PSPA in partnership with DAP highlights phronesis during the launching of Philippine Phronetic Leadership Cases

The Philippine Society for Public Administration (PSPA) in partnership with the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), under the LEADING Asia project, conducted a joint book launch of the Philippine Phronetic Leadership Cases last 07 February 2019 at the DAP Building in Pasig City. An officer from the JICA Philippine Office represented JICA in this important event.

The Leadership Enhancement and Administrative Development in Asia (LEADING Asia) project pioneered in 2013 with 18 participants from ASEAN countries aimed at developing case studies focused on developing capacity assessment tools and modules for training programs that encompasses Japanese experiences guided by the Nonaka framework of Professor Ikujiro Nonaka. The LEADING Asia project is through the leadership of National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) Vice President Professor Kiyotaka Yokomichi and Professor Kiichi Tomiya, and Professor Masaei Matsunaga of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
The event featured leaders from both the national and local governments, as well as the civil society sector, recognized for their phronetic abilities: the ability to make a judgment on goodness, grasp the essence, create the 
*ba*, articulate the essence, use political power, and foster phronesis, or practical wisdom, in others.

These phronetic leaders were Mr. Tomas “Butch” Africa, former National Statistics Office (now Philippine Statistics Authority) Administrator; Hon. Feliciano “Sonny” Belmonte, Jr., former Mayor of Quezon City and now Congressman of the Fourth District of Quezon City; and Mr. Antonio “Tony” Meloto, founder of Gawad Kalinga.
The plenary discussion ended with a very academic yet practical synthesis of Dr. Eduardo Gonzalez as he tried to incorporate the three phronetic leadership cases into a brief and thorough analysis.

Closing remarks were then given by Dr. Magdalena Mendoza, Senior Vice President of the Development Academy of the Philippines. Also present in the event were Atty. Engelbert Caronan, President and CEO of DAP, Dr. Lizan Perante-Calina, PSPA President and other PSPA Officers and Board Members. The plenary discussion was moderated by Dr. Alex B. Brillantes, Jr., PSPA Immediate Past President and accompanied by Dr. Eduardo Gonzalez, as plenary reactor, former President and CEO of DAP.
The keynote speakers made presentations of their leadership and management style based on their tacit and explicit knowledge. Mr. Africa discussed the former status of the National Statistics Office (NSO) and their constraints as a national government agency with the mandate to deliver efficient services to the mass public using only a minimal budget from the administration. It was during his term that the Census Serbilis was implemented, paving the way for the advancement of public service efficiency in the civil registry sector.

Congressman Belmonte, meanwhile, focused on the phronetic leadership in the local government which he executed when he served as Quezon City Mayor for three consecutive terms. He shared that it was during his administration that the City became as progressive and as independent as it is right now. He mentioned the struggle of combating the debt crisis of the City along with social and environmental dilemmas it confronted at the time. Congressman Belmonte’s phronetic leadership became a means for the City to receive recognitions from government agencies such as Galing Pook and achieved its status now as the “bedroom of Metro Manila.”

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Last among the plenary speakers to present was Mr. Meloto, a phronetic leader from civil society sector. He discussed how one’s childhood and personal experiences affect a person’s perspective of society, and eventually motivate the person to bring forth innovations that can lead to a better society, just like what he did when he founded the Gawad Kalinga. It was also during Mr. Meloto’s presentation when he stated that, “I value the freedom to serve and not the power to rule,” pertaining to the rumors of him being offered a seat in the Cabinet.
LEADING Asia
Leadership Enhancement & Administrative Development for Innovative Governance in Asia

“Regional Knowledge Co-creation Program on Public Organizational Development in Southeast Asian Countries” (the Program) is a consortium-based research project related to public organizational development. Commissioned by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and steered by GRIPS, the program is run cooperatively by a consortium involving GRIPS, Southeast Asian universities, governmental human resources training organizations and other related organizations.

The consortium conducts case studies and agile projects related to public organization development. In Japan, case studies on Japanese public policy and institutions are conducted and the outcomes are shared with participating organizations in other countries. GRIPS, as the hub organization of the Program, holds seminars, workshops and forums with participation by the member countries of the consortium. The program is scheduled to be in operation from April 2016 to March 2019.

About the Project

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Southeast Asian countries are expected to become a substantial source of global economic growth. However, the social and economic complexity accompanying globalization presents new and ever more complex policy challenges for those countries. Those policy challenges call for agile response by the governments of those countries. The governments are trying a variety of approaches to the development of their public organizations so as to improve their capacity to deal with such policy challenges.

The development of public organizations, which could be referred to as “national software infrastructure,” is considered as a significant and central challenge by Southeast Asian countries, who are working to accelerate their social and economic development in the context of democratic systems. That development is also a condition for Japan’s work to promote policy collaboration with high-potential Southeast Asian countries.
On the other hand, since Japan has applied the policies of western countries to its own development and has succeeded in organizing its unique public system, it is seen as having a great deal of experience which can be useful for Southeast Asian countries. However, Japan’s experience of public organization development is not yet fully articulated and has not been subject to sufficient scholarly examination, so its dissemination to other countries is not appropriate at the moment.

For these reasons the program is being implemented to facilitate policy collaboration between Japan and Southeast Asian countries and to contribute to the solution of important policy challenges. Southeast Asian universities, government human resources training organizations and other related organizations conduct studies of existing cases and engage in a variety of research including agile projects addressing current policy challenges. At the same time, in Japan, case studies on public policies and institutions are under way, lending support to Southeast Asian case studies and agile projects responding to high priority public organizational development policy challenges. GRIPS, as the hub organization of the program, holds seminars, workshops and forums to provide Ba (shared space for emerging relationships) for knowledge co-creation. In Ba, all participating organizations (collaborating organizations) can learn from each other's work and findings and develop connections with organizations in other countries who are dealing with similar policy challenges. This will generate findings which can contribute to the reform and improvement of public organizations and of policy process, and also to the formation of community uniting the participating organizations. Program participants include six countries (Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Japan) and over 20 collaborating organizations including universities and government human resources training organizations.

The program, scheduled to be in operation for 3 years, from April 2016 to March 2019, is based on, and will serve as an extension of, the predecessor project, “Case Study and Modeling of Organization Management in Southeast Asia,” which was implemented from March 2013 to September 2015. The previous project covered Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, and its framework was based on the Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation advocated by Ikujiro Nonaka, professor emeritus at Hitotsubashi University. The study included (a) case studies on the public policies and institutions of each country and (b) investigation of features and challenges of public organization based on the case studies.
A Glimpse of the 2019 Joint Launch of Phronetic Leadership Cases