



Linkage

A Publication of the Regional Development Council 02

June 2017



Region 2 Congress Reps
approve FY 2018 budget
proposals of RLAs

8



16 RDC 2 PSRs
attend National
Confab in Bohol

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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.

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

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ABOUT THE COVER

It's all about strengthening linkages and ties among the region's stakeholders for this issue of the RDC Linkage. During this quarter, the Council was able to interact with the region's legislators through the Advisory Committee meeting held in May. Meanwhile, the RDC 2 PSRs mingled with and learned from fellow PSRs nationwide through the National Convention held in Bohol.



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BOUNTIFUL CAGAYAN VALLEY REGION

CY 2017 FIRST QUARTER REGIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATIONER



The Cagayan Valley Region's economy was less productive during the first quarter of CY 2017 given the weak performance of the agriculture sector.

In spite of the low production in almost all agricultural sub-sectors, the region maintained its top rank in corn and second spot in palay, contributing 23.66 percent and 13.46 percent, respectively, to the country's total palay output of 4.42 million metric tons and total corn output of 2.37 million metric tons for the quarter.

On other crops, aggregate production went down by 25.32 percent from last year, mainly due to the decline in the output of all sub-sectors. The damages brought about by Super Typhoon *Lawin* from last year and the intermittent rainfall experienced during this quarter manifested negatively on the productivity of plantations and the quality of the produce.

On the services sector, the tourism industry reflected lower tourist arrivals attributed to the decrement posted in same-day visitors by 25.80 percent.

On the other hand, for the industry sector, the number and value of construction projects for the quarter increased by 34.79 percent and 13.70 percent, respectively.

Prices of basic goods and services measured by the inflation rate grew by 3.9

A QUICK GLANCE

MACROECONOMY

- ◆ Inflation rate at 3.9%
- ◆ Unemployment rate up to 5.0%
- ◆ Underemployment rate up to 16.0%

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY

- ◆ Palay production up by 2.53%
- ◆ Corn production down by 3.45%
- ◆ Fruit production down by 36.79%
- ◆ Vegetable and root crop production down by 3.54%
- ◆ Non-food and industrial commercial crops production down by 35.15%
- ◆ Livestock production down by 0.04%
- ◆ Poultry production down by 4.62%
- ◆ Fisheries production down by 1.92%

OTHER SECTORS

- ◆ Tourism arrivals down by 4.01%
- ◆ Value of construction up by 13.70%
- ◆ Revenue collections up by 26.41%
- ◆ Crime volume up by 7.98%

Figures are based on year-on-year comparison between the first quarters of 2016 and 2017.

percent attributed to the higher rate exhibited by food commodities.

This average inflation rate inched by 1.1 percentage points from the same quarter last year, yet still within the government's target range of 2-4 percent for the year. The Cagayan Valley Region also recorded one among the highest inflation rates across regions for the quarter in review.

Majority of the non-food commodity groups also posted higher inflation during the period.

The region's employment situation displayed an employment rate of 95.0 percent compared to the national average of 93.4 percent. Underemployment rate was recorded at 16 percent, almost the same with the national level of 16.3 percent. Cagayan Valley has consistently registered one of the highest (5th) employment rates across regions and still one of the lowest (5th) in the country in terms of unemployment rate. | ANGELICA A. UMOQUIT, NEDA PFPD

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

Cua presides over 1st meeting as RDC 2 CHAIR

During the 109th regular business meeting of the Regional Development Council 2, Quirino Provincial Governor Junie E. Cua thanked the Council members for attending the meeting, which he said was a manifestation of their support for and interest on the holistic development of the region.

Gov. Cua presided over this meeting of the RDC 2 held on April 28, 2017, his first as the Council's newly appointed Chairperson.

"This meeting is a historic start for the RDC 2 as we now have a Chairperson after six years of having none since 2010," the governor said in his opening remarks.

"Our region has already evolved from its primordial role as the food basket of the country," he added as he encouraged everyone to continue doing their part in making the Cagayan Valley Region an effective and efficient

contributor to the country's food basket.

Meanwhile, Santiago City Mayor Joseph S. Tan welcomed the members of the Council as the meeting's gracious host.

Also present during the gathering were Provincial Governors Marilou H. Cayco of Batanes and Carlos M. Padilla of Nueva Vizcaya.

Balot replaces Borja as PSR

One of the highlights of the meeting was the confirmation of Atty. German M. Balot as the new private sector representative (PSR) of the RDC 2 for the education and manpower sector, taking over the position of Ms. Corona C. Borja† beginning in March.

Atty. Balot, the Regional Council Director of the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals based in Santiago City, Isabela, garnered the second highest vote for the education and



manpower sector during the PSR Selection and Election held in August 2016. Together with the 11 other PSRs, his term as a PSR will end in June 2019.

