



Linkage

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Strengthening GOOD GOVERNANCE



Region 2 leaders safeguard peace and order, protection of natural resources

EDITORIAL TEAM

Consultants
RD MARYANNE ER. DARAUAY
RD PURITA S. LICAS

Editor-in-Chief
GERARDO L. CATOLOS

Managing Editor
ANNE Y. LASAM

Article Writers and Lay-out Artists
DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH DIVISION

Contributors
RDC2 Members

News and feature articles are welcome and may be submitted to the RDC2 Secretariat c/o NEDA RO2. However, the RDC2 reserves the right to choose and edit articles for publication. Comments and suggestions are also accepted.

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ABOUT THE COVER

This issue features stories about the efforts of the RDC2 in upholding the principles of good governance in making and implementing decisions aligned with the overall development of the region and its populace. Like mechanical gears, the efforts of the member-agencies of the RDC2 are designed to mesh perfectly together to make things work and to achieve the best results.



Phone: (078) 304-9300
Fax: (078) 304-1243
E-mail: neda_ro2@yahoo.com



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MACROECONOMY

- ◆ Inflation rate at 2.0%
- ◆ Employment rate at 96.8%
- ◆ Unemployment rate at 3.2%
- ◆ Underemployment rate at 11.1%

INDUSTRY AND SERVICES SECTOR

- ◆ BNR investments up by 1.08%
- ◆ Motor vehicle registration up by 20.01%
- ◆ Tourist arrivals up by 9.46%
- ◆ Gross tourist receipts up by 8.69%
- ◆ New construction projects down by 1.22%

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY SECTORS

- ◆ Palay production down by 1.01%
- ◆ Corn production down by 2.99%
- ◆ Fruit production up by 1.07%
- ◆ Vegetable and root crop production up by 31.75%
- ◆ Non-food and industrial commercial crops production up by 2.47%
- ◆ Livestock production up by 0.7%
- ◆ Poultry production up by 2.7%
- ◆ Fishery production down by 6.31%

Figures are based on year-on-year comparison

2015 ANNUAL REGIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATIONER



The regional economy in CY 2015 showed indications of growth due to its strong macroeconomic performance, i.e. stable inflation rate at 2.0 percent and increased employment rate to 96.8 percent from last year's 96.3 percent.

Across the main production sectors, the Industry and Services sectors manifested positive performances as suggested by the uptrend in most key indicators. Investments from the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Business Name Registration posted an increase of 1.08 percent to a total of PhP4.48 Billion.

The region's tourism industry has likewise substantially contributed to the economy as tourist revenues increased to PhP2.8 Billion, reflecting an 8.69 percent gain from last year.

Other noted feats for the period include the increase in loan availments and motor vehicles registration. However, private construction was marginally lower this year as construction projects slightly declined by 1.22 percent. Mining and quarrying production

also declined, which is attributed to the slowdown in construction activities.

The Agriculture sector exhibited modest growth for the year. Palay and corn recorded minimal declines of 1.01 percent and 2.99 percent, respectively, attributable to the damages brought about by calamities that hit the region.

Counteracting this decrease was the rise in the production of other crops especially vegetables and root crops with an output gain of 31.75 percent.

Livestock and poultry production likewise increased during the year. The sustained support and assistance of the various regional agencies and local government units in promoting and further improving the backbone sector of the region's economy was evident in the performance of the sector.

The mitigation measures put in place by the agencies and LGUs in anticipation of the adverse effect of El Niño has moderated the projected loss of the sector.

| KARYLL GEM L. BAYUBAY, NEDA PFPD

DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

- The implementation of intensified measures for mitigation and adaptation shall cushion the negative impacts of El Niño. Also, the strict monitoring of prices and supply of goods and services shall be undertaken to protect consumers from unwarranted increases in prices of food commodities as an effect of El Niño.
- The implementation of various projects under DA's Philippine Rural Development Program is expected to improve the agriculture sector's competitiveness.
- The completion of projects under the DOT-DPWH Convergence Program is seen to attract more tourists to the region and eventually trigger increased economic activities.
- The completion of major infrastructure projects such as the Dalton Pass Section Eastern Alternate Route in Nueva Vizcaya is expected to ease mobility and accessibility of people, goods, and services. These projects will also enhance the interplay of agricultural, industrial, and tourism growth among neighboring regions.

SDC conducts GAD leveling session

Twenty-five (25) participants from member-agencies of the RDC2 Social Development Committee (SDC) exited the Pamegafanan Hall on January 22, 2016 equipped with a better understanding of gender and development (GAD).

This after the 18 female and five male GAD focal persons attended a three-day leveling session on basic GAD concepts which was conducted by the SDC in partnership with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW).

Held at the NEDA-RDC2 Building, the activity aimed to enhance the knowledge of the members of the GAD Focal Point System (GFPS) and capacitate them on gender analysis and GAD planning and budgeting.

“GAD is about recognizing that gender biases impede development, preventing both men and women from attaining their full potentials,” said Dr. Cherrie Melanie A. Diego, a member of the PCW GAD Resource Pool. “That way, we can enable them to become effective contributors to development.”

Dr. Diego, the OIC-Regional Director of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Regional Office 1 in San Fernando, La Union, averred that “GAD is towards women’s empowerment



Through lectures, discussions, and group activities, the GAD Focal Persons from various RLAs and LGUs learned the basics of gender mainstreaming and analysis. After the training, they expressed their desire for more sessions such as this to further enhance their skills and knowledge on GAD.

and their full participation in the development process.”

