



Linkage

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**Lending
a hand
in crisis**



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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 quarter's issue is all about giving back as the RDC2 and its partner-agencies lend a hand to communities affected by the strong typhoons that visited the region in the last quarter of the year. The RDC2 also showed its support to the launching of the AmBisyon Natin 2040 in the region and in the provincial caravans and other advocacy activities that ensued.



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December 2016 Issue

What's inside this issue:

RDC CORNER

Region 2 stakeholders review the PDP 2017-2022 | 4

Region 2 embraces AmBisyon Natin 2040 | 6

RDC2, NVM-RC reach out to typhoon victims | 8

RPMC conducts M&E orientation for local PMCs | 10

PDNA teams validate effects of Typhoon Lawin | 11

Rehab and Recovery Committee prepares rehab plan for typhoon-affected areas | 11

AGENCY WATCH

DepEd holds IP Festival of Talents | 12

DAR, DTI guide ARBOs in exploring market potentials and opportunities thru Value-Chain Workshop | 12

DA shifts to climate-resilient programs, projects in 2017-2022 | 13

DTI holds competitiveness forum | 13

AROUND THE REGION

Lady Gov to assist unemployed Ivatan women | 14

Isabela PLGU forms inspection team vs. illegal drugs | 14

Quirino forms Sagip Buhay 910 | 14

Cagayan Gov wants IP participation in local governance | 15

NV PLGU gives aid to farmers, fisherfolk, allied groups | 15

FEATURE

3rd Quarter Regional Economic Situationer | 3

More advocacy activities on the AmBisyon Natin 2040 | 16



BOUNTIFUL CAGAYAN VALLEY REGION

FRONT AND BACK COVER PHOTO
CREDIT: RDC2

3RD QUARTER REGIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATIONER



The Cagayan Valley region maintained a positive performance during the third quarter of CY 2016 with the significant gains it recorded in all sectors.

The region maintained its top rank in corn production and third spot in palay production as it accounted for 21.88 percent and 8.65 percent, respectively, of the total national output.

Specifically, the agriculture sector displayed higher production levels in palay, fruits, vegetables and root crops, and livestock and poultry.

These increments in production were primarily attributed to the increase in area harvested and in productivity levels as a result of the assistances provided by concerned agencies and some private companies, particularly San Miguel Corporation, for the production of cassava and sugarcane.

On the Industry and Services sector, key indicators also recorded continuous expansion during the period. The Department of Industry's Business Name Registration (BNR) posted a higher number of firms, reflecting more investments and jobs generated.

Indicators on Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) loans, air transport, revenue collections, and value of construction also improved.

Prices of basic goods and services measured by the

MACROECONOMY

- ◆ Inflation rate at 2.5%
- ◆ Unemployment rate at 3.5%
- ◆ Underemployment rate at 8.9%

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY

- ◆ Palay production up by 25.64%
- ◆ Corn production down by 3.56%
- ◆ Fruit production up by 1.79%
- ◆ Vegetable and root crop production up by 14.34%
- ◆ Non-food and industrial commercial crops production up by 9.82%
- ◆ Livestock production up by 1.48%
- ◆ Poultry production up by 4.97%
- ◆ Fisheries production down by 1.53%

INDUSTRY AND SERVICES SECTOR

- ◆ Number of BNR investments up by 26.53%
- ◆ BNR investments up by 1.49%
- ◆ LBP loans up by 7.21%
- ◆ Value of construction up by 22.49%
- ◆ Revenue collections up by 17.40%
- ◆ Crime volume up by 31.29%

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

inflation rate remained stable at 2.5 percent.

In terms of employment, the region maintained a higher employment rate (96.5%) and lower underemployment rate (8.9%) compared to the national level of 94.6 percent and 17.3 percent, respectively.

Given these gains, the challenge for the region in the next quarters and beyond remains on sustaining its economic growth through the further improvement of productivity levels, increased inflows of

investments, availability of more quality jobs, and the presence of a secure and business-friendly environment.

Moreover, in recognition of the contributions of the agriculture sector to the economy, the adaptability of its sub-sectors in terms of climate variability and weather disturbances should also be prioritized especially during the wet season. | ANGELICA A. UMOQUIT, NEDA PFPD

The complete report can be downloaded at www.rdc2.gov.ph

On November 23, 2016, more than a hundred development partners from regional line agencies, non-government organizations, the media, the academe, and the private sector gathered together for the consultation on the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 at the Villa Blanca Hotel in Tuguegarao City.

The regional consultation is part of the government's strategies to have the PDP reviewed by various stakeholders across all the regions nationwide.

The PDP 2017-2022 is the first of the four medium-term development plans towards the realization of the long-term vision spelled out in the AmBisyon Natin 2040, which serves as an anchor for development planning across four administrations (*see separate story on page 6*).

Aside from the AmBisyon, the PDP also takes into account the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (SDA) and the Duterte Administration's 0+10-point Socioeconomic Agenda to ensure that development strategies are coherent, sustainable, and focused.

This new PDP was crafted by a planning committee (PC) whose members come from different

national government agencies, clustered according to the plan chapters.

For the consultation in Region 2, a team composed of representatives of the national PC, headed by NEDA Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Rosemarie G. Edillon, served as resource persons and assisted the region's stakeholders during the workshops.

