

The GEM Program

The GEM-3 program builds on the work carried out under GEM-1 (1995-2002) and GEM-2 (2002-2007). GEM-3 got underway in January 2008. The program is expected to operate until the end of 2012.

GEM operates throughout Mindanao, with a special focus on the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and other conflict-affected areas (CAAM).

GEM has two principal objectives:

- Accelerate economic growth in Mindanao and help assure that as many people as possible participate in and benefit from the growth.
- Help bring about and consolidate peace in Mindanao.

GEM works with: producer associations and cooperatives; the Mindanao Business Council; the ARMM Business Council; chambers of commerce; private firms; the Mindanao Development Authority; national government agencies; provincial and local governments; Parent-Teacher Associations, private sector companies; bilateral and multi-lateral donor agencies; and other organizations and individuals working to bring about equitably distributed economic growth and strengthened peace in Mindanao.

GEM Components

- Infrastructure Development
- Workforce Preparation
- Business Growth
- Governance Improvement

Infrastructure Development Component

Principal activities include:

Barangay Infrastructure Projects (BIPs). BIPs are “small-scale” infrastructure projects constructed to help increase economic growth in barangays, and to respond to the needs of Mindanao’s religious and cultural minorities. GEM-3 is constructing 800 BIPs, located primarily in the ARMM and other CAAM.

Regional Impact Projects (RIPs). RIPs are economic infrastructure projects that could catalyze the expansion of business or industry in a region or make possible the emergence of new businesses or industries. GEM-3 is constructing 12 RIPs located in the ARMM and other CAAM.

Business Growth Component

Principal activities include:

Business Support Organization (BSO) Development. GEM identifies BSOs, and increase their effectiveness, assisting chambers of commerce that have not yet received USAID support; assisting BSOs working in the tourism and aquaculture sectors; assisting chambers of commerce in their advocacy for improved LGU performance in revenue generation, corruption control and quality of education; and assisting BSOs to plan and implement strategic events in their areas.

Targeted Commodity Expansion Project (TCEP). TCEP increases rural incomes by helping to triple international exports and domestic out-shipments (volume and value) of targeted commodities. Sales of these products, including fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, tuna, carrageenan and high-value marine products such as abalone, grouper and sea cucumber are expected to reach \$82 million by late 2012. TCEP helps to expand warehousing, cold storage and VHT facilities to support the increased export and out-shipment of targeted commodities, and assists producer associations to improve their competitiveness through training and information on improved production, packaging and marketing.

TCEP provides communities of former MNLF combatants with pre- and post-harvest facilities and training needed to achieve more profitable farming or fishing.

Workforce Preparation Component

Principal activities include:

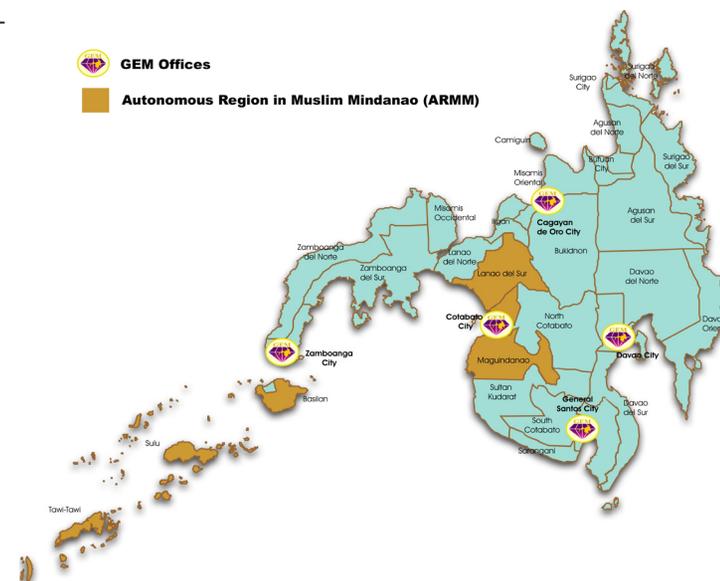
Computer Literacy and Internet Connection (CLIC) Project. CLIC introduced computer and internet education to 253 high schools in conflict-affected areas since 2008 by providing internet-connected computers and related teacher training.

Education Matching Grant Project (EMGP).

EMGP provided peso-for-peso matching grants to the PTAs of over 450 schools since 2008 to enable them to undertake education improvement activities such as the establishment of libraries, science laboratories and multimedia computer centers.

Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Project. JEEP will improve the effectiveness and utility of English language instruction programs at colleges and universities in Mindanao, to help increase their graduates’ employability in industries requiring English language proficiency. Over 14,000 students are participating in late 2011, with over 27,000 students participating since 2009.

Investments in Vocational, Elementary, Secondary and Tertiary Studies (INVESTS). INVESTS provides students with financial support to enable them to take advantage of educational opportunities or training.





Productive Internships in Dynamic Enterprises (PRIDE) Project.

PRIDE is an internship program that provides qualified recent college graduates with 3 to 6 month internships in national or multinational firms.

Governance Improvement Component

Principal activities include:

Revenue Enhancement and Progress (REAP) Project. Under the REAP Project, GEM helps ARMM/CAAM LGUs to improve local infrastructure by substantially increasing the amount of revenue collected through property and business taxes. GEM provides successful LGUs with material benefits (for example, a BIP) when they reach jointly-agreed annual revenue increase targets.

Congressional Internship Program for Young Mindanao Leaders (CIPYML). GEM has provided qualified 246 recent graduates of colleges in ARMM and other conflict-affected areas with hands-on experience in legislation and policy formulation through an internship at the Philippine House of Representatives.

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