“Women are half of the country’s population, comprising half of the producers of economic goods and services,” she emphasized. “GAD sharpens the focus of development on people and enhances their capacities to contribute to the attainment of development goals.”

Gender Mainstreaming

Ms. Marie Grace Manay of the PCW introduced gender mainstreaming and presented the Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF).

“GAD mainstreaming is the inclusion of a gender perspective in the design and implementation of development plans and programs and is a strategy to ensure that the concerns for gender equality are considered in the mainstream,” said Ms. Manay.

She further said that the GMEF is a tool to track and assess the

progress of gender mainstreaming activities of government agencies or the private sector.

Meanwhile, Ms. Kimberly Anne Teodoro gave a step-by-step procedure on how to properly prepare the GAD Accomplishment Report Matrix.

Harmonized GAD Guidelines

Ms. Joseline P. Niwane, another member of the PCW GAD Resource Pool, oriented the participants on the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG).

“The HGDG provides a common set of analytical concepts and tools for integrating gender concerns into development programs,” said Ms. Niwane, the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer in Ifugao Province.

She added that the HGDG should be used by people and agencies involved in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development

Understanding GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

interventions such as LGUs, foreign assistance donors, technical advisers, and oversight agencies like the NEDA.

“To put it simply, the HGDG ensures the gender-responsiveness of programs in the various stages of the project cycle,” Ms. Niwane explained.

“As called for by the guideline, use the GAD checklist to see whether a program or project contains any of the core elements of gender-responsiveness and look out for components such as the participation of women and men in the identification of the problem, the conduct of gender analysis to anticipate gender-related issues, and other GAD statements and activities that respond to the identified gender issues,” Ms. Niwane elucidated.

Hands-on sample GAD planning and budgeting

To let the participants have a feel of how the HGDG can be applied in assessing the gender-responsiveness of a program or project, they were asked to apply the HGDG checklists on sample projects.

In another workshop, they were grouped according to the sectors where their respective agencies belong to and were asked to accomplish the GAD planning and budgeting form.

In closing the activity, NEDA OIC-Assistant Regional Director Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan encouraged the participants to be more active as GAD focal persons of their respective agencies and as members of the region's GFPS. | ANNE Y. LASAM, NEDA DRD

RPMC to make M&E more effective through the RPMES

The Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) of the RDC2 successfully conducted a two-day orientation-workshop on the Regional Project Monitoring and Evaluation System (RPMES) on 10-11 March 2016 in Tuguegarao City.

This is in recognition of the importance of the RPMES as an institutional mechanism in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of development programs and projects.

Mr. Wilfredo M. de Perio, the Chief of the Transportation and Infrastructure Sector Division of the Monitoring and Evaluation Staff of NEDA Central Office, and another staff acted as resource persons for the orientation-workshop.

Mr. de Perio shared the features of the revised RPMES Guidelines which is expected to appropriately respond to the challenges in undertaking M&E and to take advantage of the opportunities it brings in terms of making project

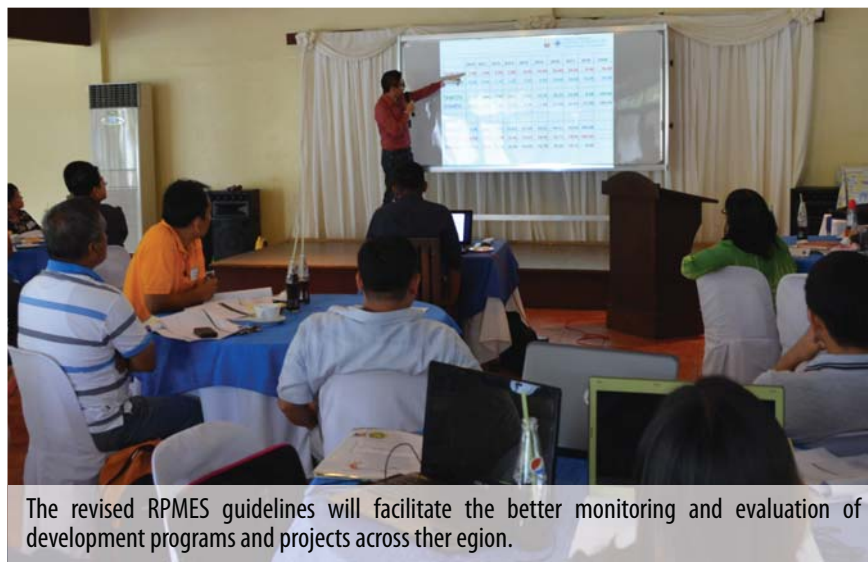
implementation more effective and efficient at the local level.

In addition, Mr. de Perio shared his knowledge and expertise on the use of the Logical Framework (LogFrame) approach. This sparked the interest of the participants who then requested for a more comprehensive training-workshop on the use of the LogFrame for project proposal preparation.

A total of 42 participants from agency members of the RPMC, particularly from the Provincial Local Governments of Cagayan, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, and Isabela, and the City Government of Tuguegarao, and the regional line agencies attended the workshop.

Selected private sector representatives of the RDC2, as well as representatives from the local Project Monitoring Committees of Tuguegarao, Santiago, and Ilagan Cities also participated in the activity.

| JESSIELYN R. BALTAZAR, NEDA PMED



The revised RPMES guidelines will facilitate the better monitoring and evaluation of development programs and projects across the region.



