



Linkage

A Publication of the
Regional Development Council 02
September 2016



Charting the Future.

RDC2 HOLDS VISIONING EXERCISE

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.

The RDC Linkage is published quarterly by the Regional Development Council 2.

Visit our website: www.rdc2.gov.ph

ABOUT THE COVER

This quarter marks a significant event in the RDC2 with the



reorganization of its member-agencies for the term 2016-2019. Back-to-back with this was the Visioning Exercise held in September where the reorganized Council underwent workshops to formulate a new vision for the development of the region.



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



Linkage

September 2016 Issue

What's inside this issue:

RDC CORNER

SDC supports proposed increase in social pension for Senior Citizens | 4

RDC endorses support for Isabela bridge replacement | 4

RLUC initiates capacity building for regional planners | 5

RDC confirms new set of SNVMs and PSRs | 6

In search of a new vision for the region: RDC holds Visioning Exercise | 8

RPMC praises NV road project | 10

CV hits highest employment rate nationwide | 10

AGENCY WATCH

DOT: More investors needed to boost Region 2's tourism | 11

DOLE 2 provides emergency employment to 177 farmers in Isabela town | 12

Farmers now earning cash through Vermi Composting | 13

DPWH installs Rain Water Collection System in 19 schools | 13

AROUND THE REGION

Quirino establishes Silid-Kanlungan | 14

Isabela to create Coastal Dev't Authority | 14

Cagayan to improve special economic zone | 14

Production of high-value crops pushed in Batanes | 15

NV Gov assures medicine access at prov'l hospital | 15

FEATURE

2nd Quarter Regional Economic Situationer | 3

What's up at the RGC? | 16



BOUNTIFUL CAGAYAN VALLEY REGION

COVER PHOTO CREDITS: RDC2;
<http://www.noiehammett.com>

2ND QUARTER REGIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATIONER



The region experienced a more favorable economy during the second quarter of CY 2016 given positive performances in all sectors.

The agriculture sector has recovered during the second quarter, displaying higher total productions of cereals, fruits, vegetables and rootcrops, livestock and poultry.

Cagayan Valley Region maintained its top rank in corn and second spot in palay production, contributing 34.61 percent and 21.37 percent, respectively, to the total national output.

The production of fruits, vegetables, and root crops also showed positive performances due to the continuous assistance from the Department of Agriculture and the sustained partnership of cassava growers with San Miguel Corporation.

Live weight production estimates for livestock and poultry also displayed higher rates of increase at 10.55 percent and 6.83 percent growth, respectively.

On the other hand, aggregate production of non-food industrial commercial crops went down by 2.74 percent from last year as was total fishery production which declined by 9.44 percent.

On the Industry and Services sector, key indicators recorded continuous expansion during the period.

The Department of Trade and Industry's Business Name Registration (BNR) posted a higher number of firms registered, reflecting higher investments and more jobs generated.

Indicators on air transport and revenue collections also improved as compared to last year's figures.

Prices of basic goods and services measured by the inflation rate eased to 2.32 percent. Except for fruits, vegetables, meat, and oil, the rest of the food commodities

experienced a slower rate of inflation.

The region likewise displayed a higher employment rate (96.9%) and lower underemployment rate (10.5%) compared to the national level of 93.9 percent and 18.4 percent, respectively.

Given these gains, the challenge for the region in the next quarters and beyond remains on the expansion of its economic capacity in order to further improve the availability of quality employment region-wide.

| ANGELICA A. UMOQUIT, NEDA PFPD

MACROECONOMY

- ◆ Inflation rate at 2.32%
- ◆ Unemployment rate at 3.1%
- ◆ Underemployment rate at 10.5%

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY SECTORS

- ◆ Palay production up by 7.45%
- ◆ Corn production up by 32.70%
- ◆ Fruit production up by 1.51%
- ◆ Vegetable and root crop production up by 6.63%
- ◆ Non-food and industrial commercial crops production down by 14.43%
- ◆ Livestock production up by 10.55%
- ◆ Poultry production up by 6.83%
- ◆ Fisheries production down by 9.44%

INDUSTRY AND SERVICES SECTOR

- ◆ BNR investments up by 10.14%
- ◆ LBP loans up by 7.19%
- ◆ DBP loans up by 68.27%
- ◆ Value of construction down by 3.92%
- ◆ Revenue collections up by 20.31%
- ◆ Crime volume up by 7.62%

Figures are based on year-on-year comparison between the second quarters of 2015 and 2016.

