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iCalabarzon—The Strategy for a Smarter Region

Calabarzon is positioning itself as a 'smart region' to lead the country in its drive to compete in the knowledge economy through public-private partnership (PPP) and handle growing demand for business process outsourcing from various global industries.

This strategy called iCalabarzon, or Intelligent Calabarzon, was thus firmed up as the brand of the campaign to promote information and communications technology (ICT) in the region. Aligned with the vision of the Philippine Digital Strategy, the brand will promote an innovative, digitally-empowered, globally competitive, and a prosperous region where everyone has reliable, affordable and secure information access.

The strategy is based on the world-wide bandwagon concept of 'smart cities' which is now sweeping Europe and Asia where countries brand themselves as 'smart' as they gear up for a



ICT Stakeholders: BPAP Sr. Exec. Director Gigi Virata , DOST-ICTO Project Manager Emmy Lou Delfin, DTI 4A Dir. Marilou Toledo, RDC Representative Mr. Donald Gawe, Sta. Rosa Planning Officer Mr. Dan Pablo and representatives from DOST IV-A, PLDT, CHED IV-A, DTI IV-A, and JICA

digital and borderless economy by 2020.

A smart city is defined as a developed urban area that creates sustainable economic development and a high quality of life by excelling in multiple and seam less key areas that is economy, mobility, environment, people, living and government. Excelling in these key areas can be achieved through programs that strengthen hu-

man capital, social capital and ICT infrastructure.

In the region, the City of Sta. Rosa has emerged as a first rate location to lead, guide or test-run the aspirations of a smart, intelligent region with the collaboration between government and private partners, particularly developers, locators and technopreneurs.

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“All the signs are up. An intelligent region is on the rise towards a 21st century knowledge economy and knowledge society.”

iCalabarzon is anchored on a framework that should help realize national development goals such as: (a) raising US\$25 billion in IT-BPO revenues; (b) reducing poverty incidence from 26 percent to 16 percent by the year 2016; (c) decongesting traffic from major cities including Metro Manila; (d) transparent, effective, and accountable governance; (e) reducing vulnerability to climate change; and (d) encouraging successful globally-competitive Filipino entrepreneurs.

The Philippines is said to possess one of the brightest prospects in the global economy. Currently, the country has a booming real estate market, a strong performing stock market in Asia since 2011, and a positive gross domestic

product (GDP) growth for 52 consecutive quarters since 1999. It has a stable banking system with low interest rates, and a low inflation environment.

Moreover, the Philippines ranked no. 1 in the call center sector and no. 2 in the BPO, worldwide. This stellar performance has confirmed the to the world the Philippine Value Proposition, helping increase IT investments by 66.2 percent (from PhP11.1 million in 2010 to PhP18.3 million in 2011) that generated employment of 643,000 and an annual revenue of USD 11 billion.

The National Competitiveness Council has been responsible advancing and improving the rank of the Philippines to 20 places higher in the World Economic Forum Competitiveness Report during the first two years of President Aquino's administration.

The National ICT Confederation of the Philippines has been collaborating with government for the development of cities towards ‘Smart City’ status.

In Calabarzon, the ICT Committee of the Regional Development Council worked with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to gather stakeholders - the local government units, industry organizations (BPAP, LINK IT), regional line agencies (NEDA, DOST, DEPED and DILG), and the telecommunications sector (PLDT) - to take proactive roles in adopting the industry cluster approach for ICT under the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project.

The objective here is to come up with a roadmap that would address the gaps identified under the following strategies: talent development, promotion and marketing, infrastructure and support services, and business development. The three-year project consists of training and planning, consensus-building, and implementation and learning and is carried out by DTI and in cooperation with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

(Tess Tawingan & Charlie Dajao, DTI IVA)

DOST's Project NOAH to Strengthen Nationwide Disaster Risk Reduction Efforts

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) is putting into place a nationwide disaster mitigation system that will help key agencies and personalities make informed decisions to save lives and properties.

Called NOAH or the National Operational Assessment of Hazards and Risks, the system is designed to “enable the government to address the serious challenges brought by extreme hazard events,” according to DOST Secretary Mario Montejo. “We will apply advanced S&T tools, such as enhanced vulnerability maps and a shortened six-hour monitoring and warning system for communication along the major river basins.”