FY 2017 budget of DepEd R02 highest among RLAs

During the recently held Regional Budget Consultation conducted by the Regional Budget Review Committee (RBRC), the proposed budget of the Department of Education (DepEd) RO2 for 2017 emerged as the highest among the 18 regional line agencies (RLAs) that presented their budgets.

DepEd's budget proposal of Php44.9 Billion covers 38.47% of the grand total amount of the budget proposals of the 18 RLAs at Php 73.1 Billion.

A large chunk of DepEd's budget, around 75% or Php 33.5 Billion, is allotted for personnel services, i.e. the salaries of public school teachers and officials as well as employees of the schools division offices and the DepEd regional office.

"DepEd has also allotted about Php 8.8 Billion for capital outlay projects," said OIC-Assistant Regional Director Benjamin D. Paragas during the budget consultation held on March 8-9, 2016.

Meanwhile, the grand total budget proposed by the five state universities and colleges (SUCs)

amounted to Php2.8 Billion. Isabela State University had the highest budget proposal at Php 905 Million while Batanes State College proposed the lowest at Php 153 Million.

Complementation of initiatives

RBRC Chair and Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Regional Director Isabel C. Taguinod said during the consultation that the proposed budgets of the RLAs were assessed to ensure the complementation of their programs and projects with local or provincial priorities.

"The actual performance of the RLAs and the SUCs for 2015 and their targets for 2016 were assessed vis-à-vis their 2017 budget proposals to avoid fluctuating targets," Dir. Taguinod said.

In explaining the 2017 Budget Priorities Framework, Dir. Taguinod said that it "zeroes in on the attainment of strategic goals such as pursuing good governance and anti-corruption; making growth inclusive to raise the quality of the Filipino workforce; sustaining the growth momentum to create and sustain job creation; managing disaster

risks to prevent the loss of lives, properties, and livelihood; and forging just and lasting peace.

RBRC Co-Chair and RDC2 Acting Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay emphasized that the framework adopts the priorities and strategies in the Philippine Development Plan.

"We can, therefore, expect greater alignment and synchronization of government efforts to focus on sectors and areas where the poor and vulnerable are concentrated, so that they, too, may reap the gains of progress," she said.

The deliberation panel was comprised of technical staff from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Department of Science and Technology, and the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority.

They were joined by selected representatives from the private

RDC 2 bares 2016 Work Program

With a budget of around Php5.7 Million, the work and financial plan of the Regional Development Council (RDC) 2 for 2016 was recently approved and endorsed by the members of the Council during the RDC's joint meeting with the Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) 2 on March 16, 2016.

The work program contains all the planned activities of the RDC2 for this year, which includes the formulation of the draft successor Regional Development Plan for

2016-2022, the revisioning exercise for the members of the Council, and the conduct of impact evaluation and project monitoring.

"Aside from these major activities, the fund will also cover expenses for the internal operations of the RDC2 which includes the conduct of quarterly meetings for both the full Council and its subcommittees," said RDC2 Interim Secretary and NEDA OIC-Assistant Regional Director Engr. Ferdinand P. Tumalian in his presentation during the meeting.

The 2016 work program also contains the RDC2's usual activities such as the preparation of various economic reports, advocacy and development studies, and research activities.

"This year, the term of our 12 private sector representatives (PSRs) will be ending and we will be selecting a new set of PSRs towards the end of the year," added Engr. Tumalian.

During the meeting, the RDC2 and the RPOC2 also jointly approved the fixed annual contribution amounting to Php7,500 to be collected from each RDC2 member-agency to support the activities of the Council. | ANNE Y. LASAM, NEDA DRD

sector and the provincial local government units.

More infrastructure and BUB projects

Following DepEd with the highest budget proposal was the DPWH with Php12.6 Billion for infrastructure development.

The same is true for the FY 2017 budget proposal of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) in the amount of Php2.9 Billion which will be used for more infrastructure projects like irrigation canals.

For projects under the Bottom-Up Budgeting (BUB) process, the DILG RO2 had the largest amount under capital outlay at Php1.1 Billion. This is mainly due to its role as the lead implementing agency for BUB.

Other RLAs also allotted certain budgets for BUB projects such as DA (Php272M), Department of Social Welfare and Development (Php130M), and the Environmental Management Bureau (Php 89M).

RDC 2 support

Subsequently, these budget proposals were endorsed by the RDC 2 during its joint meeting with the Regional Peace and Order Council 2 on March 16, 2016.

As a next step following the RDC2 endorsement, the RLAs will be reporting their budget proposals to their agency central offices (ACOs) for feedback or needed adjustments in the regional distribution of plans, programs, and activities. For the SUCs, their budgets shall be forwarded to the CHED.

As a supplement, the RDC2 and the RPOC2 also jointly expressed their support to the resolution passed by RDC 4-B requesting all Cabinet Secretaries to adopt the proposed projects and budgets endorsed by the RDCs.

In her presentation during the joint meeting of the RDC2 and the RPOC2, Philippine Information Agency Regional Director Purita S. Licas said that "ACOs should also certify the acceptance and non-acceptance of the recommendation of the RDC2 and state the reason in the event of non-acceptance as feedback mechanism."