SDC supports proposed increase in social pension for Senior Citizens

During its third quarter meeting held on September 8, 2016, the RDC2 Social Development Committee (SDC) passed a resolution supporting the proposed increase in the social pension given to indigent senior citizens from PHP500.00 to PHP1,000.00.

The resolution was borne out of the request of the RDC of the Davao Region for other RDCs to support this initiative.

The additional cash will enable senior citizens to spend for their basic needs such as medicines and nutritious food to support their well-being.

The Expanded Senior Citizens Law (RA 9994) defines indigent senior citizens as the elderly who are frail, sickly, or have disabilities; are not receiving pension from the Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System, or Veterans Pension; and do not have a permanent source of income or regular financial support from relatives for basic needs.

In Region 2, the grant of the monthly stipend started in CY 2011 with 3,074 beneficiaries



covering indigent senior citizens 80 years old and above.

The cut-off age was later lowered to 65 years old in 2015, thus increasing the number of beneficiaries to 58,414 with a total grant of Php350 million.

For CY 2016, the Department of Social Welfare and Development has a budget allocation of PHP476 million for the 79,341 identified beneficiaries, which is expected to increase to 95,805 in CY 2017.

The 100% increase in the monthly social pension will be a big help to cover for the increasing prices in basic commodities and medicines which the economically disadvantaged seniors tend to do away with, especially when they have no one else to turn to for financial aid.

Following its endorsement of the proposal, the SDC will elevate the same to the RDC2 for the Council's support and subsequent endorsement to concerned national government agencies and to the Congress for appropriate legislative action. | NEDA DRD.
Photo Credit: www.rappler.com

RDC endorses support for Isabela bridge replacement

On August 24, 2016 during its third quarter regular business meeting, the RDC2 expressed its full support to the construction of a concrete bridge that will replace an overflow bridge that connects the municipalities of Cabagan and Sto. Tomas in the province of Isabela.

At present, the Cansan-Bagutari bridge can only accommodate light vehicles, hence, impeding the entry of bigger vehicles that could facilitate more efficient trading and delivery of government services in the two towns.

Given the importance of this bridge for better access, disaster response, trading and other economic activities in this part of Isabela, the Provincial Government has requested the Department of Public Works and Highways Regional Office 2 to allocate funds for the construction of a concrete high bridge to replace the Cansan-Bagutari Bridge.

Once completed, the replacement bridge will benefit the populations of Sto. Tomas (23,005) and Cabagan (50,174) by providing them with continuous and better transport connectivity. | NEDA DRD



Regional planners pose after being capacitated on the use of the CLUP Guidebook.

RLUC initiates capacity building for regional planners

The Regional Land Use Committee (RLUC), through the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB), successfully conducted the three-day “Advocacy on the Enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) Guidebook” on August 23-25, 2016.

About 70 participants from the RLUC member-agencies, Provincial Land Use Committees (PLUC), and from the planning and development offices of the different municipalities of the region attended the activity.

Held at the NEDA Regional Office 02 in Tuguegarao City, the activity aimed to provide the participants with an in-depth understanding on the added features of the CLUP Guidebook which LGUs should consider in the preparation of their CLUPs.

The Guidebook will also be used by the RLUC and PLUC members in the review and approval process of the CLUPs.

Itself a member-agency of the RLUC, the HLURB, in its capacity as the lead agency in the provision of technical assistance to LGUs in the preparation of CLUPs, provided the pool of experts who served as the resource speakers.

Among the major topics discussed during the activity were: (1) the 12-step process in CLUP formulation; mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management and other special area studies such as green growth, urban design and development, and ancestral domain, among others; (2) the use of ecosystem analysis thru the ridge-to-reef approach; and (3) the different parameters and the agencies involved in the CLUP and zoning ordinance review, adoption and approval.

During the advocacy activity, the participants agreed that a joint partnership among national technical agencies should be

implemented in providing technical assistance to LGUs for the updating of their respective CLUPs.