NOAH has seven components that will meet major needs in various dis-

aster situations. These include Hydromet sensors development, DREAM-Lidar, FloodNET, Hazards Information Media, Landslide Hazards Mapping, Doppler System Development, and Storm Surge Inundation Mapping.

With DOST on the lead, NOAH brings together experts from 21 institutions in close collaboration, including DOST's PAGASA, PHIVOLCS, Advanced Science and Technology Institute and Science and Technology Information Institute; DILG; UP-National Institute of Geological Sciences and Department and College of Geodetic Engineering; and Smart Communications, Sun Cellular, and Globe Telecommunications.

In a country frequently visited by typhoons, tsunamis, earthquakes and



volcanic eruptions, some of them highly-destructive, the NOAH project comes as helpful as Noah's ark of the Biblical times. Natural hazards inflict loss of lives and costly damage to property, with economic losses amounting to billions of pesos each year. Also contributing to the losses is the continued development in hazard-prone areas and the rapid growth of the population.

(FV Anonas, DOST)



RICTC Pushes Support to Calabarzon ICT-BPO Development

The Regional Information and Communication Technology Committee (RICTC) has taken the lead role in pushing the development of ICT and business process outsourcing (BPO) in the Calabarzon region by harmonizing efforts among the key development players to promote viable contribution of the industry to the overall growth targets of the Regional Development Plan.

The Committee, headed by BPAP Senior Executive Director Gillian Joyce Virata, consists of representatives from regional line agencies, local government units, academe and private sector as members.

The RICTC, with the aim of building a common vision and strategies on ICT and BPO development, has concluded a multisectoral Strategic Planning Workshop on May 28-29, 2012 at Kimberly Hotel in Tagaytay City where the participants were able to formulate a draft Calabarzon ICT Roadmap. The Roadmap seeks to create an environment conducive to the growth of ICT-BPO industries.

Among the priority areas in the region are those included in the list of top ten next wave cities in the country namely, Metro Laguna, Metro Cavite and Lipa City in Batangas. Finalization of the document is underway in

consultation with the members of the Committee and other stakeholders.

To harmonize ICT-BPO development in the region, the RICTC oversees the alignment of all regional and sub-regional ICT plans with the regional and national goals. The Committee promotes integration of various IT-BPO courses in high school and college programs and enhancement of basic English skills trainings to avert a looming talent supply and help spur

the local IT-BPO industry to higher growth levels.

The RICTC supports the upcoming 5th National ICT Summit on November 22-23, 2012 to be hosted by the Sta. Rosa City government. The summit aims to attract BPO investments in the Next Wave Cities and transform the City of Sta. Rosa as well as the Calabarzon region into World-Class ICT Hub.

PEZA IT COMPANIES IN CALABARZON		
Batangas	TeleTech	Call Center
Cavite	AMCA Smart Solutions, Inc.	Software Development
	American Power Conversion	Call Center
	Analog Devices	Shared Services
	Astec International	Engineering Design
	Line Seiki	Engineering Design
	Schneider Electric	BPO
	TeleTech	Call Center
Laguna	Convergys	Call Center
	Encore Receivable	Call Center
	Furukawa Automative	Engineering Design
	KGB Phil. Inc.	Call Center
	Mekttec Phil. Corp.	Engineering Design
	Microprecision	Engineering Design
	SPI Technologies	BPO
Rizal	TeleTech	Call Center
	TeleTech	Call Center

Source: PEZA



RDC TREEmendous Planting Activity

The Regional Development Council (RDC), together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and STAR Tollway Corporation, led a region-wide tree planting activity last September 21 to celebrate the 112th anniversary of the Philippine Civil Service and to support the National Greening Program of the Philippines.

A total of 23 regional agencies gathered at the office of the STAR Tollway Corp. for the opening program of the activity. The welcome remarks from Mr. Melvin Nazareno, President of the STAR Tollway Corp. was followed by addresses from OIC-Dir. Agnes M. Espinas of NEDA IV-A and Dir. Reynulfo A. Juan of DENR IV-A who gave an overview of the planting activity and MOA on the maintenance of trees planted respectively.