Dir. Licas acts as Co-Chair of the Committee on Development Administration and Communication (CODAC) which endorsed this resolution. | ANNE Y. LASAM, NEDA DRD



Among the heads of regional agencies and their representatives who signed the Memorandum of Cooperation and the Pledge of Commitment for the Cagayan River Basin Management Council were (seated, from L to R) DSWD RO2 OIC-RD Ponciana P. Condo, DILG RO2 RD Marlo L. Iringan, PRO2 Acting RD PCSupt. Ranier Q. Idio, NEDA RO2 RD MaryAnne ER. Darauay, DENR RO2 ARD Wilfredo C. Malvar, Nueva Vizcaya PPDO Edgardo Sabado, DENR CAR RD Ralph Pablo, DA RO2 RED Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr., OCD RO2 RD Norma C. Talosig, (standing, from L to R) Mildred B. Maglaya of NEDA, Edmundo S. Malupeng of DENR, NEDA OIC-ARD Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan, Blessie S. Taguibao of DAR, Engr. Jaime Catolos, Jr. of DPWH, Virginia Bilgera of DOST, Rina Malamug of DENR RO2, Marilyn Malecda of DENR CAR, Florence Viloria of DENR, and NCIP RD Atty. Ronaldo M. Daquioag.

The heads of various regional line agencies (RLAs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), and LGUs recently sealed their commitment to protect the Cagayan River Basin (CRB) and all the abundant resources it cradles.

The ceremonial signing of the pledge of commitment was held during the joint meeting of the RDC 2 and the RPOC 2 on March 16, 2016.

The leaders also signed the Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) for the Cagayan River Basin Management Council (CRBMC) to formalize their partnership and cooperation for the effective, sustainable, and equitable management of the water resources and other related resources of the CRB.

Region 2 leaders sign MOC and Pledge of Commitment for CRB

During his presentation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Assistant Regional Director Forester Wilfredo C. Malvar explained that water and natural resources within the CRB are recognized as vital resources.

“Thus, they should be properly managed in order to support the economic and sustainable development of the regions that the CRB traverses,” ARD Malvar said.

The CRB Master Plan identifies three regions with shared responsibility over the management and protection of

this river basin: the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), the Cagayan Valley Region, and some parts of Central Luzon.

Hence, the Chairpersons of the Regional Development Councils of these three regions shall be serving as the Co-Chairpersons of the CRBMC Executive Committee.

The DENR Secretary shall be the Chairperson of the CRBMC while the Regional Directors of DENR CAR, RO 2, and RO 3 shall sit as Vice Chairpersons.

Completing the CRBMC composition are the NEDA, DILG, DPWH, DA, and DOST, with the DENR as the Secretariat.

Also signatories to the MOC were the NIA, BFAR, NCIP, DSWD, PIA, and OCD, as well as the five SUC presidents, the provincial governors, city/municipal mayors, and the presidents of the Leagues of Municipal Mayors in the region. | MILDRED B. MAGLAYA, NEDA PFPD



RDC2 Acting Chair RD MaryAnne ER. Darauay (right) and RPOC2 Head Secretariat RD Marlo L. Iringan led the signing of the Pledge of Commitment to protect the Cagayan River Basin and its natural resources.



RDC2 Acting Chair RD Darauay (right) co-presided the joint meeting of the RDC2 and the RPOC2 with RPOC2 Co-Chair PCSupt. Ranier Q. Idio (center) and RPOC2 Head Secretariat RD Marlo L. Iringan.

RDC2, RPOC2 address peace and order matters

During their 1st quarter joint meeting, the Regional Development Council (RDC) 2 and the Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) 2 deliberated on some issues concerning peace and order in the region.

Opening the program, RPOC2 Co-Chair and Acting Police Regional Office (PRO2) Acting Regional Director PCSupt. Ranier Q. Idio said that the meeting was an opportunity for both Councils to tackle, understand, and resolve issues concerning the security and safety of the region.

Foremost in the agenda was the election ban implemented by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC). Tuguegarao City Election Officer Atty. Jims Dandy Ramos highlighted the ban on bearing, carrying or transporting of firearms or other deadly weapons and the ban on public works for the period January 10 to June 8, 2016.

On their part, PRO2 presented their security preparations for the elections on May 9, 2016 for the region's 13,266 precincts.

"PRO 2 has mobilized the Regional Task Group SAFE 2016

since January to provide strategic direction and supervision to all police operations, and we are also continuously conducting daily checkpoints and monitoring in critical areas where election-related offenses have been recorded," reported PCInsp. Jhonalyn Q. Tecbobolan.

During the election phase on May 7-9, 2016, the PRO2 will deploy more personnel in polling places and investigators in Municipal Police Stations.

Trend analysis

For the reports on drug incidences and insurgency situation, RDC2 Acting Chair RD MaryAnne ER. Darauay requested the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to include a trend analysis in their reports.

"This is to monitor our improvements in curbing the problem on drugs," Dir. Darauay explained. "It will also enable us to pinpoint the underlying factors causing the insurgency problem in the region," she added.

The PDEA reported that for the 1st quarter of 2016, the agency

conducted a total of 84 operations and arrested about 100 persons, mostly drug pushers.

RPOC Head Secretariat and DILG Regional Director Marlo L. Iringan requested the PDEA to include the list of cases filed against those who were apprehended.

A call for the random drug testing of government employees was proposed in support to having a drug-free workplace, to which the members of both Councils agreed. They then moved to pass a resolution supporting RA 9165 implementing the drug-free workplace program.