Among them were Director Lorenzo Clavejo of the National Security Council, Mr. Rommel Rojas of the Department of Finance, Mr. Nestor Ian Fiedalan of the Department of Trade and Industry - Competitiveness Bureau, and Mr. Rowel A. Sancho of the Department of Science and Technology.

Meanwhile, the resource persons from the NEDA Central Office included Mr. Neil Jameson Sta. Isabel, Ms. Gemma A. Bala, Ms. Maria Kris E. Monzales, Ms. Ma. Cecilia Angela Deodores-Labadan, Ms. Elaine C. Bautista,

Ms. Ma. Corazon Japson, Ms. Baby Catherine B. Cruz, and Mr. Julius A. Casabal.

Region 2's contribution to national development

In his opening remarks, Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson P. Soriano welcomed the esteemed guests and participants and emphasized Region 2's significant contribution in national development.

He also shared the region's experience after Super Typhoon Lawin brought about huge devastation in the region. The Mayor further described the efforts and accomplishments of the local government in helping bring back the region, particularly the province of Cagayan, to its normal situation.

Putting heads together

Usec. Edillon set the tone for the consultation with a presentation on the overall framework of the national plan and the process it needs to undergo before it will finally get the approval of the President.



During the breakout sessions, the groups discussed their assigned PDP chapters after a representative from the national PC (in this photo, Ms. Labadan of NEDA Central Office) presented the draft assessment, challenges, and strategic framework of the PDP.



(From L-R): RDC2 PSR for Education and Manpower Dr. Corona C. Borja, NEDA OIC-ARD Ronilo H. Bulseco, NEDA Usec. Rosemarie G. Edillon, Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson P. Soriano, and National Security Council Asec. Lorenzo Clavejo.

For the consultation process, the participants were divided into groups to discuss in detail the major sections of the PDP, namely (1) Enhancing the Social Fabric; (2) Reducing Inequality in Economic Development Opportunities; (3) Increasing Potential Growth; (4) Enabling and Supportive Economic Environment; (5) Foundations for Inclusive and Sustainable Development; and (6) Moving Forward.

For each group, a representative from the national PC presented the draft assessment, challenges, and strategic framework of the PDP chapters. After which, the group gave their inputs, specifically on the strategies to effectively and efficiently attain the desired outcomes.

The participants were also asked to identify regional concerns that require specific actions at the national level.

During the plenary, most of the comments centered on

how the national government could tap and take advantage of the region's potential and key role as a major producer of raw materials and as the home of the biggest river basin in the country.

Specifically, the participants were eager to know how the government plans to support Region 2 especially amidst major challenges such as climate change, resource depletion/degradation, rapid urbanization, inequality, and poverty.

They also emphasized the need for more investments in agriculture and improving forward linkages to value-adding industries, while protecting the environment and the natural resource base in order to achieve sustainable development in the next six years and beyond.

Spreading development

In her presentation, Usec. Edillon highlighted the need to spread development across the country

to help lagging regions and industries catch up and contribute in attaining the country's mid-term and long-term goals. She also mentioned the need to maintain trust in the government and emphasized the importance of the private sector, including the citizenry, and the public sector working hand in hand.

Further, Usec. Edillon reiterated the importance of the next six years in realizing the long-term vision of the *AmBisyon Natin 2040*, focusing on enabling Filipinos to enjoy a *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay*.

Finally, she commended the participants for sharing their inputs during the consultation and for taking the activity as an opportunity to contribute to the PDP. She said that through this consultation, region-specific concerns and priorities were discussed to ensure that the PDP captures the real sentiments of the Filipino people. | **RIZZA T. ANDRES AND LEOMAR C. ISRAEL, NEDA PFPD.**
Photo Credit: RDC2



By 2040, all Filipinos will enjoy a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life or a *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay*.

This sums up the AmBisyon Natin 2040, or simply the AmBisyon, which represents the collective long-term vision and aspirations of Filipinos for the kind of life they want and the country that they want to see by 2040.

This vision was well received in Region 2 when it was launched on November 24, 2016 in Tuguegarao City. The regional launching was attended by more than 190 guests from various

sectors of the society such as the government, private, youth, and civil society sectors, as well as from the academe and the media.

NEDA Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Dr. Rosemarie G. Edillon, the activity's guest of honor, explained that the AmBisyon is actually a play of words – ambition and vision.

"It is our vision for the future, 25 years from now," the Undersecretary said.

She stated the AmBisyon's vision as: *"In 2040, we will all enjoy a stable and comfortable lifestyle, secure in the knowledge that we*

have enough for our daily needs and unexpected expenses, that we can plan and prepare for our own and our children's future. Our family lives together in a place of our own and we have the freedom to go where we desire, protected and enabled by a clean, efficient and fair government."

"In short, what we actually really want is a simple and comfortable life," she explained.

