

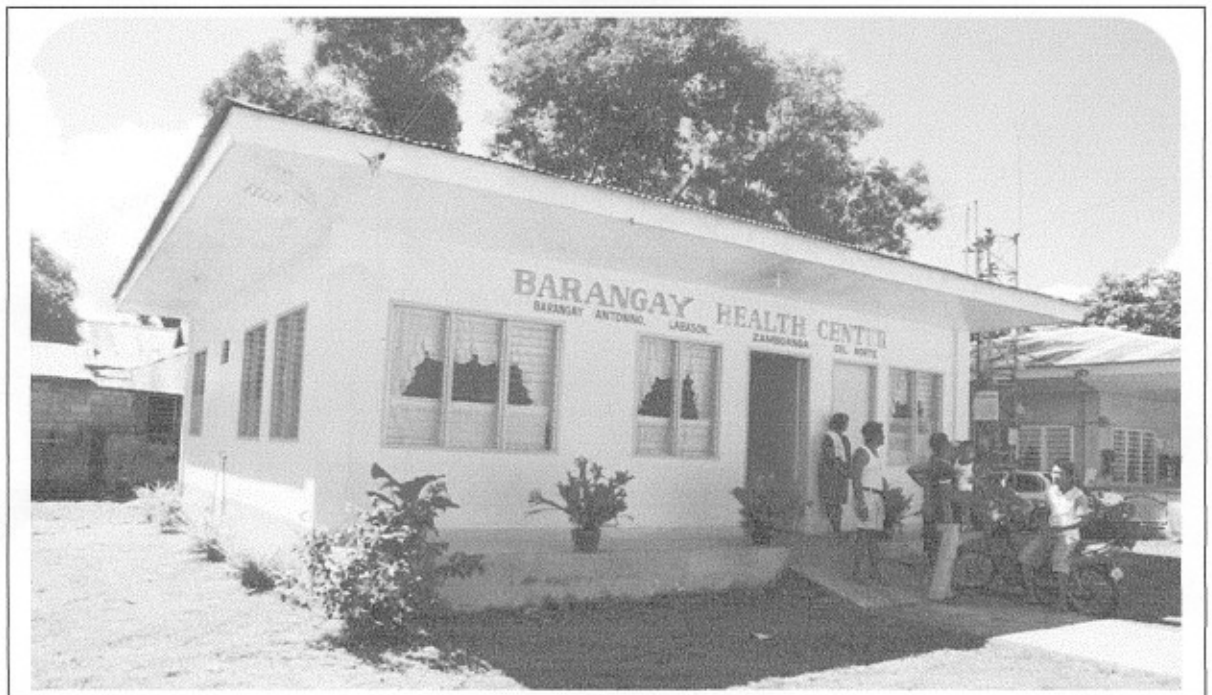
On-site Project Visit Report
Labason, Zamboanga del Norte

Labason is one of the seven (7) municipalities of the Province of Zamboanga del Norte in Mindanao, with income classification of 4th class municipality. The Municipality of Labason is composed of twenty (20) Barangays or sub-communities with a population of 42,332. The common means of income of its residents are on agriculture and fishing.

The municipality can be considered one of the depressed towns, most of the occupants cannot afford to go to the institutions to seek services for their basic needs, particularly on health, and neither the local government of Labason can provide the quality health services to the communities.

In the year 2006, it was recorded that of the total women who gave birth 89% of the women delivered at their respective homes, which was attended by both the trained and untrained birth attendants, while 10% were hospital deliveries and 1% were health center deliveries. In this situation more women and babies are at risk when complication occurs since more deliveries are done at home with no facilities or doctor who can immediately attend to the mother.

The need of health facilities and affordable services especially to cater to the pregnant women motivated Dr. Fe Claire Ticag-Buctuan, the Municipal Health Doctor to look for assistance and mobilize resources to improved health centers thus encouraging more women to have delivery at the health center rather than at home .



Barangay Health Center, Brgy. Antonino, Labason, Zamboanga del Norte

The Barangay Health Center situated in Barangay Antonino was the first improved Barangay Health Center, assisted by Belgian donations. It was renovated in May 2008 and finished after four (4) months. The center has one (1) room for delivery which is being attended by trained Birth Attendants. The Barangay health center is also rendering other health services aside of delivery such as immunization and health and nutritional monitoring not only to residents of Barangay Antonino but to other nearby Barangay residents as well.

The Municipal Health Center is another health facility situated in Barangay Imelda, Labason. It is wider in scope since it serves the whole residents of the municipality who cannot afford the Hospital services. It is run by a Municipal Health Doctor; Public Health Nurse, Medical Technologist, Malaria Technician, Dental Aide and Rural Health Midwives.

There are 2 provincial hospitals in the area. One is relatively close to the municipal health center of Labason but is so poorly supported by the local authorities that very few patients dare to go there. Another hospital situated around 50 km from Labason is better equipped and most patients who can't be treated at the Municipal health Center go there.

The original size of the Municipal Health Center followed the standard of a Barangay Health Center and was too small for its supposed services. Time came that it also needed fixing and renovation. When Dr. Fe Claire Buctuan came and was assigned as Municipal Health Doctor she proposed to the Local government of Labason for a budget allocation for the renovation and extension of the municipal Health Center but according to Dr. Buctuan it was not treated as priority since no assistance was extended.