They also firmed up the use of the enhanced parameters of each agency in the review of draft CLUPs.

The participants said that the advocacy activity was very timely as LGUs are now preparing for the formulation and review of their CLUPs.

The conduct of the activity was a result of an agreement made during the joint meeting of the RLUC and the Regional Committee on Sustainable Development (RCSD) earlier in June, wherein members of both committees passed Joint RLUC-RCSD Resolution No. 02, entitled “Approving the Conduct of the Advocacy on the Enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) Guidebook for RLUC and PLUC Members”. | **RIZZA T. ANDRES, NEDA PFPD**

RDC2 confirms new set of SNVMs and PSRs

The RDC2 has recently formally confirmed its new set of 11 special non-voting members (SNVMs) and 12 private sector representatives (PSRs) during its 107th regular business meeting held on August 24, 2016 in Santiago City, Isabela.

For the term 2016-2019, the regional heads of the Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Commission on Higher Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Environmental Management Bureau, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, National

Irrigation Administration, and Philippine Information Agency will be participating as SNVMs in all the activities of the RDC2.

As mandated by Executive Order No. 325 enacted in 1996, SNVMs are an integral part of the RDCs in each respective region to optimize the representation of all sectors and to ensure that development planning covers all sectors.

New private sector reps

Meanwhile, the 12 PSRs comprise one-fourth of the total membership of the fully constituted Council, giving them an equally major role in the development planning process of the region.

The new set of 12 PSRs was selected through an election among 26 nominees from different private sector organizations across Region 2. The selection and nomination process was held on August 18, 2016 at the NEDA-RDC2 Building in Tuguegarao City.

“As early as the provincial orientations conducted last month, you have already shown your commitment and enthusiasm to be part of the RDC2 and we commend you for that,” said RDC2 Acting Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay.

“Thank you for heeding the call for partnership with the RDC, we need you in the Council,” she added.



Representing nine of the 11 newly confirmed SNVM-agencies of the RDC2 during the RDC2 Meeting in August were (back row, from L-R) Engr. Avelino C. Tuazon of NIA, NCIP RD Ronald M. Daquioag, EMB RD Cesar S. Siador, Jr., TESDA RD Nestor C. Ave, PIA RD Purita S. Licas, MGB RD Mario A. Ancheta, DSWD OIC-RD Ponciana P. Condooy, DOLE Assistant RD Elpidio B. Atal, Jr., and CHED RD Honorato R. Alzate. Not in photo are the RDs of the DepEd and BFAR. Also in photo: (back row, from R-L) Cabbaroguis Municipal Mayor Avelino N. Agustin, Jr., Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson P. Soriano, Santiago City Mayor Joseph S. Tan, and Cauayan City Mayor Bernard Faustino M. Dy, (seated, from L-R) RDC2 Interim Secretary Engr. Ronilo H. Bulseco, Batanes Governor Marilou Cayco, RDC2 Acting Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay, Quirino Governor Junie E. Cua, Isabela Governor Faustino G. Dy III, and Cagayan Provincial Administrator Joseph M. Llopis.



The new PSRs for the term 2016-2019: (back row, from L-R) Gonzales, Lim, Vasquez, and Cumila; (middle row, from L-R) Acdal, Whigan, Zapata, Reyes, Dy, Borja, Laguinday, and Tortoza.

Aside from their regular membership in the RDC2, the PSRs will also automatically be members of the four sectoral committees and some support committees of the Council.

Four of the elected PSRs will sit as members of the Social Development Committee (SDC), namely Corona C. Borja, Emelito C. Gonzales, Roger B. Whigan, and Cristina G. Reyes, representing the social subsectors on Education & Manpower, Health & Social Welfare, Indigenous Peoples, and Labor, respectively.

Five PSRs shall be joining the Economic Development Committee (EDC) – two representing the Agriculture and Fisheries subsector, in the persons of Engr. Romeo R. Vasquez and Elpidio B. Tortoza, and three representing the Commerce, Industry, Tourism, and Services subsector, namely Engr. Gilbert L. Cumila, Dr. Cecile M. Dy, and Dr. Charles T. Lim.

Protacio D. Laguinday, representing the environment and natural resources sector, will also be sitting as a member of the EDC and the Regional Committee on Sustainable Development, a support committee of the RDC2.