Anti-terrorism campaign

Regional Director Victor Espineli of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency Regional Office 2 sought the support of the RDC2 and the RPOC2 in the counter-terrorism efforts of the Regional Anti-Terrorism Council Convergence Group (RATCCG2) by increasing the awareness of the barangays in monitoring their constituents.

The two Councils moved to pass a resolution enjoining all barangays in Region 2 to make an official record of their constituents and include an identification picture in the barangay clearance form. | ANNE Y. LASAM, NEDA DRD



(From L to R) RGC Co-Chair Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson P. Soriano, RGC Chair RD Nerie D. Bueno of the DPWH, and DILG RD Marlo L. Irangan with other members of the RGC.

RGC Locators push immediate installation of common signages

The agency locators at the Regional Government Center (RGC) have called for the immediate fabrication and installation of uniform or common agency signages within the Center.

During the RGC Management Committee (RGCMC) meeting

held on January 26, 2016, DILG Regional Director Marlo L. Irangan pushed for the project's implementation within the first semester of the year.

In support to the proposal, Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson

P. Soriano also requested that the project be started immediately and that each agency-locator should share in the costs of the fabrication and installation of the common signages.

The project was already approved by the RGCMC in 2015 but due to funding requirements, implementation was moved to the third quarter of 2016.

The agency signage is estimated at Php29,400.00 each where four (4) agencies will be accommodated per signage. Each agency-locator is expected to contribute Php7,500.00 to cover expenses for the materials and fabrication while the DPWH will shoulder the expenses for labor and installation. There will be 18 signages to be put up within the RGC to help stakeholders and clientele in locating the respective offices of RGC locators. | **FRANCES C. TANNAGAN, NEDA PMED**

In line with its commitment to provide direction and guidance to regional/local statistical development activities, the Regional Statistics Committee (RSC) 2, through the Philippine Statistics Authority Regional Statistical Service Office (PSA RSSO) 02, hosted the "Statistical Appreciation Seminar for Media Practitioners" on February 2, 2016 in Tuguegarao City.

The seminar aimed to bridge the "language gap" between statisticians and communicators of official statistics through an orientation them about the basic concepts and operational definitions of the key economic and social indicators of the Philippine Statistical System.

RSC 2 conducts Statistical Appreciation Seminar for Media Practitioners

Specifically, the seminar was intended to assist the participants, comprised of six from the print and broadcast media, six from the academe, and 39 from regional line agencies, in enhancing their role as communicators of official statistics.

Three officials from the PSA Central Office discussed the frequently misassociated or mislinked topics in statistics such as: (1) Official Poverty Statistics in the Philippines which was discussed by Mr. Joseph M. Bulan, Statistical Coordination Officer

II of the Poverty and Human Development Statistics Division; (2) the System of National Accounts with sub-topics on the Production and Expenditure Side of Gross Domestic Product discussed by Mr. Mark C. Pascasio, OIC-Division Chief of Expenditure Accounts Division; and (3) Operational Analyses of National Accounts by Mr. Florande S. Polistico, OIC-Division Chief of the Production Accounts Division. | **SHERYLL ELAINE S. RIGUA, PSA RSSO 02**

Agtas ecstatic over road improvement

With genuine smiles in their faces, about 30 members of the Agta community from Isabela showed their excitement and eagerness over the rehabilitation of the Ilagan–Divilacan road during its inauguration held on March 18, 2016 in Ilagan City.

The improvement of this 82.004-kilometer road will mean easier access to the coastal towns of Isabela such as Maconacon, Divilacan, Palanan, and Dinapigue where the Agtas and more than 20,000 other people live, isolated economically and physically from the mainland.

As early as 2010, plans to rehabilitate the old logging roads crossing the Sierra Madre Mountains have been started.

However, it is only six years later that the Provincial Government of Isabela has started the rehabilitation project through a loan of Php 1.9 Billion from the Development Bank of the Philippines.

Protecting the rights of the IPs

During its first consultation in November 2010, one of the main concerns raised was how to protect the rights of the indigenous peoples (IP) community living within the project site.

To address this and to safeguard the rights and welfare of the IPs, the Provincial Government



entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the Agta Tribal Community before it proceeded with the project.

Today, some of the Agtas are hired as workers for the project as a way of providing them income and livelihood.

RDC support and endorsement

Once completed in March 2021, the improved Ilagan–Divilacan road will help ease transportation and facilitate the speedy and effective delivery of basic services to the coastal municipalities in Isabela, especially during calamities.

Recognizing this positive impact that the improved road will be making, the Regional Development Council (RDC) 2 approved and endorsed the road improvement project in 2012.

Further, in 2015, the Council has pushed for the reclassification of the road from local to national.

“The Ilagan–Divilacan road is expected to be the trunkline and

lifeline for the socioeconomic development of the coastal municipalities as well as for monitoring and protection of the Northern Sierra Madre Mountain Range,” says Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Darauay, the Acting Chair of the RDC2.

“It will also invite potential foreign investments for alternative power sources like wind and solar power farms, and will open up more opportunities to showcase our tourist-worthy attractions along our coast,” the Director adds.

The Ilagan–Divilacan road traverses barangays Villa Imelda, Sindon Bayabo, and Bigao in Ilagan City, and barangays Sapinit, Dicambangan, and Dication in Divilacan.

Once completed, the road will help create jobs and open up new businesses and other income-generating opportunities in these areas.

