*SDG 17 | Indicator 17.2.1*

# ISU Engagements with Government on SDG Policy Development (2025)

In 2025, Isabela State University (ISU) worked with national government agencies, regional offices, and local government units to identify sustainable development challenges and contribute to policy and strategy discussions. The following reports document ISU's role in these engagements, including how it brought research and stakeholder perspectives into discussions on water security and worked with government partners to design programs for human rights education and cooperative development.

## 1 ISU and Kyoto University Facilitate Stakeholder Consultation on Water Resources and Dam Management

*January 23, 2025 | ISU Echague*






Isabela State University (ISU) and Kyoto University facilitated a stakeholders' consultative meeting on January 23, 2025, at Valmayor Hall in the Cagayan Valley Agricultural and Aquatic Resources Research and Development (CVAARRD) Building. The meeting brought together representatives from academe, the private sector, national government agencies, and provincial local government to help shape strategies for sustainable water resource management and dam operations.

The collaboration focuses in part on the Magat River Basin in the Cagayan Valley Region. It seeks to introduce new technologies and develop integrated water resources management (IWRM) practices. The work is intended to inform practical policies, improve dam operations, and strengthen water security under extreme climate conditions.

Representatives from the National Irrigation Administration, the Provincial Government of Quirino, SN Aboitiz Power Group, Cagayan State University, and the regional office of the Department of Public Works and Highways shared their perspectives during the meeting.

ISU and Kyoto University presented the project's expected outcomes and worked with participants to identify challenges and opportunities in water resource management and dam operations. The discussion also helped build stakeholders' capacity to adopt tools for climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

After the consultation, Prof. Sameh Ahmed Kantoush, Kyoto University's principal investigator, and Dr. Orlando F. Balderama, ISU Vice President for Research and Development, Extension and Training, led the Nexus Project inception meeting. The project team presented and reviewed its objectives, timeline, methods, and responsibilities.


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## 2 ISU and Japanese Partners Advance Water Security through the Japan–Philippines Nexus Program

*March 12, 2025 | Kyoto University, Uji, Japan*




ISU helped lead the Japan–Philippines Nexus Program on Water Security Inception Workshop and Ministerial Level Meeting on March 12, 2025, at Kyoto University's Disaster Prevention Research Institute (DPRI) in Gokasho, Uji City, Kyoto, Japan. The program is a collaboration between Kyoto University and ISU. Prof. Sameh Ahmed Kantoush, president of the International Organization on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Management Inc. (IO-CCA-DRRM), serves as principal investigator. Prof. Jeoffrey Lloyd R. Bareng, ISU University Director for Research and Development, serves as project leader, with support from then ISU President Prof. Ricmar P. Aquino and Vice President for Research and Development, Extension and Training Prof. Orlando F. Balderama. The project aims to develop technologies for sustainable water resource management and reservoir dam operations under extreme climate variability.

The workshop and ministerial meeting brought together Philippine and Japanese government, industry, and academic partners. Participants included Philippine Ambassador to Japan Mylene J. Garcia-Albano, who represented the Governor of Isabela, chair of the Cagayan River Basin Management Council. Also present were Commission on Higher Education Commissioner Marita R. Canapi, Kaori Yamada of the Japan Science and Technology Agency, executives from the Japan Water Agency, Department of Agriculture directors, and National Irrigation Administration officials. Industry partners included SN Aboitiz Power, IHI Construction Service Co., Ltd., and Pacific Consultants Co., Ltd.

University officials from ISU and Kyoto University joined institutional leaders from Ryukoku University, Romblon State University (RSU), Bulacan State University (BulSU), the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines (USTP), and Mountain Province State University (MPSU). Their participation broadened the academic network supporting Philippine–Japanese collaboration on integrated water resources management.

During an orientation with the International Lake Environment Committee Foundation (ILEC), delegates toured Lake Biwa, Japan's largest lake. Prof. Masahisa Nakamura, ILEC Vice President and former Director of the Lake Biwa Research Institute, discussed how the lake has been managed over time, including its approaches to flood management and water conservation. He also described ILEC's work on challenges facing lakes worldwide. Delegates visited the Biwa Lake Museum and the Seta River Weir at the lake's main outlet.

Following the exchange, ILEC expressed its commitment to work with ISU and its partner universities, including RSU, BulSU, USTP, and MPSU, on inland water conservation. The collaboration supports the Nexus Program's research on sustainable management of the Cagayan River Basin, with potential applications in other Philippine river basins.