Laguinday will be continuing his term as PSR along with Borja, Gonzales, Tortoza, Vasquez, and Cumila.

The newest members of the Infrastructure

Development Committee (IDC) and the Committee on Development Administration and Communication (CODAC) are Engr. Gilbert E. Acdal and Geronimo T. Zapata, respectively.

Two other support committees – the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) and the Regional Land Use Committee (RLUC) – will also be welcoming their new members who were chosen from among the PSRs who were not elected.

Digna C. Pagulayan and Roberto B. Madarang, Sr. will be joining the RPMC along with Acdal, who as an elected PSR of the IDC automatically becomes a PSR of the RPMC.

For the RLUC, Bella Patricia G. Osalvo and Ganzon O. Riñon are its new PSRs.

Both the SNVMs and the PSRs shall be sitting as members of the RDC2 for three years beginning July 1, 2016. | NEDA DRD



RD Darauay expressed her gratitude to the PSOs for their active participation in the PSR selection process.

In search of a new vision for the region

RDC2 HOLDS VISIONING EXERCISE

A total of 63 participants, composed of RDC2 members from the regional line agencies, local government units, and the private sector, including counterparts from the RDC 3 (Central Luzon), shared their knowledge and expertise in the crafting of a new vision for the Cagayan Valley Region during a visioning exercise held on September 20-22, 2016 at the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga.

Entitled “Charting the Future: The RDC2 Visioning Exercise”, the activity served as a venue where the RDC2 members reviewed the Council’s existing vision, mission,

and key result areas (KRAs), and discussed key issues confronting the development of the region.

The exercise also became an avenue for the regional heads of offices to strengthen the camaraderie and teamwork among themselves and to establish stronger linkages.

Atty. Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones, the Executive Director of the Career Executive Service Board (CESB), was the activity’s esteemed resource person.

Through five sessions and four workshops, the participants were able to come up with more-

focused and strategic development directions and a vision of what they want Region 2 to become in the next years.

“We are very excited about this visioning activity because we want to enhance the effectiveness of the Council in responding to the development needs of the region,” stated NEDA Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Darauay, the Acting Chair of the RDC2, as she welcomed the participants.

“On behalf of the RDC2, I would like to sincerely thank each of the members who travelled all the way to Clark for recognizing



Atty. Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones (2nd from L) being presented with a certificate of appreciation for being the resource speaker during the RDC2 Visioning Exercise. Presenting the certificate are (from L to R) Isabela Provincial Vice Governor Antonio T. Albano, RDC2 Acting Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay, and Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Governor Carlos M. Padilla.



the importance of this activity in improving the RDC's directions for the future," she added.

The workshops

Dir. Allones grouped the RDC2 members into five groups for the workshops, which all required their critical thinking and imagination of how the Cagayan Valley Region should fully develop in the next years.

In the first workshop, the participants were asked to describe the region in the present time in terms of what they see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. Next, they had to come up with a front page story of an imaginary newspaper in the year 2025/2030 about their vision and dream for the region in terms of political system and structure, economy, heritage and culture, infrastructure, and social services.

The third workshop required the participants to identify perceived milestones for 2019 and 2023



RD Darauay and RD Santos of the RDC3 leading the Partners' Interaction Session which served as an opportunity for both Councils to strengthen their partnerships and linkages.

that should be achieved by the region.

In the final workshop, they listed down actions they think people in the region should stop, continue, and start doing institutionally and individually in order for the region to achieve the status described in their 2025/2030 front page stories from the second workshop.

Partners' Interaction

In one of the sessions, the RDC2 members had the opportunity to

meet their counterparts from the RDC3 (Central Luzon) for the Partners' Interaction. NEDA RO3 RD Severino C. Santos, the Vice Chair of the RDC3, delivered a short message about sustaining the good partnership between the two Councils.

Melissa Feliciano of the Clark International Airport Corporation likewise made a brief presentation about their services and some information about the Clark Special Economic Zone. | **NEDA DRD**



RPMC praises NV road project

The Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) recently lauded the implementation of the project involving the concreting of the Kinacao-Kurasay-Kinalabasa road in Diadi, Nueva Vizcaya.