The inauguration of the road rehabilitation project was also attended by local officials, government workers, residents, and other stakeholders in the province of Isabela. | ANNE Y. LASAM & GERARDO L. CATOLOS, NEDA DRD

Nassiping Pump Irrigation Project approved for implementation

This year, the Nassiping Pump Irrigation Project (NPIP) in Gattaran, Cagayan will see fruition after it has received a go-signal from National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Administrator Florencio F. Padernal.

With a total cost of Php379.703 Million, the NPIP is foreseen to irrigate 1,028 hectares of agricultural land twice a year in six barangays in Gattaran: Nassiping, Guising, Lapogan, Sta. Maria, parts of Dummun, and Ganzano.

The project will also create 1,285 jobs during project implementation and 1,028 permanent jobs when it becomes operational after three years.

Better living conditions

Upon its completion, the NPIP is expected to benefit 717 farmers in these barangays, providing them more opportunities to improve their livelihoods.

Rice production will grow from 3,565 metric tons to 10,486 metric tons per annum, a whopping increase of 6,921 metric tons of palay.

Owing to this, farmers' annual family income is expected to increase from Php 51,106 to Php142,055, an increment of 277%.

High efficiency rating

To provide dependable water supply for irrigation in rice

production as a support to the government's goal of rice self-sufficiency, the NPIP will use four units of 285-kw pumps with a capacity of 514 liters/second per pump. Electric pumps will be used which incur lower operating costs than diesel engine pumps. These are also non-polluting as they do not emit smoke and have low noise during operation.

In addition, an electric pump has more efficient power transmission and is not prone to fuel pilferage.

As a result, the overall average system efficiency is 23.9% versus the 9.4% efficiency rating of diesel engine pumps. This efficiency rating may be one of the factors that strengthened the proposal for the project.

It has also obtained endorsement from the RDC 2 in 2015 after it passed the evaluation conducted by the NEDA RO2 through the Project Development, Investment Programming, and Budgeting Division.

"We are excited to start the project as it could really spell a difference in the lives of our farmers and inclusive growth will be pushed to the fore," NIA Regional Irrigation Manager Antonio C. Lara enthused.

The farmers in the area are already eager to see the completion of the NPIP which could make their farms more productive, increase their income, and provide them with better living conditions. | DOROTHY BELLE C. DE LEON, NIA RO2

DAR holds ARBOs Investment Summit

More than 600 Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) representing the ARB Organizations (ARBOs) in Region 02 gathered for the ARBOs Investment Summit held at the Provincial Capitol in Ilagan, Isabela on February 25-26, 2016.

With the theme: "ARBO: Rising as Competitive Catalysts and Partners for Sustainable Rural Development", the Summit aimed to transform the ARBOs to be more active participants in rural development.

They underwent leadership training and team building which was conducted by Mr. Norberto N. Quite, Training Consultant and Rotary Club Officer.

"This vision of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in providing continuous learning and growth for the ARBOs is slowly empowering our cooperatives," said Atty. Marjorie P. Ayson, DAR Regional Director.

"This is a veer away from the dole-out system which used to guide the relationship between the government and its beneficiaries," she added.

Representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry also discussed the *Go Negosyo*, Product Packaging, and other services of the DTI to help the ARBOs enhance their skills as entrepreneurs.

DAR 02 also invited the Bank of the Philippine Islands to present investment opportunities that the ARBOs can avail of to better manage their funds.

The Summit is a sequel to the 2014 ARBOs Congress. This recent convergence was made more specifically aligned with DAR's vision and was expanded to accommodate more participants. | DANIELICAH S. CRUZ, DAR RO2

"Bridge of Love" now spans over Nagtipunan River



The Katimbang Bridge, dubbed as "Bridge of Love" has opened formally on February 9, 2016 and now provides residents passage over the Nagtipunan River going to and from Sitio Katimbang in Brgy. San Ramos in the town of Nagtipunan, Quirino.

With a project cost of Php124 Million funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Katimbang Bridge is the biggest infrastructure project of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in the country under Phase III of its Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project (ARISP).

The 570-meter long Katimbang Bridge is known to symbolize the "bridge of love between Japan and Philippines", it being a joint project of DAR and JICA for the common goal of rural development.

The bridge now improves transportation and accessibility for the townspeople who relied heavily on an old wooden raft to ferry them and their farm produce to neighboring towns.

DAR Undersecretary Herman Z. Ongkiko and JICA representative C.R. Niwa headed the inauguration and turn-over ceremonies, together with Assistant Secretary for Foreign

Assisted Project Services Office Ma. Ceverina Afable and Engr. Cristina Dagdag.

DAR Regional Director Atty. Marjorie P. Ayson, Assistant Regional Directors Paramon Furigay and Jessbeth Quidasol, and Provincial Officer Arthur E. Faeldon also led the turnover as the regional management team who worked hands-on during the bridge's construction phase.

DAR 02 also turned over a Post-Harvest Facility (PHF) to the Quirino Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (QFMPC) during the inauguration. The PHF and the Katimbang Bridge will support agri-business and agri-enterprise activities which DAR introduced to the cooperatives in the area.

Rural development

Niwa said that he is proud of the contribution of the bridge to the agrarian reform communities (ARCs). He urged the LGU to work well with the ARCs and all stakeholders to ensure maintenance of the bridge.