DENR Undersecretary Demetrio Ignacio, Jr. and Dir. Lucina Flor B. Ramos of Civil Service Commission IV were



DENR Undersecretary Demetrio Ignacio Jr. delivering his message during the opening program



DOH IV-A Dir. Edgardo Gonzaga, NSO IV-A Dir. Rosalinda Bautista, CSC IV-A Dir. Lucy Ramos, NEDA IV-A OIC-Dir. Agnes Espinas, DILG IV-A Josefina Go, DENR IV-A Dir. Reynulfo Juan, DENR IV-A RTD Arnulfo Hernandez, DENR IV-A Manuel Escasura

the activity’s guest speakers. They shared insights on environmental protection and encouraged everyone to be more loving and caring of the environment.

After the short program, the participants were deployed to their respective planting sites: Tanauan Interchange, Malvar Interchange, Lipa City Interchange, and Ibaan Interchange. The ceremonial tree planting also took place in the Lipa City Interchange. Safety and traffic instructions were provided by a STAR Tollway Representative to ensure safety and coordination of the planters.

Participants in the tree planting activity included officials and staffs from: NEDA, DENR, DILG, DOT, NIA, DTI, DAR, PCA, PIA, DOLE, NSO, DSWD, PNP, DOST, DOH, DEPED, DPWH (Lipa and Tanauan), BLGF,

OCD, TESDA, CSC, BFAR, and LTO. Respective Regional Directors of the abovementioned agencies took part on the ceremonial tree planting.

Different types of plant, depending on the planting site, were provided by DENR. As for the staffs of NEDA IV-A, their assigned planting site was Lipa City Interchange where they planted at least 10 narra seedlings per participant.

Volunteer planters, showing their love and care for the nature, took initiative and planted as many seedlings as they can—an action which shows the true meaning of being *makabayan* and *makakalikasan*. The TREEmendous Planting Activity carried the theme “KAWANI, IKAW AY ISANG LINGKOD BAYANI”.

RDC Endorses the Creation of the Calabarzon Regional Competitiveness Committee

The creation of the Calabarzon Regional Competitiveness Committee (RCC) has been approved last July 19, 2012 after its endorsement by the Sectoral Committee on Economic Development during its meeting on July 10, 2012.

The RCC aims to strategically map-out Calabarzon Region's competitiveness vis-a-vis ASEAN cities/localities, and to address the challenges that confront the region from becoming competitive.

The activities of the RCC include: (a) collection of a standard set of competitiveness, compare and track them against selected benchmark data collected from selected ASEAN countries; and (b) harmonization of efforts and promotion of the optimum use of resources towards improving local economic competitiveness and accelerating investment promotion.

The RCC mirrors the competitive functions being undertaken by the National Competitiveness Council at the national level. The Calabarzon RCC is composed of DTI as Chair and a representative from the Private Sector as Co-Chair, with equal number of representatives both from the private and the government sectors as members. An organizational meeting was held on September 5, 2012 which discussed among others, the committee membership and processes in managing the competitiveness indicators in the region.



RDC Endorses Expressway, Bridges and Rail Projects

The Sectoral Committee on Infrastructure Development (SCID) endorsed three major transport infrastructure projects during its two quarterly meetings this 2012, namely: the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) Extension Toll Road 4 (TR4) to Pagbilao, Quezon; Spanish-Assisted Bridge Construction Project; and Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 Cavite Extension.

The SLEX TR4 is a priority project of the national government to improve traffic to and from Metro Manila and to stimulate interregional economic growth. The Regional Development Council (RDC) has endorsed the TR extension up to Brgy. Talipan, Pagbilao, Quezon to provide an alignment for a port access road leading to the Dalahican Fish Port and the Lucena Port which both link Marinduque, Romblon, and Masbate. To promote road safety and faster movement of vehicles, the RDC has recommended that TR4 be constructed with dual two-lane carriageway with provisions for future expansion.

Another RDC resolution was passed to extend TR4 in Brgy. Mayo, Lucena City

since the extension can still accommodate the port access road. For the immediate implementation of the project,

the RDC has issued a resolution endorsing to the Department of Public Works and Highways the prioritization of P1 billion for the road-right-of-way.

Consistent with the region's strategy in enhancing its competitiveness as a global business hub, four bridges were endorsed for reconstruction through the Spanish-Assisted Bridge Construction/Replacement Project, namely: Timalan Bridge (Naic, Cavite), Sico Bridge (Lobo, Batangas), Kinahulasan Bridge (Perez, Quezon), and Pinagdanlayan Bridge (Dolores, Quezon). These bridges are programmed for implementation in 2013.