The project was implemented under the Konkreto at Ligtas na Daan (KALSADA) Program of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

“The road project had a very strong institutional arrangement

and project management with an organized road management committee supported by legislative measures and basically top management support,” MaryAnne ER. Darauay, RPMC chairperson, said in a report.

She also underscored that additional work and road facilities are still needed such as slope protection, shoulder sealing, and drainage which will need a budget that is over and above the contract amount of PHP86.82 million.

“From the total project cost of Php 88.56 million, there will be a projected savings of PHP1.75 million,” Dir. Darauay said.

The report also stated that the provincial government institutionalized local road management performance assessment and constructors’ performance evaluation system and also involved multi-sectoral groups as third parties which the RPMC recommended for replication by other LGUs.

The RPMC is composed of agency heads of the National Economic and Development Authority, the DILG, the Department of Budget and Management, the Philippine Information Agency, the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinators (PPDCs), and three RDC2 PSRs.
| BEN MOSES EBREO, PIA R02



CV hits highest employment rate nationwide

Director Atty. Sixto T. Rodriguez, Jr. said.

“We will work better to maintain or even upgrade the status quo of the region,” he added.

The survey further showed that out of the total population in the region, some 2.254 million Cagayanos aged 15 years old and above are part of the labor force comprising the 63.4 percent labor force participation rate in the region.

Also, the region’s 10.5 percent underemployment rate ranked second to the lowest, next to the National Capital Region.

DOLE’s major employment enhancement programs

include the regular job fairs, the Government Internship Program, the Special Program for Employment of Students, the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa ating Displaced/Disadvantaged Workers or emergency employment, the Skills Registry System, Philjobnet, and the Public Employment Service.

These programs greatly contributed to the high employment rate in Cagayan Valley, in collaboration with other agencies and LGUs.

Employment can be classified into two: wage employment and self-employment. Meanwhile, employed persons are classified as either full time or part-time workers and underemployed persons are categorized as part-time workers since they render service for less than 40 hours a week. | KATRINA JOY C. UBIÑA, DOLE R02. Photo Credit: www.clipartpanda.com

Cagayan Valley Region had the highest rate of employment with 96.9 percent and the lowest unemployment rate with 3.1 percent in the first few months of CY 2016.

This was according to the April 2016 Labor Force Survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

“This only shows that our collaborative efforts with other government offices and LGUs in implementing our programs and services in the region are all worth it,” Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) 2 Regional

The Pacific Garden at
the Fundacion Pacita
Nature Lodge in
Basco, Batanes

More investors needed to boost Region 2's tourism

The intervention of foreign and local investors is needed in order to further improve the tourism potentials of Cagayan Valley Region, Department of Tourism (DOT) Regional Director Virgilio Maguigad said.

"We are still lagging behind compared to other regions in terms of tourism arrivals and its impact to the economy because we are not yet included as one of the primary tourist destinations in the country," he said in a press conference.

Dir. Maguigad said that Cagayan Valley Region has many tourism potentials that need the help of private investors so that these hotspots and destinations can be developed fully.

He added that the government, through the DOT-Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Convergence Program alone, has poured in more than PHP2 billion for the development of access roads to

the region's tourism attractions and destinations.

Also, Dir. Maguigad said that the influx of foreign and domestic tourists in Cagayan Valley continues to increase over the past years which contributed more than PHP2 billion to the region's economy.

From 2010-2015, DOT has recorded an increase in foreign and domestic tourists from more than 358,000 to 795,000.

Most of the major growth in the number of tourist arrivals were noted in 2014 with 748,861 and in 2016 with 795,502.

"Most of the foreign tourists who visited Cagayan Valley came from China, Taiwan, the United States, and Canada, among others," the director said.

DOT also reported that PHP1.7 billion-worth of receipts from foreign and domestic tourists were generated by the region in

2014 and this grew to PHP1.8 billion in 2015.

For this year's first semester, DOT has listed 352,387 foreign and domestic tourist arrivals while same day visitors were at more than 1.4 million.

Dir. Maguigad added that the National Tourism Development Plan for 2016 to 2022 will focus on the implementation and development of various projects for Batanes and the Babuyan Islands, Cagayan Coast cluster, Tuguegarao-Tabuk (Sierra Madre cluster), Ilagan-Isabela (Coast), Quirino (Sierra Madre cluster), and Nueva Vizcaya (Cordillera cluster).