Proposed establishment of PhilCorn

During the same meeting, the RDC 2 approved and endorsed the proposed establishment of the Philippine Corn Research Institute (PhilCorn) in Region 2.

In his presentation, Department of Science and Technology



From L-R: Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Governor Carlos M. Padilla, Batanes Provincial Governor Marilou H. Cayco, RDC 2 Chairperson and Quirino Provincial Governor Junie E. Cua, Santiago City Mayor Joseph S. Tan, RDC 2 Interim Secretary and NEDA OIC-Assistant Regional Director Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan, and NEDA Head Secretariat Ronilo H. Bulseco.

Regional Director Sancho A. Mabborang, the Chair of the RDC 2 - Regional Research and Development Committee, said that there are already well-established research institutes in the Philippines that are devoted to major crops and disciplines such as rice, coconut, sugarcane, cotton, and tobacco, but there is no similar institute devoted to corn and corn-based farming systems.

“The proposed establishment of PhilCorn supports the strategies in the Cagayan Valley Regional Development Plan 2017-2022 to increase economic opportunities in agriculture through improved interventions,” Dir. Mabborang reported.

In the proposal, the Province of Isabela, being recognized and declared by the Department of Agriculture as the corn capital of the Philippines, is eyed as the location of the main station of PhilCorn while branch stations shall be set up in other regions nationwide.

“This would definitely help achieve the agro-industrial goal of Region 2,” Dir. Mabborang further stated.

Region 2 is the top corn-producing region in the country, contributing a share of about 23% of the country's total corn production.

“PhilCorn shall unify, coordinate, fund, implement, and strengthen all corn and corn-related research and development activities as well as manpower training and extension of technologies,” the Director said. | **NEDA DRD**

Statement on the 2016 GRDP of Region 2

The region continued to manifest a positive growth in its Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) for 2016, attaining a growth target of 3.1 to 4.1 percent for the year despite the significant contraction in the agriculture sector.

The 3.3 percent growth in GRDP is attributed primarily to the expansion of the industry sector at 12.9 percent from 7.0 percent in 2014 as well as the positive performance of the services sector at 5.3 percent.

These reflect the sustained efforts of the region's leaders and stakeholders in diversifying their products and markets and ensuring a supportive macroeconomic environment that is characterized by a stable inflation, strong household consumption, and improved labor market and investment climate conditions.

On the other hand, the region should address the registered decreasing rate of the positive growth from 7.2 percent in 2014 and 4.1 percent in 2015. The region remains vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather events. As in the case of the consecutive typhoons that hit the region during the last quarter of 2016, all sectors, not only the agricultural economy, were affected.

However, despite having an agriculture sector that aggravated from negative 0.4 percent in 2014 to a negative 3.0 percent growth, Region 2 still remained as the top corn producer, contributing a share of 23.26 percent to the national output, and second in palay production with its 13.23 percent share. Production gains were also recorded in vegetables and root crops and in livestock and poultry.

This positive growth pattern for the region for the last six years, along with the steadfast commitment of and strong partnership among the region's stakeholders, shows that the region can possibly attain the target of 5.1 to 6.1 percent growth this 2017 and further reduce poverty levels. For the last Plan period, poverty incidence was reduced from 25.1 percent in 2009 to 15.8 percent in 2015. For the current Plan period of 2017-2022, the goal is to further reduce the poverty incidence to 8.2 percent by 2022.

The services sector remained as the leading driver of growth with a 51.3 percent share to the economy. Contributory to this growth was the region's flourishing tourism industry, increased local investments, improved fiscal sector, and the continuous development of micro, small, and medium enterprises.

For the industry sector, the growth was propelled by the manufacturing industry (from 2.4 to 17.0 percent), by the recovery of the mining and quarrying industry (negative 18.3 to 9.3 percent), and by the growth in electricity, gas, and water supply (from 7.0 to 27.4 percent).

Overall, the major task is to build the socioeconomic resiliency of the region's economy, communities, and individuals. There is also a pressing need to accelerate the development of infrastructure in transportation, power, and ICT, intensify social protection mechanisms, and ensure ecological integrity. Local government units need also to improve their services, response mechanisms, and capabilities to address disasters and natural hazards.

Lifted from the Official Statement of NEDA RD MaryAnne ER. Darauay during the Press Conference on the 2016 GRDP of Region 2.



NPMC Chair visits 2 major ODA projects in Region 2

On June 15-16, 2017, NEDA Undersecretary for Regional Development Adoracion M. Navarro, who is also the Chairperson of the National Project Monitoring Committee (NPMC), visited two major development projects implemented in the Cagayan Valley Region to draw out the issues and concerns encountered during project implementation.

The project visit was also an opportune time to gather information on the best practices on project implementation.