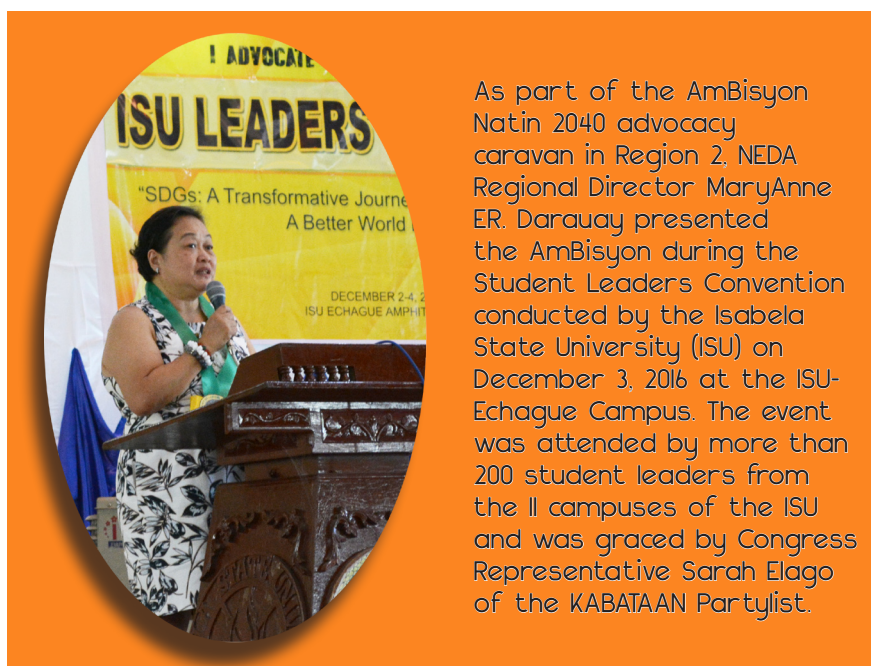
She added that the AmBisyon aims to be an anchor for development planning across four administrations and a guide for engaging with international development partners.

During the launching, Usec. Edillon noted the presence of students from various higher education institutions in the region.

"We are happy to see so many of our youth in this gathering," she averred. "We really need the young ones to embrace this vision and see it through."

Stakeholders share insights on the AmBisyon

For Cagayan Provincial Governor Manuel N. Mamba, the AmBisyon's vision for every



As part of the AmBisyon Natin 2040 advocacy caravan in Region 2, NEDA Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Daraauay presented the AmBisyon during the Student Leaders Convention conducted by the Isabelo State University (ISU) on December 3, 2016 at the ISU-Echague Campus. The event was attended by more than 200 student leaders from the 11 campuses of the ISU and was graced by Congress Representative Sarah Elago of the KABATAAN Partylist.

Filipino having a simple and comfortable life is echoed in the Cagayan Development Agenda (CAGANDA) 2025, which the province has embarked on since he started his term as governor.

“Both the AmBisyon and the CAGANDA are blueprints for the future of our people as both aspire for better lives for them across all aspects of development,” he said in his opening remarks which was delivered by Provincial Administrator Joseph M. Llopis.

The Governor added that it is imperative especially for the people in government to work together for these visions to be realized.

Four other stakeholders from the government, private, and youth sectors as well as the academe also shared their impressions and insights on the AmBisyon (*photo on the right*).

Government services to help Filipinos achieve the AmBisyon

A highlight of the regional launching of the AmBisyon was the plenary session composed of three presentations from selected



The four stakeholders who shared insights on the AmBisyon include (from L-R): Dr. Troy Alexander G. Miano of the Isabela Provincial Planning and Development Office; Dr. Armenio C. Liban, Jr., the Director for Research of the University of Cagayan Valley; Mr. Cherson C. Bariuan, a student leader from Saint Paul University Philippines and one of the national finalists for the 2016 Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines; and Engr. Romeo R. Vasquez, a well-renowned farmer-entrepreneur and currently one of the 12 private sector representatives of the RDC2.

government agencies showcasing their respective services under the three components of the AmBisyon (*bottom photo*).

These agencies include (1) the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) for the component on *Matatag at Balanseng Buhay*, which features services that help people keep their families intact, achieve work–life balance, and allow them to spend enough time with their family even while they work or pursue their careers; (2) the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for the component on *Maginhawang Buhay*, or services

that enable people to be gainfully employed and earn enough for the kind of life they want for their families; and (3) the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) for the component on *Ligtas at Panatag na Buhay*, which features services that enable individuals and communities to achieve peace and security and to be resilient against shocks, whether man-made or caused by natural hazards.

These services can aid people to take the next step toward realizing their aspirations for a *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay*.

Advocating the AmBisyon

NEDA OIC-Assistant Regional Director Ronilo H. Bulseco thanked the guests for taking time to witness the grand launching and recognizing it as a symbolic event both for the citizenry and for the country.

In behalf of NEDA Region 02, he also encouraged them to continue supporting this endeavor by advocating the AmBisyon to their peers, constituents, and clients. (*More stories on back cover*)

AYLASAM, NEDA DRD. Photo Credit: RDC2



(From L-R): PhilHealth Regional Vice-President Mr. Oscar B. Abadu, Jr. presented the agency's e-services, particularly the “My PhilHealth Portal” which can be accessed by PhilHealth members for their various needs; Engr. Reynald Alan of DOLE presented the JobStart program, including other services that support students in finding employment while in school or after graduating from college; and DOST Assistant Regional Director Dr. Teresita A. Tabaog presented the agency's developed facilities and technologies that play major roles in building resilient communities and in disaster management.



