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**Title: ADB joins PBSP in poverty alleviation project**

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An official of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has underscored the need for more partnerships between the public and private sectors to pool financing and technical expertise in combating urban poverty.

ADB senior housing finance specialist Michael Lindfield made this point during a presentation on ADB's Strategic Private Sector Partnerships for Urban Poverty Reduction (STEP-UP) project in conjunction with the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP).

It was part of the Fourth Corporate Social Responsibility Week of the League of Corporation Foundations.

STEP-UP is a pilot public-private sector partnership to upgrade slums in Metro Manila, Philippines, which ADB is supporting with a US\$ 3.6- million grant from its Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR), financed by the Government of Japan.

"STEP-UP aims to change the way in which the corporate sector interacts with, and provides support, to local communities. Government alone cannot effectively address the scale of the problem," said Mr. Lindfield.

"Broader private sector involvement is urgently required." Lindfield noted that this pilot project has taught important lessons about the capacities of poor communities, appropriate forms of financing, and the modalities of partnerships with the private sector.

In the six months since the project was launched, 19 homeowners associations, or some 4,429 households from six cities and a municipality, have signed up for the project, reaching 82.6 percent of the target.

Financial and volunteer contributions from the private sector and people's organizations have been used to construct roads, alleys and drainage systems, canal fencing and to install water systems.

A seminar workshops on disaster management and risk reduction has also been held. Professional groups of architects, engineers, contractors and designers have provided technical advice on the design of houses and open spaces to ensure structural soundness and aesthetic value.

Some 35,000 poor people in 23 communities throughout Metro Manila will benefit.

In an innovative approach, ADB is partnering PBSP, a corporate-led non-government organization (NGO) promoting social development, and well as local government units (LGUs). PBSP's membership comprises over 160 corporations.

STEP-UP has private sector backing and promotes new partnerships with a wide base of stakeholders, including homeowners' associations and NGOs.