She was joined by RDC 2 Interim Secretary and NEDA RO2 OIC-Assistant Regional Director Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan and staff of the NEDA RO2 Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division which serves as secretariat of the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC). RDC 2 Vice Chair and NEDA RO2 Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Daraui chairs the RPMC.

During the visit to the Pasa Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (SRIP) in Ilagan City, Isabela and to a sub-project of the Flood Risk

Management Project (FRIMP) for Cagayan River in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, Usec. Navarro shared insights and recommendations to improve or sustain the smooth implementation of the projects.

Climate-smart infrastructure

At the Pasa SRIP location, she advocated for project sustainability and infrastructure resiliency. She suggested for operation and management reprogramming to incorporate climate-smart infrastructures in the project design like the planting of vertiver grass and use of coconet for slope protection and protection of canals from siltation.

She also advised the RPMC to coordinate with concerned agencies to establish sustainability measures and educate farmers to maintain buffer zones.

She likewise called upon the Department of Agriculture, an agency member of the RPMC, to assess the possibility of converting rolling hills into terraces to maximize the use of the irrigation facility.

Usec. Navarro emphasized the significant role of farmers and irrigators' associations in the operation and management of the facility once it is turned-over to them. She opined that the Board of Directors of irrigators' associations can have their term of office on a rotational basis to ensure the continuity of plans and the retention of knowledge about the project.

As for the implementation of the reforestation and management component of the irrigation project, she suggested the planting of fast growing indigenous tree species and the involvement of the irrigators' associations in the maintenance of the planted seedlings to ensure a high survival rate.

Mitigating flood damages

Meanwhile, Usec. Navarro commended the speedy implementation of the FRIMP which gained a positive 18% physical variance ahead of its 8% target as of June 7, 2017.

Targeted to be completed by August 2019, the FRIMP is a

PHP1.92 Billion project aimed at mitigating flood damages through the implementation of structural and non-structural measures. This is expected to reduce vulnerabilities from flood and make local communities more flood-resilient, thereby contributing to the region's sustainable economic growth.

Relative to the construction of the FRIMP, the monitoring team visited the PAGASA Tuguegarao Synop Station, specifically the Cagayan River Flood Forecasting and Warning Center (CRFFWC) located at the Cagayan Provincial Capitol Compound in Tuguegarao City.

Usec. Navarro and the other members of the team learned from Engr. Leo L. Buñag, Chief Meteorological Officer, that the CRFFWC is mulling

over the conduct of flood drills in the region, especially for LGUs.

The Undersecretary advised that the agency may request the support of the RDC 2 and the Office of Civil Defense for the institutionalization of the conduct of flood drills especially in Region 2 where flooding is frequent.

The team was also shown the damaged and phased-out equipment of the station which need to be replaced. The lack of personnel in the station particularly meteorologists was also pointed out.

To this, Usec. Navarro said that state universities and colleges in the region can be tapped to offer related courses to augment the personnel needed in the station. | **JOEL T. UNCIANO, NEDA PMED**

Usec. Navarro meets RDC 2 Secretariat

In mid-June, NEDA Undersecretary Adoracion M. Navarro paid a visit to the Regional Development Council (RDC) 2 secretariat to give updates and developments occurring at the Regional Development Office.

The brief encounter also served as a venue for exchanges with the staff members of the NEDA Regional Office 2 who make up the whole RDC 2 Secretariat.

The Undersecretary, being the Chairperson of the National Project Monitoring Committee (NPMC), was in town to conduct monitoring visits to two major development projects in Cagayan and Isabela provinces (*see related story on this page*).

The NPMC oversees the implementation of major development programs and projects throughout the country.

After her visit to these projects, Usec. Navarro was toured around the 60-hectare Cagayan Valley Regional Government Center in Carig Sur, Tuguegarao City.

She expressed her admiration of the scenic view of the Center and its characteristic as a one-stop government center in the heart of an urban area. She was further informed that the RGC is now home to 50 agency locators and that more government agencies are expected to relocate their regional offices in the RGC. | **FLORENDO T. IRIGAYEN, JR., NEDA DRD**



REGION 2 CONGRESS REPS approve FY 2018 budget proposals of RLAs

Eight of the 10 Congressional Representatives from the five provinces of the Cagayan Valley Region expressed their approval of the proposed budgets of 17 regional line agencies (RLAs) in Region 2 for fiscal year 2018.

This was during the annual meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Regional Development Council 2 which was held on May 30, 2017 at the Batasan Complex in Quezon City.

Among the legislators present were Cong. Ramon C. Nolasco, Cong. Randolph S. Ting, and

Cong. Baby Aline Vargas-Alfonso for Cagayan, Cong. Ana Cristina S. Go, Cong. Rodolfo T. Albano III, and Cong. Napoleon S. Dy, for Isabela, Cong. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma for Nueva Vizcaya, and Cong. Dakila Carlo E. Cua for Quirino.