RDC2, NVM-RC *reach out* to typhoon victims

In celebration of the National Volunteer Month (NVM) in December, the Regional Development Council 2 ended the year with an outreach program for families who were severely affected by Super Typhoon Lawin which brought havoc in Cagayan and nearby provinces in October.

The RDC2, led by Acting Chairperson and NEDA Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Darauay, partnered with the NVM-Regional Committee in conducting the outreach activity on December 21, 2016.

The NVM-RC is composed of the regional offices of the

Members of the RDC2, NVM-RC, and PSA coordinated with local barangay officials for a smooth and orderly relief distribution. Brgy. Furagui Punong Barangay Arnel C. Punzalan (3rd from R, standing) and Brgy. Liwan Norte Punong Barangay Juanito G. de Guzman (not in photo), together with other barangay officials, showed their support to the activity by personally leading the beneficiaries to the designated distribution areas.

Philippine Information Agency (PIA), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Civil Service Commission (CSC), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Cagayan State University (CSU).

Representatives of the RDC2 and NVM-RC member-agencies as well as development partners and various donors traveled roughly 55 kilometers to reach the beneficiaries in two barangays in Cagayan Province – Brgy. Liwan Norte in the municipality of Enrile and Brgy. Furagui in the municipality of Solana.

More than 400 affected families in the two barangays received

goodwill bags containing assorted grocery items such as canned goods, instant noodles, coffee, and laundry soaps. They also received five kilos of rice each as well as blankets and solar lamps.

Dubbed as “Lend a Hand in Crisis”, the activity was a huge success as evidenced by the smiles in the faces of the beneficiaries as they lined up to receive their bags of goods.

“Malaking tulong ang mga ito para sa amin lalo na at unti-unti pa lamang kaming bumabangon mula sa epekto ng Lawin,” said one woman in Brgy. Liwan Norte as she expressed her gratitude to the RDC2 and to all the sponsors and donors.

“We know that the contents of these bags will not last long but we hope that these goods will be able to contribute to your recovery in



any way,” averred Dir. Darauay.

“We apologize that we were not able to accommodate your request for shelter assistance and we just wish that we had enough funds so we can reach out to more beneficiaries,” she added.

Partner Institutions and Donors

The RDC2 and the NVM-SC also worked with the Regional Statistics Committee (RSC), whose member-agencies are mostly members of the RDC2 as well. The RSC is chaired by Dir. Darauay and co-chaired by Philippine Statistics Authority Regional Director Marilyn T. Estrada, who was also present during the activity.

The solar lamps, blankets, and some assorted grocery items came from the RDC2. The other grocery items and blankets were donated by the DBM, DILG, PIA, and TESDA while the sacks of rice came from CSU and Oceana Gold (Philippines), Inc.

Cash donations, which were used to purchase more grocery items,

were also received from CHED, DepEd, and the Northeast Luzon Credit Cooperative (NELCCO) through Mr. Geronimo T. Zapata, who is currently a private sector representative of the RDC2.

During the outreach program, some officials and staff of the 5th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army also partnered and participated by securing the venue and offering free haircuts to interested male beneficiaries.

In coordinating the activity, NEDA RO2 also sought the assistance and support of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, who provided the list of affected barangays and the LGUs of Enrile and Solana as well as the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Offices and Barangay Officials of Barangays Liwan Norte and Furagui.

The NVM is commemorated every December of every year,



In her message before the goodwill bags were distributed, RDC2 Acting Chair Dir. Darauay encouraged the beneficiaries to not lose hope especially in times of calamities because many people and organizations, such as the RDC2 and its partner-agencies, are always willing to lend a hand. Also in photo is PSA RD Estrada.



Members of the Philippine Army provided free haircut services to interested male beneficiaries in the two selected barangays.

spearheaded by the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency, which is also the agency conducting the annual Search for Outstanding Volunteers (SOV).

In the Region, the NEDA Regional Office 2, through the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division, serves as Secretariat of the SOV-Regional Steering Committee, with Dir. Darauay as Chairperson. | **JOEL T. UNCIANO**, NEDA PMED RO2. Photo Credit: RDC2

An Orientation on Project Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) was conducted by the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) 2 on December 14-15, 2016 to local Project Monitoring Committees (PMCs) of the region.

Around 30 participants from the local PMCs of the Cities of Tuguegarao, Ilagan, and Cauayan and of the five provinces of the region, as well as the newly-elected RDC2 private sector representatives (PSRs) assigned to the RPMC, attended the orientation which was held at the NEDA-RDC2 Building in Tuguegarao City.

The two-day activity aimed to enhance the capability of the PMCs and PSRs in project monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, it enabled them to know, understand and appreciate the concepts, bases, and procedures of the Regional Project Monitoring and Evaluation System (RPMES) and other monitoring and evaluation tools and techniques.

Likewise, the orientation gave them a better understanding of their respective roles as members of the RPMC or of the Provincial/

City PMCs and determine actions and generate commitment to fully operationalize the RPMES at the local level.

In his opening remarks, NEDA OIC-Assistant Regional Director Engr. Ronilo H. Bulseco emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of government programs and projects.