According to Dir. Maguigad, the DOT also plans to promote rural and value-chain development towards increasing agricultural development and rural enterprise and to invest in human capital development. | BEN MOSES EBREO, PIA R02. Photo Credit: www.dotregion2.com.ph

DOLE 2 provides emergency employment to 177 farmers in Isabela town

One hundred seventy seven (177) farm tenants and laborers in the municipality of Roxas, Isabela have been recently granted emergency employment by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Regional Office 2.

This after the farmers and laborers experienced the adverse effects of farm mechanization in their only source of livelihood.

"They were displaced due to the increasing use of mechanical rice planters and harvesters brought about by the farm mechanization program in Roxas," Dr. Jonathan Calderon, municipal mayor of Roxas, said.

A total amount of PHP1,189,796.00 funded through the DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program (DILEEP) under the Bottom-Up Budgeting

was granted to the municipality to cover the employment of the farmers for six months.

The displaced farmers were expected to work and serve by maintaining the cleanliness of drainage canals (through declogging) and the barangay roads.

They were also asked to plant ornamental plants and seedlings along barangay roads in Roxas as part of the municipality's green environment program.

The farmers who benefitted from this assistance came from the barangays of Simimbaan, San Antonio, and San Rafael.

The beneficiaries were provided with uniforms, gears, and personal protective equipment. They were also enrolled in the Social Security System as part of their social protection benefits.

The DILEEP contributes to poverty alleviation and reduces risks for the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized workers either through emergency employment or promotion of entrepreneurship and community enterprises.

It has two components, namely the Kabuhayan or Livelihood Program and the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) or emergency employment.

The Livelihood Program is a grant assistance for capacity building on livelihood in the form of working capital solely for the purchase of equipment, tools and jigs, and raw materials, among others.

On the other hand, the TUPAD program is a community-based (municipality/barangay) package of assistance that provides emergency employment for displaced workers, under-employed, and unemployed poor for a minimum period of 10 days, but not to exceed a maximum of 30 days, depending on the nature of work to be performed. | **DIVINE GRACE P. CRISTOBAL, DOLE R02**



The NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regional Office 02



joins the nation in celebrating the

14th DEVELOPMENT POLICY RESEARCH MONTH
September 2016



**Investing in Risk Reduction
for a Resilient Philippines**

VISIT: <http://dprm.pids.gov.ph>

The month of September each year is declared as the Development Policy Research Month (DPRM) to promote and draw nationwide awareness on the importance of policy research in the formulation of national development plans, programs, and policies.

This year's theme highlights the need for in-depth reflections and analyses on resilience building, risk reduction, and structural transformation. It also emphasizes the role of appropriate policy interventions in building the country's resilience to various economic, environmental, political, and social risks and stresses. ■

Farmers now earning cash through Vermi Composting



Farmers carry out their practical training on vermi composting

a DAR-assisted Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Organization (ARBO), headed by its Chairman Herminio Lamorena and Manager Gloria Bullawit.

Farmers in Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya are now gaining income from a profitable household project after attending more than two months of the season-long training on Vermi Composting conducted by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Provincial Office of Nueva Vizcaya, through the DAR Municipal Office of Quezon, and in collaboration with the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg).

During the initial harvest, the farmers produced 12 cavans (with 40 kilos per cavan) of organic fertilizer which were readily made available to and accepted by the market. Due to this successful and continuous production, harvest is scheduled every two weeks and as often as the project is expected to prosper.

Among the participants were the members of the Buliwao Multipurpose Cooperative (BMPC),

As a complementary way of helping the farmers sustain their interest in the project, Quezon Municipal Mayor Dolores B. Binwag personally expressed her willingness to buy the organic fertilizers which are apparently relevant to the municipality's "Gulayan sa Munisipyo" project.

The project was allocated with PHP40,000 financial outlay funded under the Agricultural Extension Service of the Program and Project Beneficiaries Development Division (PPBD) of the province.

DPWH installs Rain Water Collection System in 19 schools

The Department of Public Works and Highways Regional Office 02 through the Quirino District Engineering Office has recently completed the construction of Rain Water Collection Systems (RWCS) in 19 elementary and secondary schools in five municipalities in Quirino province.

