Since its launching, the MSACC has been meeting regularly once every two months and holding special meetings to pursue its goals and objectives. Technical/administrative support and secretarial services are provided by the Council by its Technical Working Committee (TWC) and the NACPA Secretariat, respectively. To this end, members of the TWC and the Secretariat have had to undergo several capacity building seminars to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills required in discharging their functions. They have successfully completed

a Workshop on Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects, Seminar on the New Procurement Law, and Trainers' Training on Anti-Fixing.

The Council recognizes the imperative to enhance convergence management of all anti-corruption initiatives and commitments of its members within the context of three policy frameworks as originally adopted by the NACPA, namely: The Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (specifically the chapters on governance and anti-corruption), the United Nation Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), and Millennium Development Goals of state parties to the United Nations. One of its most recent challenges is to adopt and expand each of its three thematic clusters to cover the major concerns of the UNCAC, as shown below:

Thematic Cluster 1 Prevention/*Criminalization, Relevant policy Advocacy & Technical Assistance*

Thematic Cluster 2 Prosecution/*Asset Recovery, Enforcement, Investigation, Relevant Policy Advocacy & Technical Assistance*

Thematic Cluster 3 Promotion/*Information*

Cluster 3 *Exchange, International Cooperation, Relevant Policy Advocacy & Technical Assistance*

To meet this challenge, it is necessary to clarify, specify and expand the core functions of the MSACC Technical Working Committee so that each Thematic Cluster once expanded is assured of the services of a particular technical working group assigned to it. Another challenge but more pressing is the establishment of a system for performance measurement and management to be utilized as a Tracking System for all initiatives, programs, projects and other commitments made by various stakeholders belonging to the NACPA network.

The MSACC, TWC and NACPA Secretariat are ready to meet these challenges with courage, dedication, creativity and faith in Divine Wisdom. As for the Council, teamwork, commitment, and respect for one another are key principles that have fostered the vitality of its members since the creation of the MSACC a year ago. The same principles are expected to sustain it forward in mobilizing people and institutions into creating and nurturing a high integrity Philippine society.

OMB-MOLEO at work

BY FRANCISCO P. FELIZMENIO

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN is vested with the power to prevent corruption and abuse in government and to investigate and prosecute erring public officials and employees based on the constitutional provisions that a public office is a public trust and of public accountability. The Office is looked upon by the general public as the bastion of hope to curb, if not totally eradicate, graft and corruption and other abuses in government which cause losses in billions of pesos of government money and unnecessary waste of time, anger, sufferings and heartaches to the hundreds of thousands who transact with government.

The Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for the Military and Other Law Enforcement Offices (ODO-MOLEO) is the sectoral Office of the Ombudsman that exercises primary jurisdiction over all officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, the Bureau of Fire Protection, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, and law enforcers of the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, the Manila International Airport Authority, the Land Transportation Office, and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

When he was appointed as the new Deputy Ombudsman for the MOLEO in February 2007, veteran investigator Atty. Emilio "Lot" A. Gonzalez III, one of the few remaining "originals" of the office, immediately set out to make the ODO-MOLEO the prime and model office in the anti-corruption campaign of the entire Ombudsman. To achieve this goal, Deputy Gonzalez introduced and continues to institute policy and procedural changes to make the office less bureaucratic and more responsive to the needs of the people it serves.

One of the innovations Deputy Gonzalez initiated is the upgrading of the entire computer system of the office, especially in the records division, which will be realized before the end of the first semester of this year. Once achieved, it would be another pioneering act of Deputy Gonzalez aimed at making the

ODO-MOLEO more result and public-service-oriented, a constant desire of every person transacting with any government office, that is, less or no bureaucratic red tape at all.

The battle against graft and corruption, malfeasance, abuses, and other crimes perpetuated by men in uniform is fought two-pronged: prevention and investigation and prosecution.

On graft prevention, known as the "pro-active mode," the ODO-MOLEO conducts seminar workshops on integrity development and public accountability. For the year 2007, a total of 26 seminar-workshops were held nationwide where there were more than 3,000 attendees. The seminar-workshops are aimed at inculcating in the attendees the true meaning of public service--serving with integrity and being accountable for every act done.

The office is also deeply involved in the Corruption Vulnerability Analysis through the Integrity Development Review (IDR) as previously done in the Bureau of Fire Protection and the Bureau of Corrections. A similar IDR is being planned to be conducted at the Philippine National Police and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. In his keynote speech to the participants of a seminar-workshop on corruption prevention and public accountability, DO Gonzalez aptly emphasized that "public accountability is the best weapon against abuse, ineptness, malfeasance and other forms of corruption and also the best guide to effective governance."

Recognizing that corruption prevention is not only achieved through seminar-workshops, the office participated in and conducted outreach programs. The office took an active role in the Social Service Caravans launched by the Ombudsman herself where free medical and dental services as well as free eye consultation were provided together with the distribution of eyeglasses. A team from the Public Assistance and Community Coordination Bureau (PACCB) joined a medical mission conducted by a unit of the Civil Relation Service (CRS), AFP

Reserve Command in Rosario, Batangas. These outreach programs are manifestations of the office's concern for the common *tao* by reaching out to them and for them to know that there is an office, the ODO-MOLEO, they can turn to which will address their grievances when corruption or abuse is committed by a personnel in uniform.

