

Suggested Remarks
USAID Mission Director Jon D. Lindborg
BIP Turn-over Ceremony
Bangonay Trading Center
Jabonga, Agusan Del Norte Province
1 February 2007, 9:00 a.m.

Gov. Amante
Mayor Moran
Local Government Officials
GEM Program Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure and a privilege to be here with you all today, as we formally turn over another Barangay Infrastructure Project, the Bangonay Trading Center.

This facility is one of 815 community-level infrastructure projects that USAID, in partnership with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, is planning to

build by the end of 2007, through our Growth with Equity in Mindanao, or GEM Program.

These types of facilities, as well as a number of larger infrastructure improvements that we will also support, all aim to help expand access to economic opportunity, social services, and improve the quality of life in the beneficiary communities. They also complement other important efforts that the U.S. Government and our Philippine partners are pursuing in the areas of microfinance, improved governance, education, family planning, health and nutrition, environmental management, and renewable energy.

While this simple facility will provide the residents of Bgy. Bangonay and its neighbors with a common area to buy and sell their produce, it serves a larger purpose. It demonstrates that partnerships between a community and our two governments -- mutually committed to peace and prosperity in Mindanao -- can achieve true progress, and real results. Thanks to these partnerships, we see before us today a concrete expression of the benefits of peace.

The American people are truly pleased to be able to help those who are committed to peace and who have the vision to see a brighter tomorrow for this Barangay, the Municipality of Jabonga, the Province of

Agusan Del Norte, Mindanao and the
Philippines.

Thank you.