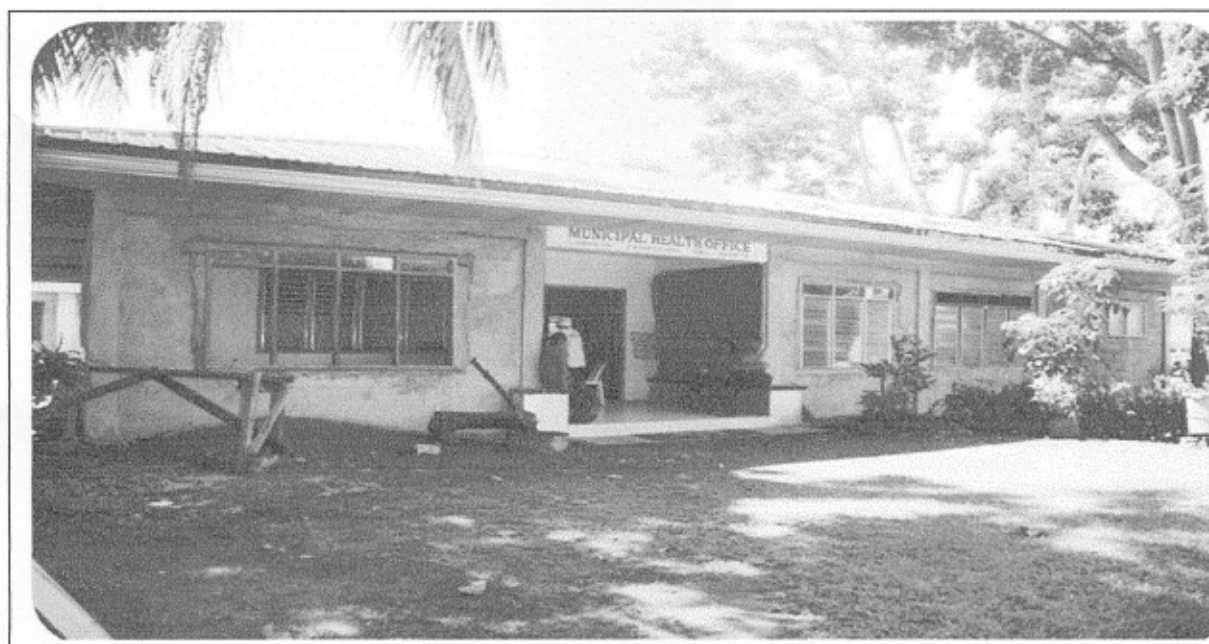
The Department of Health of the national government had been tapped and generated one hundred fifty thousand pesos (150,000.00) for the renovation, but it was not easy for Dr. Buctuan to start. A resolution that authorizes for the withdrawal and use of the fund was needed and the government of Labason did not bother to release the said document, so, the office of Barangay Imelda had to be tapped to prepare the resolution.

The first donation was insufficient to improve substantially the Municipal health Center so Dr. Buctuan, as representative of Labason Municipal Health Office prepared a project proposal to Dr. Jan Lepeleire and his Belgian friends for the renovation and expansion of the Labason Health Center.

The project was initiated in order to improve the health services in the municipality particularly the mother and child health care but also the anti-tuberculosis program. Separate rooms were added for Labor, delivery, recovery room or admitting room where mothers could stay of least 24 hours after delivery. Another separate room for Tuberculosis patients was also added to be able to meet the basic standard requirement of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) for accreditation. The accreditation for the maternity and Tuberculosis facilities could generate revenue to the health center in every treated patient.

At present, even still under renovation, the Municipal Health Center caters to an average of 100 patients a day. The services are in place and there is a supply of cheap generic medicines this due to the efforts of the 7 municipal health doctors of Zamboanga Del Norte. This program of common purchase of generic medicines was initiated by the Belgian Cooperation Project (BIARSP) and the doctors have continued it to the benefit of the poor patients.

There are also an organized Barangays health Workers group under the leadership of midwives and the municipal doctor, Dr. Claire. The midwives are in charge of the Barangay health Centers and the Barangay Health Workers report and refer any health problems in the community to the Health Center. Only few Barangay Health Center are as good as the one constructed in Barangay Antonino!



Labason Municipal Health Center

This picture of the Labason municipal Health Center shows the current development of the project since the start of the renovation on August 2009. Three (3) remittances were given through DISOP Philippines, coming from funds collected in Belgium. The first remittance was made on July 14, 2009 in the amount of three hundred ninety thousand pesos (390,000.00), the second was on December 2, 2009 with an amount of five hundred fifty-three thousand, five hundred twenty pesos (553,520.00) and the most recent one was on August 23, 2010 in an amount of three hundred four thousand nine hundred fifty pesos (304,950.00) for a total of one million, two hundred forty-eight thousand, four hundred seventy pesos (1,248,470.00).

The first and second amounts were already liquidated but not yet the last one. Cash balance is presently amounting to one hundred sixty-nine thousand, six hundred sixty-four pesos and fifty centavos (169,664.50)

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As of September 2010, the renovation is on-going and is around 70% finished. It is expected to be finished by early quarter of next year. With the improved and fully operational facilities Dr. Claire is expecting an increased number of patients that seek consultation and treatment at the Municipal Health Center.

It was observed that the local government of Labason is not involved in making effort for the development of the health center. During the on-site-visit of Ms. Kathleen Deckmyn, the DISOP Phils representative, on September 23, 2010 to Labason, she met the Municipal mayor for a courtesy call. Ms Kathleen informed the mayor that they are fortunate for having such a dynamic doctor, she also encouraged the mayor to prioritize the improvement the health center and other health services in the municipality.