These schools are located in the municipalities of Aglipay, Cabarroguis, Diffun, Nagtipunan, and Maddela.

The system collects rainwater through pipes connected from the roofing of the school buildings. The accumulated rainwater is distributed to toilets, washrooms, and other utilities, thereby allowing the school to maximize rainwater for sanitation purposes.

The RWCS project was started in June this year with a total amount of PHP3,400,00. | **MARICEL B. ASEJO (WITH REPORTS FROM WILFRED CATU), DPWH R02**

The training was headed by Engr. Noralyn G. Busa of OPAg, a National Awardee of the National Organic Agriculture Achievers' Awards as Outstanding Provincial Organic Agriculture Focal Person for 2014 and 2015. She said that more than the project's profitability, the relevance of the implementation and maintenance of an environment-friendly system of disposing wastes is very much appreciated in these times.

The DAR Municipal Office will regularly monitor the project to ensure its sustainability and further expansion. | **LIZZETTE ANN GUIUNTAB, PLGU-Nueva Vizcaya. Photo Credit: PLGU-Nueva Vizcaya & DAR R02**

QUIRINO ESTABLISHES SILID-KANLUNGAN



The Quirino Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) has just received

the accreditation of its Silid-Kanlungan from the Standard Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development Central Office through Luisa M. Aquino.

PSWD Officer Agaton Pagbilao said the accreditation was granted during their visit to the DSWD Central Office last June 15.

“The Silid-Kanlungan Drop-in Center will be for the victims of violence, children in conflict with the law, foundlings, victims of trafficking, stranded, and the like,” Pagbilao said.

Pagbilao added that the center has three rooms: one for females, one for males, and one for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

“They can stay here up to 72 hours but maybe extended up to the time that the case will be filed or up to the time that the client will be referred to a center or institution or to a nearest relative,” he also stated.

The center is located at the PSWDO Bldg., Capitol compound and is manned by Geraldine E. Ramos, registered social worker. It operates under the supervisions of Pagbilao, QSU

Campus Administrator Norma Lim, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Roger Baguioen, Luzviminda Reyno, Editha Castro, Eleanor, Eleazar Ancheta, Ruben Reganit, Chanterphere de Vera and Daryll Pagbilao. | **THELMA C. BICARME, PIA R02**

ISABELA TO CREATE COASTAL DEV'T AUTHORITY



The provincial government of Isabela plans to create an office which will focus on the

province's comprehensive coastal development.

Atty. Noel Manuel Lopez, provincial administrator, said if the plan will materialize, the office will be named as Isabela Coastal Development Authority (ICDA) which will be responsible in the over-all development of the province's coastal towns.

Lopez said once the construction of the Ilagan – Divilacan road will be completed, the economic activities and investment opportunities are expected to increase in the island-towns of Maconacon, Divilacan, Palanan and Dinapigue.

“This is why we need to create an office to oversee the over-all development plan for the coastal towns,” Lopez said.

The provincial administrator urged the four coastal towns'

local officials to submit to the provincial government their local development plans for inclusion in the ICDA once the creation of such office will be approved. |

MERLITO G. EDALE, JR., PIA R02

CAGAYAN TO IMPROVE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE



The provincial government of Cagayan has expressed its plan to develop the Cagayan Special

Economic Zone and Free Port (CSEZFP) in Santa Ana town.

In a press conference at the Provincial Capitol last July, Governor Manuel N. Mamba said that he hopes to improve the zone by getting rid of the illegal practices in the area.

He said that he will focus on making the zone a tourist destination by improving nearby beaches and by developing the area's operation as a fish port.

The governor also revealed that the provincial government is currently in talks with Taiwan to form a partnership on a “province to province” relationship in accordance with the “One China Policy.”

In earlier statements, Gov. Mamba mentioned that his administration will be prioritizing more projects geared towards tourism development as part of his Cagayan Development Agenda or CAGANDA 2025.

The Cagayan Special Economic Zone and Freeport is managed by the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority (CEZA). | **ANGELY L. MERCADO, GERALD JOSEF LUCENA, PIA R02**

PRODUCTION OF HIGH-VALUE CROPS PUSHED IN BATANES



The Department of Agriculture (DA) Regional Field Office 2 has provided techno-demonstrations for Ivatan farmers to increase their production of high-value crops, considering the soil potential of the province for growing high-value crops.