The LRT Line 1 South Extension Project, for its part, was endorsed for public-private partnership (PPP) financing. The project aims to reduce traffic congestion between the southern portion of Metro Manila and Cavite province. It will involve extension of the existing 20.70 km. LRT 1 by approximately 11.70 km. from Bacclaran to Bacoor, Cavite.

The LRT project will be implemented through a hybrid PPP arrangement where the private sector undertakes civil works, electro-mechanical works, system enhancement works, and operation and maintenance of the integrated Line 1. The Government of the Philippines will provide the rolling stock and the depot through official development assistance (ODA) from the Japan International Cooperation Agency.



RPMC Monitors Two Strategic Transport Infrastructure Projects

Calatagan - Lubang Island Corridor



The Regional Development Council (RDC) has monitored the implementation of the Calatagan Port and Batangas-Tabangao-Lobo Road last October 3-5.

The monitoring team comprised Sectoral Committee on Infrastructure Development (SCID) Chairman Engr. Ladislao L. Andal, SCED Chairman Atty. Apolinario M. Macalintal, PMS-OP Representative Mr. Rex D. Yurong, DPWH Representative Engr. Josephine Baquiran and the RPMC Technical Secretariat Engr. Josephine D. Hapil and Engr. Alan del Socorro.

The visit to Calatagan Port enabled the team to conduct a problem-solving-session (PSS) with the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) and the concerned local government units (LGUs) of Calatagan and Lubang to address difficulty in dredging and poor access roads, among others.

Calatagan Port has continuously been developed for the past 10 years as a sister port of Lubang Port through the Calatagan-Lubang Island Steering Committee (CLISC) composed of selected inter-agency members from Regions IV-A and IV-B. The CLISC, through a resolution, has requested the concerned RDCs to endorse to PPA the prioritization of the full development of Calatagan Port as Roll-on Roll-off port.

The result of the port visit was one of the items on agenda during the Third Quarter SCID meeting on October 12,

2012 at Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club, Lipa City. The mayors of Calatagan and Lubang namely, Sophia G. Palacio and Juan M. Sanchez, respectively, were present at the meeting to support the project.

It was recommended that a Task Force be created to resolve problems being encountered by the Calatagan Port and elevate them to the PPA Board for favorable action. The Task Force will be chaired by DPWH IV-A and PPA as Vice-Chair. Members include NEDA IV-A, PSRs Engr. Ladislao L. Andal,

Richard Albert I. Osmond and Atty. Apolinario Macalintal, and Mayors Palacio and Sanchez. In response to the call from the CLISC, the Committee endorsed to the RDC the PPA management's full development of the said port.

Also visited was the 42 kms. Batangas-Tabangao-Lobo Road concreting project which is part of the Calabarzon Coastal Road that will interconnect the provinces in the region as well as serve as an alternate route to the Bicol Region. The ongoing project comprises the concreting of 4.52 kms. intermittent sections and has a project cost of PhP94.56 Million. It has a physical accomplishment of 70.11 percent as of October 1, 2011 and is expected to be completed on November 23, 2012.

The monitoring team has recognized the need to widen the coastal road due to encroachment of the road right-of-way and that the funding should be prioritized to open the 17-km. untouched section between Malabrigo-Balibago-Biga in Lobo to the coastal road in San Juan, Batangas that extends to Sariaya, Quezon.



The ongoing Batangas-Tabangao-Lobo Project terminates at Brgy. Malabrigo Lobo, Batangas where the 17 km. untouched section starts



The Regional Project Monitoring Team with the PPA personnel



PNOY Inaugurates Candelaria Bypass Road

President Benigno Simeon Aquino III inaugurated the 7.5-kilometer Candelaria Bypass Road located in the province of Quezon under the jurisdiction of Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Region IV-A, on September 17, 2012.

Accompanied by DPWH Secretary Rogelio L Singson, Quezon 2nd District Congressman Irvin Alcala and DILG Secretary Mar Roxas, PNoy led the inaugural drive-through from Brgy. Bukal Sur to Bukal Bridge. The DPWH Secretary briefed the President

on the two-lane concrete road with three bridges on a 20-meter wide road right-of-way.