Governors Faustino G. Dy III of Isabela and Marilou H. Cayco of Batanes also graced the meeting.

In his welcome and opening remarks, RDC 2 Chairperson and Quirino Provincial Governor Junie E. Cua encouraged the members of the AdCom to

continue working as a team to put in place necessary legislations to boost the development of the region.

“We need to work hand in hand with our Congress Representatives to implement the necessary policy framework in achieving our region’s vision of being the prime water resource, agro-industrial hub, and emerging tourism destination of our country,” Gov. Cua said.

In relation to the proposed 2018 budgets, the RDC 2 Chair enjoined all the RLAs to submit the list of proposed programs and projects per congressional districts to the legislators for their reference and support, as well as updates on major regional proposed programs and projects.



From L-R: RDC 2 Chair Gov. Junie E. Cua, Cong. Randolph S. Ting, and Cong. Dakila Carlo E. Cua.



Among the Region 2 Congress Representatives and RDC 2 members who attended the Advisory Committee meeting were (From L-R) DPWH ARD Alexander Nola, RDC2 Interim Secretary Ferdinand Tumaliuan, RDC2 Vice Chair MaryAnne Darauay, DOST RD Sancho Mabborang, DepEd RD Estela Cariño, DA RD Lucrecio Alviar, Jr., PIA RD Purita Licas, DBM RD Isabel Taguinod, Cong. Ramon Nolasco, NIA Division Mgr. Avelino Tuazon, Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy III, RDC2 Chair and Quirino Gov. Junie E. Cua, Cong. Napoleon Dy, Party-list Rep. Juan Johnny Revilla, Cong. Rodolfo Albano III, Cong. Randolph Ting, Cong. Ana Cristina Go, RDC2 PSR Gilbert Acdal, Batanes Gov. Marilou Cayco, RDC2 PSR Cecilia Dy, RDC2 PSR Charles Lim, and DILG ARD Odilon Pasaraba.

“We need the support of our Congresspersons and we need to work through established systems of the government to facilitate collaboration with them,” Gov. Cua urged.

“The RDC is here as collaborator of programs, projects, and activities but there must also be aggressive monitoring of special projects as well,” he added.

On the proposed establishment of the Philippine Corn Research Institute (PhilCorn) in Region 02, Department of Science and Technology Regional Director Sancho A. Mabborang, the Chair of the Regional Research and Development Committee, presented the draft bill stating that the proposed PhilCorn shall oversee all corn and corn-based endeavors not only in Region 2 but also across the nation.

“The proposed site for the main station of PhilCorn is in Isabela, it being recognized and declared as

the corn capital of the Philippines and branch stations shall be established in other regions,” explained Dir. Mabborang.

Cong. Ting expressed his willingness to author the bill while the other legislators agreed to co-sponsor as well.

As regards the existence of the Philippine Rise, previously known as the Benham Rise, Cong. Ting requested the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to allocate bigger fishing boats to explore this area which has been declared by the government as a “protected food supply exclusive zone”.

Cong. Albano reiterated that since the town closest to the Philippine Rise is Dinapigue in Isabela, the best thing to do is develop more access roads as well as the

ports of Palanan, Sta. Ana, Baguio Point, and Bolos Point as access points to the Rise.

In closing, RDC 2 Vice Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay thanked the legislators who devoted their time to attend this year’s meeting of the AdCom.

“We hope to strengthen our collaborations with our voices at Congress for us to be able to get the support we need for our endeavors that aim to speed up the development of our region,” Dir. Darauay said. | **NEDA DRD**



Cong. Cuaresma and RD Darauay during the AdCom meeting.

An alternative port in Batanes, a seaport in Claveria, Cagayan, additional evacuation centers across the region, and feasibility studies for two bridges in Cagayan – these were the proposed infrastructure development projects that were approved by the Regional Development Council 2 during its quarterly meeting in April.

Presenting for the RDC2 Infrastructure Development Committee (IDC), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Assistant Regional Director (ARD) Alexander D. Nola said that these projects are crucial to help raise the level of development in the region in terms of transportation and disaster response, among others.

For the two proposed bridges, ARD Nola reported that the DPWH Central Office has already allotted PHP20 Million to cover the expenses for the conduct of feasibility studies for the proposed alternate bridges along the Cagayan River, all in Cagayan Province.

“For this meeting, the IDC is requesting for the immediate conduct of feasibility studies for the Camalaniugan–Allacapan Bridge and the Nassiping Bridge in Gattaran,” ARD Nola reported.

IDC gets Council nod for 4 infra projects

In June 2015, the RDC2 passed a resolution requesting for the inclusion of six proposed Cagayan River bridges under the DPWH Feasibility Studies Fund for CY 2015 or 2016.

