



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Donna Thiessen
(703) 875-4357

USTDA AWARDS GRANT TO IMPROVE EARLY WARNING AND DISASTER RESPONSE CAPABILITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES



U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie A. Kenney (center) and Dr. Estrella F. Alabastro (right), Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology, shake hands following the award of the USTDA grant. USTDA Regional Director for South and Southeast Asia Henry Steingass (left) signed as a witness to the grant agreement.

The \$381,000 grant was conferred during a signing ceremony held at PAGASA's weather and flood forecasting facilities in Manila. U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie A. Kenney and Dr. Estrella F. Alabastro, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology, signed the grant agreement on behalf of the U.S. and Philippine governments respectively. USTDA Regional Director for South and Southeast Asia Henry Steingass and PAGASA Director Dr. Prisco Nilo witnessed the signing.

At today's grant signing ceremony, Ambassador Kenney noted with enthusiasm the continued partnership with PAGASA, "for letting us be a part in improving a [communications] system that will benefit all of us...so that we can have information, daily information or much more significant information that affects life and property. We appreciate it and we're really delighted to be a part of helping you be the very best you can be."

The Philippines is frequently exposed to weather hazards, including typhoons, monsoons, and landslides, due to its geographic location. As the government agency responsible for warning the public about these dangers, PAGASA has successfully undertaken a number of modernization efforts to improve their operations. PAGASA is now seeking to identify the necessary upgrades to ensure real-time data transmission linkages among its monitoring facilities, as well as interconnectivity, and has plans for a broadband network system.

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The study funded by today's grant will provide a comprehensive analysis of PAGASA's meteorological and hydrological telecommunications system needs. In addition, the study will include the implementation and financing plans for the identified technologies, and corresponding system specifications and bidding documents. The opportunity to conduct the USTDA-funded study for PAGASA will be competed on the Federal Business Opportunities website at www.fedbizopps.gov. Interested U.S. firms should submit proposals according to the instructions in the Federal Business Opportunities announcement. PAGASA will select the U.S. contractor that will complete the study.

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, early investment analysis, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.

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