The Secretary also mentioned the ongoing construction of the Eco-Tourism Road which will improve the access of motorists from Quezon to Batangas and other nearby provinces.

“Mabanggit ko lang Mr. President, ang proposed budget po dito sa Quezon ay halos dodoble sa isang taon. Kung nakikita nila, marami pong trabaho dito sa Quezon ngayon, mas marami pa ho next year,” the DPWH head said that made the crowd cheer.

The project, which costs PhP557.5 million, will decongest traffic along Daang Maharlika, enhance tourism industry and promote economic development in the province of Quezon and other nearby areas and provide faster, safer and shorter travel time from Metro Manila to the Bicol Region.

“Kaya nung tinitingnan ko yung kalsada, siguradong makakatulong itong mabawasan ang trapik dito papuntang Quezon at talaga naman pong masasabi nating medyo may pagbabago na po maski umpisa pa lang po yan,” the President said. He also enumerated the increasing demand for coconut water inside and outside the country. Quezon is one of the nation’s leading exporter of coconut-based products. The President also reiterated that if Quezon government officials could save more money and spend their budget wisely, support for additional projects by raising allocations in the province is possible.

The President ended his speech by affirming that development of the country starts with the cooperation of everyone and the desire to change their own lives.



Regional Director Luis A. Mamitag, Jr. explains the location map of the bypass road to DPWH Secretary Singson.

(Bren Ramos, DPWH)



DEPED Salutes Teachers of Teachers

“Those who educate children well are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well.”
-Aristotle

This inspiring quote carried the perfect message to highlight World Teachers Day celebration last October 5 at DepEd Calabarzon. In consonance with DepEd Memorandum No. 147, s. 2012 entitled National Teachers’ Month and World Teachers’ Day Nationwide Celebration, DepEd Region IV-A (Calabarzon) recognized and honored the teachers of teachers through a simple program. A thanksgiving mass commenced the day’s activity which was officiated by Bishop Efraim Perez-FCS, the Secretary of Interfaith at Malacañang Palace. This was followed by wel-

come remarks from DepEd Regional Director Lorna Dig Dino stressed that the international day is an opportunity to emphasize the challenges facing the teaching profession. It is essential to give this day much visibility and impact as much as possible, she added.

The celebration became more meaningful with the presence of special guests from DepEd Central office headed by Dr. Elena R. Ruiz, Assistant Secretary for Programs and Projects, Dr. Socorro Pilor, Director of IMCS and Dr. Beatriz Torno, Teacher Education Council Director.

“There can be no quality education without competent and motivated teachers. Teachers are among the many factors that keep children in school and influence learning. They help students think

critically, process information from several sources, work cooperatively, tackle problems and make informed choices” Asec. Ruiz said in her inspirational message which was resoundingly applauded by the audience.

Highlight of the program was the giving of recognition to teachers of teachers who provided impeccable leadership, defined direction and inspiration to others in their immediate sphere of influence. Awarded during the ceremony were the different Schools Division Superintendents, Assistant Schools Division Superintendents, Education Program Supervisors in the 15 divisions of DepEd IV-A including those from the regional office.

(Christopher Diaz, DepEd)

‘HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY’

Learning Center on Money, Credit and Banking in Calabarzon

On July 30, 2012, Governor Amando M. Tetangco, Jr. of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) hosted the Relaunching of the Economic and Financial Learning Center of BSP Lucena Branch (EFLC-Lucena).

EFLC-Lucena is actually operational since 2008 but has expanded its scope and services, hence the relaunch. It upgraded its facilities and was linked with the EFLC national network to ensure that all electronic resources at EFLC-Manila are also available to the

public in Quezon province and adjacent provinces of Calabarzon.

Aside from conventional reading and information materials on money, credit and banking like books, magazines and newspapers, EFLC-Lucena is now able to provide technology-based interactive learning modules, informative video clips and educational computer games. Researchers are also able to browse the digitized library collections and download statistical data and information from its interactive statistical database.

The other learning programs of EFLC-Lucena which aims to bring the information on money, credit and banking closer to the people include:

- In-house Briefing on the Role of BSP in the Philippine Economy, New Generation Currency (NGC) and Clean Note Policy;
- Information Campaign on the Role of BSP in the Philippine Economy, New Generation Currency (NGC), Clean Note Policy, Coin Recirculation Program – An Outreach Program;
- Lectures on BSP advocacies like microfinance, financial literacy and financial consumer protection.