The other bridges include the Alcala (Tupang–Afusing) bridge, which had been noted to be prioritized for its feasibility study through an RDC 2 resolution in January 2017, the Anquiray–Pacac bridge in Amulung, the Aparri East–Aparri West bridge, and the Solana–Bagay bridge in Tuguegarao City.

These bridges shall ease the delivery of services and transport of goods and people along the Cagayan River, augmenting the two existing bridges in Buntun, Tuguegarao City and in Magapit, Lallo.

Alternative port in Batanes

ARD Nola also presented details of the proposed alternative port in Sitio Diura, Uvoy in Mahatao, Batanes.

“The DPWH-Batanes Engineering District found the

cove at Sitio Diura to be the most feasible site of the proposed port that will accommodate sea transport vessels even during the occurrence of the southwest monsoon, ensuring the continuous flow of goods and economic lifeline year-round in Batanes,” he explained.

The existing port in Basco is currently being utilized by incoming and outgoing transport and cargo vessels. However, loading and unloading are often interrupted and perilous due to sudden changes in weather coupled with the southwest monsoon winds which usually occur six months in a year during May to October.

“Due to the difficulty in loading these commodities and construction materials transported from the mainland, the risks of increased and high prices of essential commodities are high as well as delays in project implementation,” the ARD further said.

The recommended site has been validated by a group of technical experts from the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) in late November 2016.

The RDC2 endorsement for this proposal strengthens the request

The alternative port in Mahatao will augment the port services in Batanes currently provided by the port in Basco.





The alternative port in Mahatao will augment the port services in Batanes currently provided by the port in Basco.

of the Province of Batanes for the construction of this port.

Seaport in Claveria

Meanwhile, the Provincial Government of Cagayan has forwarded its request to the PPA to allocate funds for the establishment of a seaport in the town of Claveria.

“This seaport will be our vital link in the global supply chain as it is located along the Southeast China Sea and the North Pacific Coast,” ARD Nola said.

“It will be accessible to international ports in other Asian nations and some parts of the United States of America,” he added.

He said that this international seaport shall be equipped with essential structures such as wharfs or quays, berths, jetties, and a breakwater facility.

The identified site in Claveria is ideal to safeguard and provide security, comfort and protection to all oceangoing vessels against high waves, destructive tidal surges, strong winds, and sea currents. It is also deep enough to

accommodate vessels to navigate while docked or moored.

“It will also be equipped with port facilities for accommodating, loading/discharging of ships, stacking and handling of cargo and cargo-handling equipment such as cranes and forklifts, and for storage,” the ARD said.

When completed, the seaport is expected to boost the economy of the province and the region as ancillary industries such as warehousing, cold storage, stevedoring, and manufacturing are seen to emerge and provide countless benefits such as employment and economic prosperity to people in the area.

More evacuation centers in R2

Like the alternative port in Batanes and the seaport in Claveria, the IDC has also endorsed the proposal to construct more regional evacuation centers in four sites in Region 2.

“This is to augment the existing areas being used as evacuation centers in the region in times of calamities wherein a large number of families get displaced,” ARD Nola explained.

It can be recalled that in 2016 alone, the region was visited by consecutive typhoons in the latter part of the year, with Super Typhoon *Lawin* being the strongest, putting the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela under signal number 5, the highest tropical cyclone warning signal.

“Hundreds of families were displaced when *Lawin* struck our region in October last year,” the ARD said. “Schools and gymnasiums were used as evacuation centers, however, these places were not comfortable as they lack the necessary facilities to aid the needs of the evacuees.”

He added that initially, four sites have been identified for the regional evacuation centers: at the sub-capitol compound in Lallo, in Brgy. Flourishing in Gonzaga, and in Brgy. Lalayug in Tuao all in the province of Cagayan, while the fourth center will be located at the capitol compound in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya.

“The DPWH has validated these proposed sites and all the proponents have complied with the required paperworks,” the ARD said.

“The Department has also allotted PHP36 Million from its FY 2016 fund for the construction of the evacuation center in Lallo. The building plan and program of work for this have already been completed,” he added.

“A budget of PHP108 Million has also been allotted in the FY 2017 budget of the DPWH for the construction of the three proposed evacuation centers,” ARD Nola said | **NEDA DRD. Photo Credits:** www.ironwulf.net; www.bizbilla.com



Thirty-five ambulant vendors from Pamplona and 100 skilled workers from Allacapan, both Cagayan towns, received various livelihood assistance packages from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region 2 under its Negosyo sa Kariton (NegoKart) project and the Kabuhayan Starter Kit project, respectively.

According to DOLE Regional Director Manuel C. Roldan, the NegoKart project will provide each beneficiary with a vending cart, necessary accessory tools, and working capital for the procurement or production of marketable goods or services.