On investigation and prosecution, for the year 2007, the ODO-MOLEO recommended 257 indictments filed with the Sandiganbayan and regular courts out of the 1,031 resolved criminal cases. Moreover, it imposed 137 administrative sanctions, ranging from dismissal from the service, suspension, and demotion of rank. Over and above these functions, the ODO-MOLEO conducted 72 fact-finding investigations which recommended for preliminary investigation and administrative adjudication. In addition, the office acted on 374 requests for assistance. Investigators of the office are actively involved in the various task forces created by the Tanodbayan such as Task Force SAPAK, Task Force Hatak, Task Force Red Plate and Task Force Amelyar. These criminal indictments, administrative sanctions and involvement in the task forces are assertions that the office means business in weeding out undesirable and abusive officers and men in uniform, hence, giving fulfillment to the hope of the aggrieved and abused in their search for justice.

Seminars on public accountability and graft prevention on the *barangay* level will be conducted not only to bring awareness to but make the office closer to the hearts of the people. Also, the ODO-MOLEO will embark its own caravan, in close coordination with the Ombudsman Proper, where seminars on the environment, proper waste disposal and the likes will be conducted. These activities exemplify that the ODO-MOLEO is their partner and hope in the fight against corruption and abuses and its men and women are always and ever ready to reach out and extend help to the people - *Lahat ng Oras Tumutulong* (LOT).

PAHRDF Activity: Strengthening Training and Development in the Office of the Ombudsman

BY MARIBETH R. TAYTAYON-PADIOS

A SIX-COMPONENT HUMAN RESOURCE development activity participated in by the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Philippine Health Insurance (PhilHealth), Supreme Court of the Philippines (SC) and the Office of the Ombudsman is currently taking its course. This nine-month training intervention, which commenced on January 21, 2008 and to culminate on September 24, 2008, is a partnership agreement between the Philippines-Australia Human Resource Development Facility (PAHRDF), an Australian Government-AUS AID initiative, and the Office of the Ombudsman. It is being implemented by the Building Responsive Intervention Through Delivery of Goal-Oriented and Empowering Services, Inc. (BRIDGES).

This PAHRDF activity aims to enable participants to design, manage, facilitate, and implement a training management system that embraces governance in relations to training policies, procedures, and structure; training and development planning; training operations; monitoring and evaluation; and other support system.

Designed to integrate all training efforts into a system that will improve overall performance of an organization, the activity expects as tangible outputs from the participants the following: (a) a developed and approved institutional Training and Development Management System (TDMS) including policies, procedures, structure, and training planning and budget processes for a 3-year strategic Training (T) and Development (D) Plan of the Office of the Ombudsman; (b) an organizational and employee Training Needs Analysis (TNA) results of the Office of the Ombudsman, translated into prioritized training needs; (c) training designs of at least three (3) courses specified in the T and D Plan, including session guides and instructional materials; (d) a training resource guidebook; and (e) training monitoring and evaluation schemes, forms, templates, techniques and reports.

Constituting the six residential and coaching activity components, some of which already implemented, are: (a) Devel-



THE OMBUDSMAN CORE TEAM: (from left) Ms. Lourdes Salazar, Atty. Janet Leah Ramos, Atty. Rachel Favila, Ms. Rosalinda Ibarra, Ms. Remedios Sobremisana, Ms. Rosanna Ortiz, Ms. Laarni Vita, Ms. Amelia Peligro, and Director Edgardo Diansuy. (not in photo) Atty. Maribeth Padios

oping Training and Development Management System (TDMS) of the Institution, January 21-25, 2008, Canyon Woods Residential Resort, Laurel, Batangas; (b) Institutional Training Needs Analysis, February 11-15, 2008, Taal Vista Hotel, Tagaytay City; (c) Developing Training Design and Instructional Materials, April 21-25, 2008, Club Balai Isabel, Talisay, Batangas; (d) Effective Training Management and Delivery, June 23-27, 2008; (e) Developing Training Monitoring and Evaluation, June 2-4, 2008; and (f) Presenting the Gains of the Experience, September 1-3, 2008.

After a professionally and personally rewarding three component activities, the Ombudsman Core Team consisting of Atty. Rachel C. Favila (PAMO), Ms. Rosalinda C. Ibarra (OMB-Luzon), Ms. Rosanna V. Ortiz (OMB-Visayas), Atty. Maribeth T. Padios (OLA), Ms. Amelia O. Peligro (OMB-Mindanao), Atty. Janet Leah M. Ramos (OSP), Ms. Lourdes P. Salazar (PACPO), Ms. Remedios S. Sobremisana (OMB-MOLEO), Ms. Laarni T. Vita (FIO), and Director Edgardo Diansuy (FAO) has presented to the management a proposed TDMS and has conducted an institutional Training Needs Analysis. It is presently developing training designs and instructional materials as its integral outputs of Component 3.

With a steadfast and unreserved commitment to accomplish the objectives of this activity, the Ombudsman Core Team envi-

sions the Office of the Ombudsman, after this training intervention, as an institution, which has not only installed, but has institutionalized and maintained an integrated human resource planning and development system incorporated into its corporate and strategic plan.

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“OMBUDSMAN: Sandigan ng Bayan, Susupil sa Katiwalian”