Schools, private and non-government organizations, banking institutions, business groups, among others, can avail of information campaigns and lectures upon request.

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Learning Center...

EFLC-Lucena is located at the 2/F BSP Lucena Branch Building, Quezon Avenue, Lucena City (in front of Perez Park). It is open from Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Researchers from the other provinces of Calabarzon can access the virtual services of EFLC-Lucena through email at mcondes@bsp.gov.ph. To some extent, the services of EFLC-Lucena can also be accessed through telefax number (042) 660-1012 - Melanie N. Condes, Sr. Research Specialist, BSP Lucena Branch.

(Melanie P. Condes, BSP)



Technical Assistance on Planning for Bondoc Peninsula

NEDA IV-A (Calabarzon) embarked on a partnership with the University of the Philippines, Los Baños-College of Human Ecology (UPLB-CHE), in collaboration with the Provincial Government of Quezon and the 12 municipalities of Bondoc Peninsula (BP) for the implementation of the Technical Assistance on Planning for BP (TAP-BP) project.

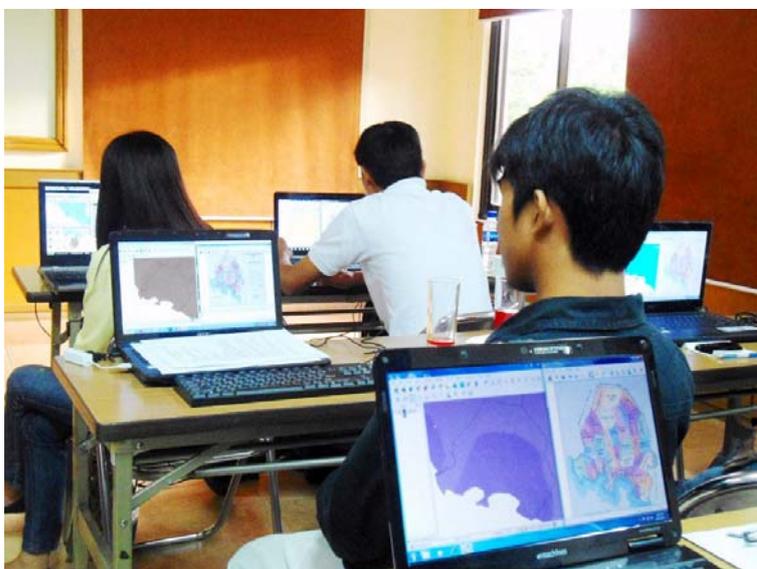
The TAP-BP project aims to facilitate lagging socioeconomic development of the area, in line with PNoy's social contract and policy that emphasizes the need to address the concerns of vulnerable sectors and areas to ensure

growth and development. It also seeks to provide TA to the municipalities of BP namely: Agdangan, Buenavista, Catanauan, General Luna, Macalelon, Mulanay, Padre Burgos, Pitogo, San Andres, San Francisco, San Narciso and Unisan in coming up with their respective updated databases and human ecological profiles as well as craft an integrated area development plan (ADP).

The ADP may serve as basis for convergence by various stakeholders identifying and providing major interventions to promote the growth of the area. The TA activities will include technology transfer, capability building and trainings

were conducted by the NEDA and UPLB-CHE. The first was intended for the UPLB-CHE practicum students assigned to the project, who then became trainers in the second batch that was participated in by the representatives from the local planning offices of Agdangan, Buenavista, Catanauan, Gen. Luna, Macalelon, Mulanay, Padre Burgos, Pitogo and Unisan. UPLB-CHE Instructor Joan P. Talubo and NEDA GIS Expert Kathleen DC. Melendrez served as resource persons. During this training, the LGU participants were able to generate maps using the QGIS.

A three-day site visit was also conducted by the project implementers on September 18-20, 2012. The UPLB-CHE Team, headed by Prof. Ronaldo Rogel and Ms. Talubo with six practicum students, together with Alvin Caesar V. Olanday of NEDA visited the municipalities of Agdangan, Catanauan, General Luna, Macalelon, Padre Burgos, Pitogo and Unisan to validate the data initially gathered by the UPLB-CHE students and conduct group discussions to collect input on the draft human ecological profiles. The team was also able to pay courtesy calls to some local chief executives during the site visit.



on Quantum Geographic Information System (QGIS), development planning and building partnership and linkages among the academe, local government units and regional line agencies.