“Each vendor-beneficiary will get a total assistance of PHP9,950.00 along with a group insurance amounting to PHP50.00,” Dir. Roldan said.

Worth a total of PHP351,000.00, this program includes projects on ice cream making and vending (4), *balot* vending (4), fish vending (8), fish and vegetable vending (6), vegetable and fruit vending (6), cooked food and snack vending (2), and snack vending (8).

The local government unit of Pamplona will also provide an additional capital of PHP5,000.00 to each beneficiary. It will also conduct necessary training sessions and seminars on social preparation, entrepreneurship and development, and simple bookkeeping.

Ambulant vendors, skilled workers receive livelihood assistance

This project will enable ambulant vendors to increase, upgrade, and diversify their products and services with the use of vending carts and market the same to more buyers and customers.

A million for skilled workers

Meanwhile, DOLE Region 2 has recently approved a total amount of PHP1,031,765.00 as livelihood assistance to 100 skilled workers under the Kabuhayan Starter Kit project.

“The beneficiaries for this project will receive tools and jigs amounting to PHP9,000-15,000.00,” Dir. Roldan said.

The Starter Kit includes equipment for specific livelihood undertakings such as grinder, sewing machine, portable welding machines, cooking equipment, and hair and make-up kits, among others.

“These kits will enable the skilled workers to start their own businesses,” the Director added.

In Allacapan, the beneficiaries include 25 carpenters, 14 tailors, 3 electricians, 22 hair and make-up artists, 8 welders, 13 fresh produce vendors, and 8 caterers, among others.

Like the ambulant vendor-beneficiaries in Pamplona, the beneficiaries in Allacapan will also receive a two-day training/seminar on social preparation, entrepreneurial development,

and simple bookkeeping to hone their skills and ensure that they will succeed in managing their business.

The Public Employment Service Office of the local government unit of Allacapan will take part in safeguarding and monitoring individual projects.

DOLE Programs

The NegoKart project and the Kabuhayan Starter Kit project are part of DOLE’s effort to improve the lives of many hard-working but low-income persons.

The programs assist the unemployed and boost the capacities of the marginalized informal sector, displaced and other disadvantaged workers, and the families of overseas Filipino workers to operate a livelihood quickly to alleviate unemployment and reduce poverty. | JOLINA V. PELOVELLO, DOLE R02. Photo Credits: www.ro2.dole.gov.ph; www.wikimedia.org



DAR RD leads ARB validation in Cagayan Valley

No less than the Regional Director (RD) of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Regional Office 02 led the validation of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) in the mountain barangay of Lipuga, Alfonso Castañeda in Nueva Vizcaya on June 27, 2017.

RD Homer P. Tobias himself facilitated the validation of 36 farmer beneficiaries covering an area of 65.9178 hectares in one of Cagayan Valley's southernmost barangays inhabited by members of the Bugkalot tribe.

The activity began with a program at the barangay gymnasium where the farmer beneficiaries signed the conformity to the Approved Survey Plan after they were positively identified and their pictures taken.

Officials of DAR-Region 02 and the provincial office led by Provincial Agrarian Reform

Program Officer Primo C. Lara, as well as municipal and barangay officials headed by Lipuga Mayor Jerry P. Pasigian also personally visited the farm lots of the beneficiaries in the barangay.

As the local chief executive, Mayor Pasigian thanked the DAR for the services they have provided to his town. He also expressed his personal gratitude to the program being one of the ARBs and a proud member of the Bugkalot tribe.

He also expressed hope that the projects of the agrarian reform beneficiaries organizations in Brgys. Galintuja and Lublub, also in the Municipality of Alfonso Castañeda, will be replicated in Brgy. Lipuga.

"Rest assured na ang inyong lingkod ay hindi magpapabaya sa programang ito dahil malaking benepisyo ang naibibigay sa ating ARBs," the Mayor said.

"PHP70 Million ang pumunta noon sa Galintuja at Lublub. Siguro kung kalahati lang ang pupunta dito, gaganda na ang ating *kaingin*. *Kaingin* naman talaga ang aming means of livelihood. Walang maluluwang na patag para gawing bukid," Mayor Pasigian added.

Lipuga and its neighboring barangay, Pelaway, are particularly home to the Bugkalot villagers who practice the slash-and-burn method in cultivating their lands because of the mountainous terrain of the area.

Regarding the request of the officials to issue more Certificates of Land Ownership Awards or CLOAs in their barangay, RD Tobias assured that DAR will coordinate and talk with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples for the possibility of issuing individual titles since the Bugkalot tribe already has a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) over the area.

He also urged the ARBs to improve their lots and form their organization so that DAR will be able to extend support services to them.

"Hindi po tayo titigil na hanggang asosasyon lang kayo. Sasanayin po kayo ng pagmimiyembro sa isang kooperatiba at lahat ng pagsasanay tungkol doon hanggang sa mabuo kayo bilang isang kooperatiba," RD Tobias said.