He urged the PMCs to be more vigilant in conducting M&E to assist in the facilitation of programs and projects in the region and to ensure their proper implementation.

The main resource persons were Engr. Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan, Mageline S. De Laza, and Francisca C. Tannagan of NEDA and Ms. Imelda Rosales of the Department of the Interior and Local Government Regional Office 02.

Included in the topics discussed were an overview of the monitoring and evaluation environment, concepts and

RPMC conducts M&E orientation for local PMCs

its part in the planning cycle; the RPMES objectives, system frameworks, scope and coverage; and the institutional arrangement, including the role of LGUs in monitoring and evaluation.

During the open forum, one major concern that was raised was the need to cascade the RPMES and its concepts at the local level so that even the local chief executives (LCEs) will be more aware of its importance.

By the end of the workshop, the groups of local PMCs drafted their proposed 2017 monitoring and evaluation action plans using the "Open Space Technology". They are expected to present their enhanced plans to their LCEs for appropriate approval and adoption.

These action plans will provide the PMCs direction for the coming year and will make them more effective and efficient in monitoring and evaluating government projects implemented in their areas. | **ERIC M. CABUTAJE, NEDA PMED. Photo Credit: RDC2**



Engr. Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan, the Division Chief of the NEDA Policy Formulation and Planning Division, gave an overview of the monitoring and evaluation process, emphasizing on its role as an integral component of the overall development planning process through which the timely delivery and/or completion of projects could be enhanced and their quality improved.

PDNA teams validate effects of Typhoon Lawin

Technical representatives from member-agencies of the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (RDRRMC) convened on November 13, 2016 to prepare for the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) after Super Typhoon Lawin struck the region, particularly the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, in mid-October.

During the meeting held at the Valley Hotel in Peñablanca, Cagayan, the Committee discussed and assessed the

damages caused by the typhoon and finalized arrangements for the actual conduct of the PDNA in 20 affected municipalities in the two provinces.

Three PDNA teams were organized to conduct a 10-day field validation on November 14-23, 2016 to assess the typhoon's infrastructural, agricultural, social, cross-sectoral impact in the affected areas.

Two teams covered 13 municipalities in Cagayan, namely Iguig, Alcala, Amulung,

Baggao, Gattaran, Peñablanca, Enrile, Solana, Tuao, Piat, Sto. Niño, Rizal, and Tuguegarao City. Meanwhile, the third team covered seven municipalities in Isabela, which include San Pablo, Cabagan, Sta. Maria, Sto. Tomas, Tumauini, Delfin Albano, and Ilagan City in the province of Isabela.

This was followed by a two-day writeshop for the preparation of the teams' reports. The result of the assessment was used in the formulation of a Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan to identify priority needs and to develop a recovery framework in order to mobilize the needed resources for recovery and reconstruction. | GIOVANNI I. MAGUDDAYAO, NEDA DRD

Rehab and Recovery Committee prepares rehab plan for typhoon-affected areas

The Rehabilitation and Recovery Committee (RRC), the post-disaster arm of the RDRRMC, conducted two meetings in December to validate the needed interventions for the rehabilitation of communities and people affected by the three consecutive typhoons that visited the Cagayan Valley Region in a span of less than two months in the last quarter of 2016: Super Typhoon Ferdie on September 13 which affected the province of Batanes, Typhoon Karen on October 16 which affected the provinces of Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya, and Super Typhoon Lawin on October 19 which severely affected the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, bringing about PHP 13.1 Billion worth of damages to properties.

These interventions are reflected in the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) report crafted after the three typhoons.

During its December 6 meeting, the RRC validated the PDNA reports and came up with the next set of actions and the requirements for the preparation of the rehabilitation plan.

They also discussed the utilization of the 5% DRRM Fund of LGUs and the Quick Response Fund (QRF) of agencies.

The RRC met again on December 28 to review the submission of the LGUs based on their three-year rehabilitation commitments with corresponding funding arrangements.

The Committee also validated the proposed programs and projects that draw funding from the 20% Development Fund and other funding sources/arrangements for rehabilitation purposes in the next three years.

The limitations on the coverage of the QRF were also clarified as most LGUs were expecting to get support from the said fund for the rehabilitation of their affected areas and population.

The final PDNA report which was forwarded to the national DRRMC was also shared during the TWG meeting. It serves as a crucial reference in the preparation of the Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan. | LEOMAR C. ISRAEL, NEDA PFPD

DepEd holds IP Festival of Talents

Various Indigenous Peoples' (IPs) groups in the Cagayan Valley Region recently showcased their native dances, songs, foods and culture during the three-day Regional IP Festival of Talents-cum-Summit initiated by the Department of Education (DepEd) Regional Office 02 in December.

DepEd Regional Director Estela Cariño said the event aimed to promote awareness and appreciation of the IP's heritage and history.

She added that the IPs form an integral part of the country's heritage and history but are often neglected in development programs.

The Indigenous Peoples Education Office (IPsEO) lauded the DepEd's initiative in preserving and promoting the rights of indigenous cultural communities geared towards national unity and development.

Rizzano Rufino, National Coordinator of the IPsEO, said the event will help the youth to have a deeper understanding and respect for IPs and for cultural diversity.