USEC Ongkiko acknowledged the partnership that DAR forged with the Department of Public Works and Highways, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and

the National Irrigation Administration for the agency's infra projects including the Katimbang Bridge.

He thanked Nagtipunan Mayor Rosario Camma and Quirino Governor Junie E. Cua for the local government's 30% share of the total cost.

He assured the QFMPC of the continuity of support projects for the agrarian reform community.

"Hindi lang ang tulay ang isusulong ng DAR kundi pati ang kabataan at mga magsasaka at bawat kita ng ARBO ay dapat ding maitaas," he added.

Pedro Pandongit, QFMPC Chairman of the Board said, "[The bridge] helps a lot during emergency cases and it hastens the transport and marketing of the products of the ARBs to the neighboring town of Maddela and the adjacent province of Nueva Vizcaya as compared to the usual use of banca or ferry boat as a means of transport since 1979."

The construction of the Katimbang Bridge and PHF would make the ARCs more productive and progressive. This development is expected to increase the income of the farmers and uplift their quality of life. | DITAS CADIENTE, DAR R02



PLGU-CAGAYAN TEAMS UP WITH DOT, CEZA FOR 1ST CULTURE AND TOURISM SUMMIT

The 1st Cagayan Culture and Tourism Summit was successfully conducted last March 28-30, 2016 in Tuguegarao City with over 100 participants from the academe, LGUs, government agencies, and the private sector.

With the theme “Cagayan’s Heritage and Cultural Identity and its Tourism Value”, the Summit opened an interest in the preservation of the Ybanag and Ytawes culture and heritage.

The activity was conducted through a collaboration among the Department of Tourism (DOT), the Provincial Government of Cagayan, and the Cagayan Special Economic Zone and Free Port.

Among the speakers were Prof. Ricamela Palis of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts who discussed the pedagogy of culture and Prof. Joan Cristi Trocio of the University of Santo Tomas who talked about generational differences brought about by the use of primary language and their effect on language and culture.

DOT Regional Director Virgilio M. Maguigad also presented a tourism situationer as well as a discussion on tourism standards.

Preserving the local language

Rev. Fr. Ferdinand Maguigad, a principal at the Lyceum of Aparri, emphasized the need to elevate the local language as a cultural and historical icon by studying and using language in oral and written form.

“When a language dies, culture unfortunately follows,” he stated.

Meanwhile, Dr. Boyet Batang, an Ytawes Professor at the Isabela State University, discussed Cagayan’s songs, dances and folklore and encouraged the participants to go back and appreciate cultural traditions as a way of life.

Preserving Cagayan heritage

On the second day of the summit, the participants listened to Prof. Ivan Anthony Henares, a multi-awarded blogger and President of the Heritage Conservation Society of the Philippines. He said that culture and heritage uplift the lives of the community and that tourism should put value to both, making day to day activities as a form of tourism attraction since they offer a different experience in every destination.

Librarian Michael Pinto of the Cagayan Provincial Learning and Resource Center (PLRC) stressed the role of libraries as a repository of all forms of culture heritage.

He said that the PLRC is undergoing automation after its acquisition of Php37 Million worth of online journals. It has also opened its doors to all activities related to culture and history, like storytelling, reading sessions, book launching, and community activities.

“There is a unique context when we say Ybanag or Ytawes”, said Nilo Agustin, Tourism Consultant and Facilitator and the man behind the successful turn around of festivals in the Province of Isabela, specifically the Bambanti Festival.

During the workshop, the idea of a festival for Cagayan was brought up, which moved around the word “Vungkul” which if motivated will become “Vungkul Festival”.

Vungkul is an Ybanag word that means “let’s go eat and meet with relatives and friends to talk and have fun”.

Will the Ybanags of Cagayan vote for the creation of an identity manual moving around the idea of a “Vungkul Festival”? We will see in the coming years. | **FANIBETH T. DOMINGO, DOT R02**



2 ISABELA BRIDGES OPENED TO PUBLIC



The two newly completed bridges in Barangays San Ignacio and Santa Isabela in Ilagan City were formally inaugurated in January by City Mayor Jose Marie L. Diaz.

Mayor Diaz said the city government has allotted Php10.4 Million for the completion of the two bridges which link the two barangays to the city's business center.

He added that these bridges will provide farmer's agricultural goods better access to markets.

"The new bridges are very important for the locals because this will resuscitate the accessibility of these places and other business activities in this part of the city," the mayor said.

He added that the bridges will spur more economic activities as transport of products becomes easier, establishing a better link among farming communities in different barangays. | ALM / MGE, PIA R02

BATANES DAIRY INDUSTRY GOING STRONG



This province's dairy industry remains strong and stable which is attributed to the enhanced cattle production project of the national and local governments.

This was stated by Dr. Alberto Tabile, provincial veterinarian, who added that the cattle production enhancement program is a joint undertaking of the provincial government, the Department of Agriculture (DA), LGU Ivana, and the National Dairy Authority.

He said the project is geared towards improving milk production for the dairy industry and providing potential livelihood for more farmers as well.

He added that there are already 14 female Holstein Freisian breed produced through artificial insemination, which are expected to further produce more heads for the cattle production program.

"Aside from additional income for residents here, the project also aims to improve the nutritional status of the people as it promotes dairy products out from the organically raised cattle," he said.