Two batches of QGIS trainings

NEDA Spearheads Preparation of a Strategic Action Plan for Recovery and Rehabilitation



Photo by JPD. Biñan, Laguna on 08 August 2012

is intended to direct post-disaster actions of government, the private sector and the official development assistance community towards immediate and medium- to long-term programs and projects, to be mainstreamed into the regular agency and local development plans.

The plan will cover the assessment of physical damage to assets and estimation of indirect losses from said hazard event. It will also include a description of the hazard's impact on the re-

The National Economic and Development Authority, through its Regional Offices 3, 4A, 4B and 6, has been directed to prepare a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the rehabilitation and recovery of areas affected by the Southwest Monsoon enhanced by Typhoon Haikui that hit the said regions last August 6-9.

This effort is in line with the Republic Act 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) Act, which mandates NEDA to lead in the preparation of Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan of areas heavily affected by disasters.

The SAP aims to assess the damages arising from the typhoon and to determine the interventions necessary for the rehabilitation of affected areas. It

regional economy, income, employment and means of livelihood, social cohesion and governance, among others. These critical information would serve as basis for coming up with a rehabilitation strategy and drawing up of rehabilitation and recovery programs in order to achieve full recovery of economic activities and overall regional economy as well as to reduce disaster risk factors, respectively.

RDC Conducts 2nd Calabarzon GAD Convention

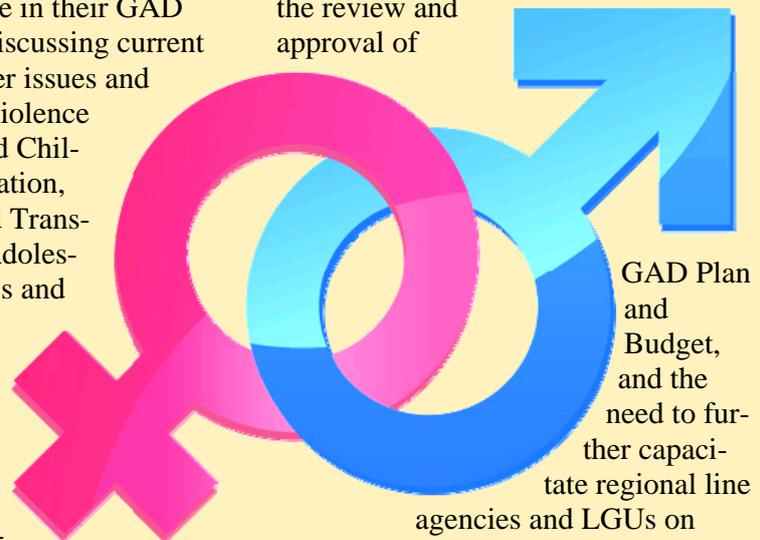
Calabarzon gender advocates organized the 2nd Regional Gender and Development (GAD) Convention held May 31 to June 1, 2012 at Kimberly Hotel, Tagaytay City with the theme "A Call for Partnership among Local Government Units (LGUs), Government Agencies, Private Sector and Civic Society Organizations to Strengthen Gender Mainstreaming Efforts in Calabarzon".

This convention was participated in by around 250 GAD focal persons/ program coordinators, budget and planning officers, academe from both the public and private sector, and other program implementers. It served as a venue for sharing best practices of the local government units, regional

line agencies and educational institutions.

From the best practices, the participants could integrate in their GAD plans and budget; discussing current and emerging gender issues and concerns such as Violence Against Women and Children, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Transgendered Rights, Adolescent Sexuality, HIVs and AIDs and institutional mechanisms and initiatives in addressing gender issues such as creation of Committee on Decorum and Investigation for Sexual Harassment Cases in an Agency, and Organization of Men Opposed to Violence Against Women Everywhere.

The highlights of the panel discussions were on the allowable activities for the use of 5 percent GAD fund, passive responses of responsible agencies in the review and approval of



GAD Plan and Budget, and the need to further capacitate regional line agencies and LGUs on GAD mainstreaming to efficiently and effectively identify and implement programs and projects.

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2nd Calabarzon GAD Convention...