**Source** River Basins for Sustainable Development

# 3 ISU and CHR Region II Establish Partnership for Human Rights Education

*November 5, 2025 | ISU Echague*




Isabela State University (ISU) and the Commission on Human Rights Region II (CHR Region II) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to establish the Center for Human Rights Education (CHRE) on November 5, 2025, at Alba Hall, ISU Echague Campus. ISU President Dr. Boyet L. Batang and CHR Region II Regional Director Atty. Jimmy P. Baliga led the signing, witnessed by university and campus officials and CHR representatives.

The center is intended to serve as a social laboratory for human rights education, where the university can develop approaches to teaching, advocacy, and capacity building that promote respect for human dignity and rights. Its programs will involve faculty, staff, and students in instruction, research, and community extension, with activities on campus and in partner communities.

In June 2025, CHR Region II conducted an orientation on the proposed center. The session brought together key stakeholders to help shape its vision and foundational goals ahead of the agreement.

Under the MOA, ISU, through its Gender and Development Office, will lead efforts to integrate human rights principles into curricula, training, and instructional materials. ISU will conduct education and advocacy activities for students, faculty, staff, and community partners and undertake research to strengthen human rights education. The university will also support community capacity building, including the establishment of Barangay Human Rights Action Centers and programs addressing the needs of vulnerable sectors.

At the signing, Dr. Batang described education as a means to nurture respect for life, equality, and freedom. He said the center would provide a venue for dialogue, research, advocacy, and community empowerment.

> "As we formalize this partnership, let us be reminded that the work ahead calls for courage, compassion, and collaboration. We are hoping that this center inspires a generation of learners and leaders who will stand for truth, uphold justice, and build a society where every person's rights are recognized and therefore respected," Dr. Batang said.

Atty. Baliga commended ISU's support for the initiative. He noted that the partnership recognizes the role of education in preparing future leaders who are knowledgeable, skilled, and respectful of human dignity.

The agreement supports ISU's work in socially responsive education and CHR's mission to promote a human rights–based approach across sectors. Both institutions aim to strengthen human rights education and practice in academic and grassroots settings across the Cagayan Valley Region.




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## 4 ISU and CDA Region II Partner to Train Cooperative Educators




Isabela State University (ISU) and the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) Region II entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for a Training of Trainers (TOT) program. The program serves accredited cooperative training providers (CTPROs) and prospective applicants under the CDA Accreditation Program.

The agreement supports CDA's mandate to promote and strengthen cooperatives nationwide and recognizes the role of state universities and colleges in cooperative development under Republic Act No. 11364. It also supports ISU's work in regional development through extension services, capacity building, and applied research.

Through the agreement, ISU and CDA Region II aim to expand access to training and equip trainers with the skills and standards needed to improve cooperative governance, management, and enterprise performance. The partnership builds on the KooPerAtbp Extension Program of ISU's College of Business, Accountancy and Public Administration, which connects the training to the needs of cooperatives and their communities.

ISU and CDA Region II will jointly develop the standard curriculum and share responsibility for monitoring and evaluation. ISU will implement the standard course outline, build a pool of resource speakers, facilitate training activities, prepare information and education materials, and issue certificates of completion to qualified trainers.

The initiative also provides for customized workshops on cooperative governance, mentoring, demonstration farms, and support for training hubs. These activities are intended to help cooperatives apply what they learn and strengthen their operations across the region.

CDA Region II Regional Director Atty. Nita Doreen L. Maestre-Tabbu expressed confidence in the partnership and emphasized the role of state universities and colleges in delivering quality cooperative education.

> "We need you, State Universities, and we chose Isabela State University to be our partner—and this would be our maiden voyage for the implementation of the TOT. We believe that if we want to implement education in its purest form, State Universities should be our partners," Atty. Tabbu stated.

ISU President Dr. Boyet L. Batang emphasized how the partnership could contribute to local livelihoods and help cooperatives develop their members and communities.

> "It takes collaboration, trust, and a united commitment to nurturing sustainable livelihood and resilient progress…With this partnership, we are investing not only in skills but in people, not only in programs but in futures," Dr. Batang affirmed.

The partners expect the program to strengthen the cooperative sector in the province and serve as a model for future capacity building supported by state universities and colleges.




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