Tabile added that his office also extends technical assistance to the cattle producers to ensure quality milk for dairy processing and sustainability of the project. | ALM / OTB / NGA, PIA R02

NV's PRO-POOR PROGRAMS BENEFIT 422 FAMILIES



At least 422 poor families have benefited from the Nueva Vizcaya provincial government's poverty alleviation programs, particularly from the "Search for Idol Kong Kapamilya" and "Search for Idol Kong Entrepreneur".

According to Gov. Ruth Padilla, these programs are actually incentive and rewards systems for model families and entrepreneurs.

The beneficiaries each received capital assistance amounting to Php10,000 in the municipal level and additional capital assistance in the provincial level.

Gov. Padilla also bared that 170 disadvantaged women and 199 disadvantaged families more have been given livelihood assistance amounting to more than Php3.6 Million.

This assistance, she said, were used for the beneficiaries' livelihood projects such as rice retailing, food processing, livestock and rice cake production, and dragon fruit propagation. | ALM / BME, PIA R02

QUIRINO TO INTENSIFY CAMPAIGN AGAINST GLYPHOSATE IN FARMLANDS



Quirino Provincial Agri-Fisheries Council (PAFC) Chairman Dante Tobias said that the provincial government, through

the PAFC, will work even harder in advocating for a glyphosate-free farming in the province.

Tobias said that the council's resolution requesting the Department of Agriculture (DA) to regulate the use of glyphosate in farmlands was adopted by Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, and Cagayan.

"This effort also led to the launching of the Sustainable Corn Production in Sloping Areas (SCOPSA) Program in the region, which became a national program under the Agri-Pinoy," he added.

"There is an urgent need to change farming ways that cause soil erosion and degradation such as the use of glyphosate," he said, adding that most farmers are into upland farming as 80 percent of the province's land area is covered by mountains.

Contour farming or terracing is recommended to prevent soil erosion that causes siltation of rivers.

"Our rivers carry the eroded soil downstream, increasing the severity of floods along the Cagayan river," Tobias said, adding that the Quirino PLGU will also push integrated farming to fight soil erosion and degradation. | ALM / TCB, PIA R02

Resolutions approved during the Joint Meeting of the RDC2 and RPOC2 held on March 16, 2016

Resolutions supporting and endorsing the FY 2017 Budget Proposals of the following 19 regional line agencies (RLAs) and five state universities and colleges (SUCs):

02-01-2016

BFAR RO2 - P207,990,000.00

02-02-2016

CHED RO2 - P32,800,000.00

02-03-2016

DA RO2 - P3,380,310,300.00

02-04-2016

DENR RO2 - P1,445,846,780.00

02-05-2016

DEPED RO2 - P44,615,623,000.00

02-06-2016

DILG RO2 - P1,291,222,400.00

02-07-2016

DOH RO2 - P2,351,268,000.00

02-08-2016

DOLE RO2 - P216,664,000.00

02-09-2016

DOST RO2 - P181,222,000.00

02-10-2016

DOT RO2 - P45,404,000.00

02-11-2016

DPWH RO2 - P12,640,991,000.00

02-12-2016

DSWD RO2 - P2,443,212,000.00

02-13-2016

DTI RO2 - P270,654,000.00

02-14-2016

EMB RO2 - P171,026,650.00

02-15-2016

LTO RO2 - P172,655,000.00

02-16-2016

Acknowledging the FY 2017 Budget Proposal of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) RO2 as Presented in the Regional Budget Review and Consultation

02-17-2016

NIA RO2 - P2,976,482,720.00

02-18-2016

TESDA RO2 - P230,877,160.00

02-19-2016

Quirino State University (QSU) - P384,829,000.00

02-20-2016

Nueva Vizcaya State University (NVSU) - P477,769,000.00

02-21-2016

Isabela State University (ISU) - P905,190,000.00

02-22-2016

Cagayan State University (CSU) - P878,642,000.00

02-23-2016

Batanes State College (BSC) - P153,018,000.00

02-24-2016

Requesting all Cabinet Secretaries to Adopt the Proposed Projects and Budgets Endorsed by the Regional Development Councils (RDCs) and for Agency Central Offices (ACOs) to Feedback Actions Taken on the RDC Endorsements

02-25-2016

Adopting the Work and Financial

Plan of the Regional Development Council 2 for CY 2016

02-26-2016

Adopting the Annual Fixed Contribution Amounting to P7,500.00 to be Collected from each Member-Agency of the Regional Development Council 2

02-27-2016

Supporting the Proposed Construction of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) RO2 Building in the Regional Government Center

02-28-2016

Resolution Encouraging All Barangays in Region 2 to Make an Official Record of their Constituents and to Include ID Picture as a Requirement in the Issuance of Barangay Clearance

02-29-2016

Resolution Condemning the Acts of the New People's Army of Burning Government Equipment, Killing Six (6) and Wounding Fifteen (15) Police Officers in Baggao, Cagayan

02-30-2016

Resolution Expressing Strong Support Against the Use of Dangerous Drugs and Other Similar Substances Thru the Conduct of Mandatory Drug Testing of All Members of the RDC-RPOC

02-31-2016

Resolution Commending the Philippine National Police Region 02 for their Bravery and Dedication to Service Against the Act of Violence of the New People's Army (NPA)

02-32-2016

Resolution Earnestly Requesting PNP National Headquarters to Consider the Soaring Number of Transient Population as Additional Criteria for the Assignment of PNP Personnel in Tuguegarao City

02-33-2016

DAR RO2 - P473,622,000.00