The two officials also led the opening of the Regional IP Village inside the DepEd regional office's compound which features various local products and goods of the region. | **GENE V. BAQUIRAN, PIA R02**

DAR, DTI guide ARBOs in exploring market potentials and opportunities thru Value-Chain Workshop

With the desire of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to sustain a productive and competitive Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Organizations (ARBO) enterprise in the global market, a Value-Chain Analysis (VCA) workshop was recently conducted in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) at Vercida's Hotel in Gamu, Isabela.

The three-day training seminar equipped the 38 participants with understanding on the full range of value-chain activities such as the design, production, marketing, and distribution of a product, thus, ensuring the ARBOs of productive advantage over their competitors.

"VCA includes the scrutiny of each step of the production process and the evaluation of steps to be eliminated or improved, resulting to cost-saving or upgraded productive capacity. The end result will benefit customers through the reduced cost of the product," said Ms. Buenafe Salas, the Provincial Marketing Agrarian Officer.

The activity focused on the mapping of three sectors which includes home styles and wearables, processed fruits and nuts, and cacao – all of which have huge potentials and

opportunities in contributing to the creation of bottom lines in terms of employment, investment, and economic growth.

After the participatory assessment and analysis, the activity concluded with the crafting of an action plan by the participants/stakeholders.

"With this, ARBOs are hopeful that through the VCA, the realization of possible strategies and interventions from government and private sectors will be achieved," said Ms. Salas.

The said training was attended by representatives from Del Pilar Multi-Purpose Cooperative (MPC), Karigo, San Mariano Banana Growers Association, Aranaar ARB MPC, Morado ASG, Sierra Madre MPC, San Mariano Agri-Prenuer, KALESACO, ARB Growers Association, and Aurosan High-value Crops Cluster MPC.

The VCA training is one of the support services that ARBOs receive as DAR steadfastly moves to accomplish its goals of uplifting their lives through a sustainable, if not a globally competitive, ARBO Livelihood Enterprise. | **CRISTINA B. BAUTISTA, DAR R02**

DA shifts to climate-resilient programs, projects in 2017-2022

The Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 2 has bared its programs and projects for 2017-2022 focusing on climate-resilient farming practices to meet its goal of providing available and affordable food and increasing farmers' income while improving their resilience to climate change risks.

The DA's report during a regional seminar for stakeholders and benefactors of the Quirino Integrated Agricultural Development Project showed that climate change has rendered everything unpredictable in agriculture.

To address this, the DA will focus on rice, corn, chicken, meat, dairy products, fish and marine products, fruits especially banana, high-value crops including coconut, cavendish and lacatan banana, pineapple, cacao, coffee, rubber, oil palm, abaca, shrimps, seaweeds, organically grown rice and vegetables, pork, halal chicken, spices, essential oils, and tropical fruits.

The DA will also pursue institutional restructuring and paradigm resetting and will finalize a memorandum of agreement with the Department of the Interior and Local Government to detail agricultural extension workers from the LGUs to DA-Regional Field Offices.

Further, it will push technology updating and sharing and pursue the modernization and mechanization program. It will also

provide easy access financing program for farmers, fishermen, and agriculture and fisheries stakeholders as well as free crop insurance coverage to around 1.5 million farmers.

The Department will increase competitiveness and promote value-added to agricultural products by providing strategic and effective post-harvest, storage, and processing facilities and pursuing an aggressive marketing campaign especially for high-value crops in foreign markets to generate jobs and increase the incomes of farmers and fisherfolks.

It will also coordinate with other government agencies to ensure the protection and preservation of water sources.

An aggressive enforcement of agricultural and fisheries laws shall be carried out to ensure the sustainability of crop production and fisheries.

The DA shall also re-introduce basic agriculture in the primary and elementary grades with emphasis on the value of land, water and seas, and the maximum but prudent utilization of these resources.

The agency has also announced its legislative agenda such as free irrigation, establishment of a coco levy trust fund, and the implementation of the National Land Use Policy, Urban Agriculture, and the Philippine Native Animal Development Act.
| **THELMA C. BICARME, PIA R02**

DTI holds competitiveness forum

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Regional Office 02, in collaboration with the Regional Competitiveness Committee, recently conducted the 1st Cagayan Valley Regional Competitiveness Forum and Workshop in Ilagan City, Isabela.

With the theme "Harnessing Economic Growth and Competitiveness through Multi-Sectoral Governance", the activity was attended by various local chief executives and local functionaries, regional line agencies, research practitioners from the academe, and private sector representatives from all over the region.

DTI Regional Director Ruben B. Diciano said the event aimed to facilitate the sharing of ideas and strategies on enhancing local competitiveness through the analysis of the results of the 2016 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) survey, an annual ranking of Philippine cities and municipalities.

The DTI also recognized the six most competitive LGUs in Region 02 based on their rankings in the 2016 CMCI survey: Ilagan City, Santiago City, and Cabatuan in Isabela; Tuguegarao City and Camalaniugan in Cagayan; and Solano in Nueva Vizcaya.

The CMCI Survey covers the three pillars of local economic development, namely Economic Dynamism, Government Efficiency, and Infrastructure. It aims to serve as a diagnostic tool, investment promotion tool, and a take-off point for further research. | **ANGELY L. MERCADO, PIA R02, AND CHARLES IRVIN P. TAGARINO, DTI R02**

LADY GOV TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED IVATAN WOMEN



Batanes lady Governor Marilou H. Cayco urged government line agencies that have a mandate

of assisting local entrepreneurs to focus on organizing and assisting unemployed women in Batanes for their livelihood.