If approved, the 65.9178 hectares will be an addition to the 670.2177 ha in Alfonso Castañeda already covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. | **HAZEL P. BUCTAYON, DAR-NUEVA VIZCAYA.** Photo Credit: DAR RO2



DAR officials and staff, together with local officials of Alfonso Castañeda, were present during the ARB validation and checked the lands to be titled to the beneficiaries.

CAGAYAN PLGU CREATES ADDITIONAL TASK FORCE



To render rescue services within the shortest possible time and to provide legal assistance and support, the Cagayan Provincial Government has created an additional Task Force Lingkod Cagayan-Quick Response Team (TFLC-QRTs).

According to Provincial Information Officer Rogelio P. Sending, the formation of one additional TFLC-QRT at Baybayog in Alcala town will serve Alcala, Amulung, Baggao, and Gattaran towns to ensure that every Cagayano will be served and attended to.

"This is the goal of Governor Manuel N. Mamba, to provide fast and reliable service to save lives," Sending said.

Aside from immediate rescue operations and emergency services, the TFLC-QRTs shall also provide ambulance transport service to any point of Luzon.

Sending added that Cagayan has five task forces that are now actively providing services in different Cagayan municipalities.

He said the task forces are situated in Sanchez Mira town which caters to the northwestern municipalities, in Buguey which serves the northeastern part, in Lallo which caters to the northcentral area, in Tuao which covers the southwestern part, and in Tuguegarao City which serves the third district area.

He said the teams deployed in the different towns are composed of well-trained experts in various emergency and rescue operations.
| OLIVER T. BACCAY, PIA R02

BATANES UPDATES MUNICIPAL CLUPS



Recognizing the importance of the Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan (MCLUP) in ushering responsible and sustainable development in the province, Batanes Governor Marilou H. Cayco, through the Provincial Planning and Development Office, sponsored a joint MCLUP workshop for all six municipalities in early 2017.

Given that the MCLUPs of all six towns have long been outdated, the last revision being in 2007, the workshop proved to be timely as the updated CLUPs shall serve as the basis in the formulation and updating of the enhanced disaster risk reduction / climate change adaptation plan as well as the Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan.

Likewise, the MCLUPs shall also be an instrument in integrating and harmonizing all other provincial development plans including the Batanes Protected Landscape and Seascape Management Plan, the final version of the Provincial Tourism Master Plan, the updated Integrated Coastal Resource Management Plan, and the updated Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and

Protection Plan of the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples.

For the workshop, the PLGU worked closely with the Regional Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board who sent technical experts to the province to serve as resource speakers. *(Lifted from Batanes Today Vol. V No. 2)*

QUIRINO LEADERS EMBARK ON FOREST PROTECTION IEC



In a move to conserve and protect the remaining forest cover in Quirino against the provincial government's Information, Education and Communication (IEC) team recently initiated a caravan in some barangays identified as hotspots of deforestation.

Speaking before the residents of Jose Ancheta in Maddela town, the first stop-over of the information caravan team, Gov. Junie E. Cua, who led the IEC team, urged the residents to stop slash-and-burn farming and to start planting trees to rehabilitate the province's lost forest cover.

"The province is generally mountainous, with about 80 percent of the total land area covered by mountains and highlands. The forest land is 235,460 hectares composed of second growth forest, sub-marginal forest, and close canopy forest," the governor said.

He added that the forest cover has been decreasing due to incorrect human activities such as *kaingin*, illegal logging, and charcoal making, among others.

To address the problems of the residents on where to get sources of livelihood in lieu of the *kaingin*, which is the main source of their income, Gov. Cua said some livelihood programs and projects will be implemented through the Q-Life and the tourism office.

He added that the provincial government will replicate the Korean agro-forestry model with the assistance of the Department of Agriculture, in response to the extensive deforestation being made in the province.

A planning session participated in by the barangay, municipal, and provincial officials was also held after the information and dissemination activities. The IEC team is also set to conduct the same activities in other parts of the province. | **THELMA C. BICARME, PIA R02**

DISADVANTAGED TOWNS IN ISABELA TO GET PROJECTS



A total of P H P 5 2 3 Million shall be granted as Assistance to Disadvantaged Municipalities (ADM) in Isabela this year, according to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

During the Provincial Stakeholders Forum attended

by government agencies, LGU officials, the Provincial Planning and Development Office, and DILG – Isabela field officers, DILG Isabela Provincial Director Elpidio Durwin said that this amount is part of the total PHP1.3 Billion allotted by the current administration to the Cagayan Valley Region for ADM.

Durwin said the PHP523 million will be used to fund the 95 approved ADM projects for this year, which include 80 core local access roads, nine projects on disaster risk reduction and management, five potable water systems, and one small water impounding project.