“A series of training sessions has been provided for farmers all over the province to equip them with the necessary knowledge on how to boost their production of garlic which is one of the high-value crops in the province,” Celso B. Batallones, Batanes DA-Experiment Station chief, said.

He said DA has identified at least 70.9 hectares garlic plantation here which will be managed by five farmers’ organizations in the province.

“We target to produce at least 43.5 metric tons of garlic this year,” he said.

Aside from garlic production, Batallones said they also provided assistance to four farmers’ groups

that ventured in planting sweet potatoes at the 19.2-hectare farms identified by DA.

“We have also provided 0.28 hectare agricultural lot for some farmers who choose to venture in planting purple yam,” Batallones said.

He then urged the beneficiaries to sustain the DA programs so that the province will become the next top producer of high-value crops in the country. | **OLIVER T. BACCAY, PIA R02**

NV GOV ASSURES MEDICINE ACCESS AT PROV’L HOSPITAL



Governor Carlos M. Padilla has assured patients at the provincial government-owned provincial hospital in Bambang town that medicines will be available anytime.

Padilla said the availability of medicines at the Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Hospital (NVPH) will be ensured through the allocation of at least PHP50,000.00 monthly petty cash.

“This will be used in buying generic medicines for the NVPH pharmacy so that people can get medicine anytime of the day when they need it, without leaving their patients inside the hospital,” Gov. Padilla said.

“This will also unburden the patients especially the poor in

buying costly medicines outside the NVPH,” he added.

The petty cash allocation is one of the measures agreed upon to address the insufficient supply of medicines at the NVPH.

Gov. Padilla recently met with NVPH officials and workers to discuss issues and concerns and come up with recommendations to improve the hospital’s services.

He said other measures to further improve the operation of the NVPH include the immediate release of the salaries of casual and contractual employees and the improvement of the procurement system for health services and materials, among others.

“We are expecting that for one month, there will be positive improvements already because we have long been hearing many complaints from outpatients regarding the services of our hospital that need to be improved,” the governor stated.

Health workers revealed that private doctors prescribe medicines that are only available outside the NVPH, which is one of the issues identified by the patients that need to be addressed.

The private wards, they added are also benefiting the private medical practitioners, prompting Gov. Padilla to reconsider the possibility of abolishing the private wards and instead transform them into pay wards to benefit patients from all walks of life. | **BEN MOSES EBREO, PIA R02**

What's up at the RGC?



To continue its drive to have a green environment at the Regional Government Center (RGC), the RGC Management Committee conducted another tree planting activity on September 28, 2016 at one of the tree lanes within the 60-hectare RGC area.

About 40 officials and staff of the different member-agencies of the RGCMC participated in the tree planting. They came from the City Government of Tuguegarao, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Budget and Management, the Department of the Interior and Local

Government, the Commission on Audit (COA), the Department of Justice, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office - Cagayan, the Philippine National Police, and the National Economic and Development Authority.

A total of 45 fire tree seedlings were successfully planted at the tree lane located between the Rogelio B. Baggayan Nature Park and Wildlife Center and the PENRO-Cagayan sub-office.

To show their support to the activity, participating agencies fabricated and brought their own tree guards to secure their seedlings.

Also, the DPWH prepared the holes while the DENR provided the seedlings.

The RGC's drainage system is also being continually improved. During the Committee's third quarter meeting on July 27, 2016 at the DPWH Regional Office, it was reported that part of the drainage system along Dalan na Pappabalo has been completed. This is located along the Department of Agrarian Reform compound.

Meanwhile, the installation of the drainage system fronting the properties of the COA regional office and the Cagayan Valley Integrated Agriculture Laboratory of the Department of Agriculture is on-going as of this quarter. | **FRANCES C. TANNAGAN, NEDA PMED.**
Photo Credit: RGCMC; <http://trees.phillipmartin>; <http://image.freepik.com>



Officials and staff of the RGCMC planted 45 fire tree seedlings at a tree lane along Dalan na Pappabalo at the Regional Government Center in Carig Sur, Tuguegarao City in September.