She said she will seek their help in providing more training opportunities for the women in the province so that they will become more productive and enterprising.

“We need to conduct training sessions for these women’s groups especially in the development of market-competitive products out of our abundant resources and recyclable materials,” she added.

Earlier, Gov. Cayco forged an agreement with various government agencies such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Tourism, and the Philippine Health Organization for skills and livelihood training activities for the women’s groups.

She said the DTI has already enrolled 40 Ivatan women for food processing training and has allotted PHP 90 million capital seed fund for the group to start their livelihood project.

She added that the TESDA has also provided PHP 1.5 million

worth of scholarship grants for them for skills training on air-conditioning repair, cookery, bar tending, and dressmaking.

The governor also said she plans to partner with hotel and home-stay operators in the province to provide additional employment opportunities for those who have already completed the TESDA trainings. | **OLIVER T. BACCAY, PIA R02**

ISABELA PLGU FORMS INSPECTION TEAM VS ILLEGAL DRUGS



The provincial government of Isabela recently created a Provincial Building

Inspection Team to ensure that all commercial buildings in the province are not being used in manufacturing illegal drugs.

Gov. Faustino G. Dy III made the order after the recent discovery of the police and agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) of a shabu laboratory at Barangay District I, Cauayan City, hours after President Rodrigo Duterte made a short visit to the province to deliver relief goods and aids to Isabela farmers in November after the onslaught of Super Typhoon Lawin.

Gov. Dy directed the Provincial Building Inspection Team to study all the structures referred by the municipal and city governments’ building inspection teams that are set to be built or erected in their respective areas.

The Inspection Team also requires all LGUs in Isabela to form their respective building inspection teams to ensure that no buildings in their areas are utilized in the manufacture of illegal drugs or are places of illegal activities.

One other mandate of the team is to ensure that all buildings constructed in the province follow building safety standards strictly.

The Inspection Team is led by Gov. Dy and Provincial Legal Officer Atty. Francis Meer as Action Officer, while its members are the heads of the Provincial Engineering Office, Bureau of Fire Protection, Isabela Police Provincial Office, and the PDEA.

| **MERLITO G. EDALE, JR., PIA R02**

QUIRINO FORMS SAGIP BUHAY 910



Some 28 male and female responders were pre-selected as official members of the provincial

rescue team which will be the core of the now functional Sagip Buhay 910 in Quirino.

The Sagip Buhay 910 is the official emergency response program of the province through the efforts of Jesusa F. Leal, the provincial risk reduction management officer.

Working with the six local Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Offices (DRRMOs), the Sagip Buhay 910 was created to provide a speedy and efficient response in all kinds of emergencies throughout the province.

A one-day orientation program on Disaster Operation and Emergency Response was held recently at the Provincial DRRMO. The Diffun municipal DRRMO handed out protocols to equip the respondents, with the assistance of the Philippine National Police. | **THELMA C. BICARME, PIA R02**

CAGAYAN GOV WANTS IP PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE



Cagayan Provincial Governor Manuel N. Mamba wants Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the province to participate in local governance under his administration to ensure that this sector's needs and concerns will be duly addressed.

Gov. Mamba said he will give IPs the right to participate voluntarily and let their voices be heard at all levels of decision-making that may affect their rights, privileges, and heritage.

He added that the creation of the province's Task Force for Equal Opportunities, in partnership with the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office, provides equal opportunities to all sectors including the IPs to participate in local governance and other development activities.

Further, the governor vowed to look into the issues and concerns raised by various IP groups all over the region during the 2016 Indigenous People's Summit held in Cagayan Province recently.

Gov. Mamba said he will seek the assistance of various regional line agencies and other sectors to address the IPs' concerns. | **GENE V. BAQUIRAN, PIA R02**

NV PLGU GIVES AID TO FARMERS, FISHERFOLK, ALLIED GROUPS



The provincial government of Nueva Vizcaya continues to provide support to farmers, fisherfolk, and municipal-based organizations in its bid to improve agricultural production in the province.

Alexander Domingo, provincial agriculturist, said that 2,084 bags of certified rice seeds, 50 bags of registered rice seeds, 360 bags of hybrid corn seeds, and 760 cans of assorted vegetable seeds have already been distributed as part of the PLGU's agricultural input support for farmers.

He added that the provincial nursery has also produced tree seedlings while the Polloc Freshwater Fish Farm in Solano town has produced 780,000 tilapia fingerlings which were given for free to fish-farmers.

He said a series of training sessions to improve the capability of town-based organizations was also provided, including those for seed growers and agriculture and fishery councils.

The provincial government, he added, has provided 15 technology trainings on

packaging of technology and on good agricultural practices, 26 technology demonstrations on rice, corn, vegetables, and fisheries, and varietal trials of promising rice varieties.

"This is intended to test the adaptability of these varieties in the province," Domingo said.

Through the Nueva Vizcaya Farmers Information and Technology Services Center, four technology caravans have been rolled out to farmers.