Meanwhile, DILG Assistant Regional Director Odilon Pasaraba said that the ADM is the national government's subsidy to help LGUs finance projects such as those mentioned above.

He reminded the LGUs to submit the detailed engineering design, program of work, schedule of implementation, and necessary permits and clearances to ensure the smooth implementation of their respective projects. | **MERLITO G. EDALE, JR., PIA R02**

NV PLGU GIVES LIVELIHOOD AID TO MODEL FAMILIES



The Nueva Vizcaya provincial government recently gave livelihood assistance amounting to PHP10,000 each to at least 148 families through its "Search for

Idol Kong Kapamilya" program which aims to uplift the living conditions of poor but ideal families in the province.

Governor Carlos M. Padilla and his wife Ruth, a former governor, personally handed the checks to the beneficiaries at the provincial capitol in Bayombong town.

"Use your assistance according to the set terms and conditions and you will improve your economic life," the Governor said.

"Once you have succeeded, we will provide more for you," he added.

The beneficiaries came from the towns of Kayapa, Aritao, Sta. Fe, Solano, Kasibu, Bagabag, Alfonso Castaneda, Ambaguio, Quezon, Bayombong, Bambang, Villaverde, Diadi, Dupax del Norte, and Dupax del Sur.

Lita Tabudlo, provincial social welfare and development officer, said the beneficiaries passed the search criteria which prohibit their engagement in various vices and the existence of malnutrition among their children, out-of-school youth, any form of violence, and financial delinquencies.

The other criteria encourage the families' involvement in school and community activities and promotes values of spirituality.

Started in 2014, the program has already benefited more than 300 families from the 275 barangays of the province.

Tabudlo said the beneficiaries are regularly monitored on their compliance with the criteria and their economic gains from this livelihood assistance. | **BEN MOSES EBREO, PIA R02**

RDC 2 PSRs attend National Confab in Bohol

Ten private sector representatives (PSRs) of the Cagayan Valley Regional Development Council (RDC) 2 participated in the 8th RDC-PSR National Convention held at The Bellevue Resort in Panglao Island, Bohol on June 21-23, 2017.

The RDC 2 PSR delegation was headed by Ms. Cecile M. Dy, PSR for commerce, industry, tourism, and services. She was joined by Engr. Gilbert E. Acdal, Engr. Gilbert L. Cumila, Atty. German M. Balot, Mr. Emelito C. Gonzales, Mr. Charles T. Lim, Mr. Protacio D. Laguinday, Ms. Cristina G. Reyes, Engr. Romeo S. Vasquez, and Mr. Elpidio T. Tortoza.

RDC 2 Vice Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay, RDC 2 Interim Secretary Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan, and Ms. Djonimar Lo C. Dumlao from the RDC 2 Secretariat also joined the region's delegation.

The group was among the more than 140 participants of the convention who were composed of PSRs, officials, and secretariat members of the 14 RDCs across the country.



The 10 RDC 2 PSRs who joined the 8th National Convention had a chance to interact with Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto M. Pernia (*front row, 4th from L*) and NEDA officials namely, Undersecretary Adoracion M. Navarro (*front row, 5th from L*), Undersecretary Jose Miguel R. dela Rosa (*2nd row, 4th from L*), Assistant Secretary Mercedita A. Sombilla (*2nd row, 5th from L*), and OIC-Director Remedios S. Endencia (*last row, 2nd from L*). RDC 2 Vice Chair MaryAnne ER. Darauay (*2nd row, 3rd from L*) and RDC 2 Interim Secretary Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan (*2nd row, extreme L*) also joined the RDC2-PSR delegation.

With the theme, “Beyond 20/20: Defining the AmBisyon Natin 2040 Vision”, the PSR Convention served as a venue for all the PSRs across the nation to interact and share success stories.

It was also an opportunity for them to learn from esteemed resource speakers from the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Public-Private Partnership Center, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Australian

Embassy, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, and NEDA.

Distinguished leaders in business, industry, and local governments were also invited.

During his opening message, Mr. Kenneth C. Cobonpue, the Chairperson of the RDC Central Visayas who is this year’s host, said that the convention “aims to explore what we can do together to achieve the progress that we want: one that is sustainable, inclusive, and defined for us by our fellow Filipinos in the AmBisyon Natin 2040.”

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dr. Ernesto M. Pernia delivered the keynote address and discussed the new initiatives under the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 arising from the AmBisyon Natin 2040. The Secretary emphasized on the role of the private sector in development and in achieving the long-term vision spelled out in the AmBisyon. | NEDA DRD



Ms. Cecile M. Dy, PSR for commerce, industry, tourism, and services, led the RDC2-PSR delegation during the convention. Also in photo are PSR Charles T. Lim and RDC 2 Interim Secretary Ferdinand P. Tumaliuan