On infra support, Domingo said 10 communal irrigation systems have been completed while 26 are on-going and 10 are for bidding.

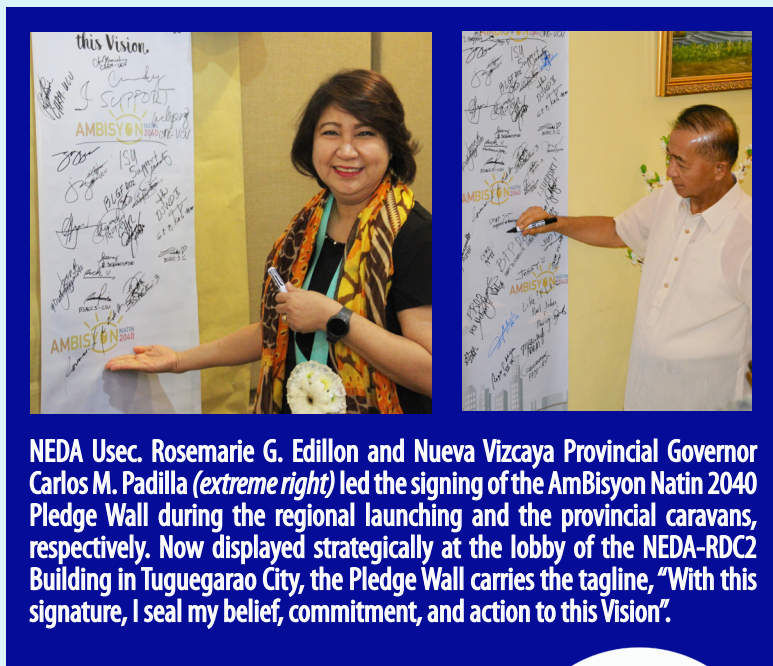
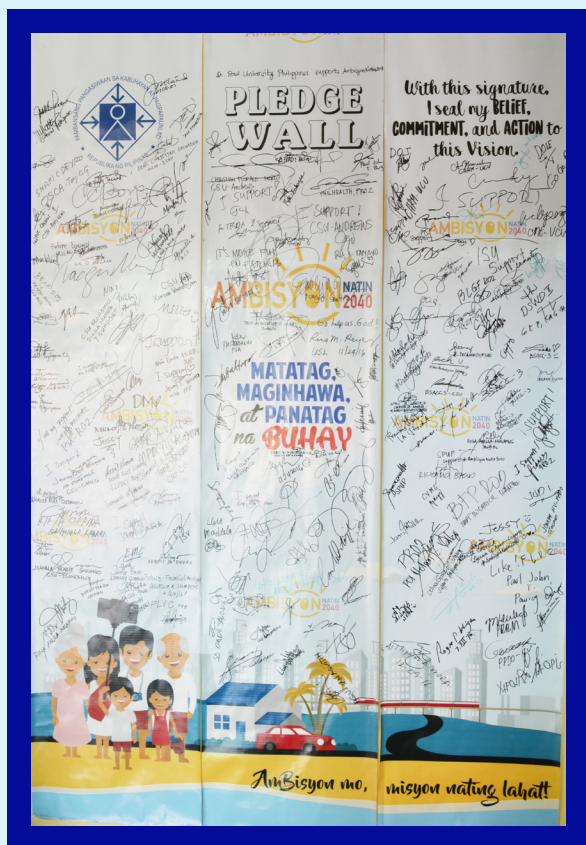
He added that 18 farm-to-market roads have been completed this year while 28 others are on-going, including the construction of the organic trading post and organic model farm.

"Ninelivelihood projects were also given to our allied organizations to improve their agricultural ventures," Domingo added.

These organizations are the Rural Improvement Club, Provincial Aquatic and Fisheries Council, and the 4H Club.

Domingo added that they have also collaborated with the municipal LGUs, the Department of Agriculture (DA) Regional Field Office 02, DA-Bureau of Plant Industry, and the National High-Value Commercial Crops Program for the production and distribution of 120,000 coffee seedlings, 100,000 cacao seedlings, 70,000 sweet potato cuttings, 10 units of top vent (Green House), and 3 units of shredders.

| **BEN MOSES EBREO, PIA R02**



NEDA Usec. Rosemarie G. Edillon and Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Governor Carlos M. Padilla (*extreme right*) led the signing of the AmBisyon Natin 2040 Pledge Wall during the regional launching and the provincial caravans, respectively. Now displayed strategically at the lobby of the NEDA-RDC2 Building in Tuguegarao City, the Pledge Wall carries the tagline, "With this signature, I seal my belief, commitment, and action to this Vision".



**MATATAG,
MAGINHAWA,
at PANATAG
na BUHAY**



Local chief executives, planners, students, members of the academe, and other local stakeholders attended the three provincial caravans that were conducted as part of the advocacy activities for the AmBisyon Natin 2040: in Solano, Nueva Vizcaya on December 7 for Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino provinces, in Ilagan City, Isabela on December 8, and in Tuguegarao City on December 9 for Cagayan and Batanes provinces. These provincial orientations aimed to generate support from LGUs in mainstreaming the AmBisyon in their local policies, plans, and programs by exploring ways on how to localize its thematic agenda and strategies.