The RDC-Sub Committee on GAD spearheaded the convention through the Calabarzon GAD Resource Center -University of Rizal System, with the support and cooperation of the officers and staff of Batangas State University, Cavite State University, Laguna State and Polytechnic University, Southern Luzon State University, CHED IV-A, DILG IV-A, DSWD IV-A, NEDA IV-A, POPCOM IV-A, PGAD-Batangas, Cavite Province, PGAD-Quezon and Rizal Province. The Cavite State University sponsored the fellowship night, wherein the participants enjoyed singing and dancing with the CavSU band.



The panelist on GAD implementation issues (from left to right): Dir. Wilma Naviamos of DSWD, PSSupt. Rolando Opeña of PNP, OIC-Dir. Agnes M. Espinas of NEDA, Director Lolita Layser of POPCOM IV-A, Assistant Commissioner Lourdes Castillo of COA, Atty. Aileen Chua of CHR IV-A, Dr. Prescilla Tulipat and Mr. Eric Julian Manalastas of UP Diliman and ARD Ariel Iglesia of DILG IV-A.



Engaging Migrants in Agricultural Development

At the height of overseas labor migration, agriculture emerged as an abandoned sector in most part of the region as farmers and relatives left their farms and fishing boats for jobs abroad. This situation was exacerbated when the earnings started coming in and those who remained joined the exodus.

Where agricultural lands were left unattended, these were added to earlier land that were transformed and developed into subdivision, villages and industrial parks. For OFW families who still clung to their land, dependence on remittances became the norm instead of investing into modern farm equipment and learning new technologies to improve their lives.

This was the reality that prompted Atikha to launch the PinoyWISE Movement.

PinoyWISE which stands for Pinoy Worldwide Initiatives on Investment, Savings and Entrepreneurship, has two core messages: (1) “PinoyWISE: Maging Wise sa Pamamahala ng Pera, Maging Wise sa Pangangalaga

ng Pamilya”, and; (2) “PinoyWISE: Pagbabalik Paghandaan, Siguraduhing Bukas May Daratnan.”

Atikha, a nongovernment organization, provides economic and psychosocial services for the OFWs, their families and communities. It conducts information, value formation and education campaigns to encourage OFWs and their families to save and invest the hard earned money wisely. It also links hometown associations with community and agricultural development in the Philippines.

Atikha’s model on savings and investment campaign towards agriculture was initially accomplished in Italy as an output of Atikha project funded by International Fund for Agricultural Development. In less than two years of its implementation, PinoyWISE Movement mobilized more than PhP10 million in investments and enrolled around 300 overseas Filipinos (OFs) with an agri-based cooperative.

This was achieved through the significant involvement of the PinoyWISE Financial Counselors, a pool of trained

migrant leaders in Italy. The remarkable results of PinoyWISE Movement in Italy and the enthusiastic response of migrant-sending communities in the Philippines inspired Atikha to scale up PinoyWISE movement and its activities.

For the next four years, PinoyWISE intends to promote the campaign in top destinations of OFs which comprise countries of: UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Hongkong, Singapore, Taiwan, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy, Spain, UK and Germany. The activities abroad will have counterpart activities in top sending provinces to ensure the significant reach in both migration corridors and to serve OFWs and their families.

The international launching of PinoyWISE will commence through the PinoyWISE Overseas Filipinos Market Place Event in Abu Dhabi UAE on November 23, 2012 at the Abu Dhabi National Theater which will be participated in by nine provinces nationwide of which three are from Calabarzon.

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"Converging and Celebrating a Decade of Development"

The Calabarzon Region plays a dynamic role in our country's development, contributing significantly to the overall growth of its economy. Under the Aquino Administration, the Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2011-2016 was formulated to guide the development of the region and to operationalize the Social Contract of the President with the Filipino people. The RDP also supports the thrusts of promoting the public-private partnership in programs and projects that shall provide the foundation for growth.

To implement the Plan, the Calabarzon Regional Development Council (RDC), composed of national government agencies, local government units (LGUs) and the private sector, has played a pivotal role in achieving the vision set forth in the Plan. It is envisioned to make the region a place with thriving urban centers, vibrant commercial and trade activities and superb quality of life.

As we approach the year 2013, the midterm period of the six-year RDP, it would be fitting for the RDC to showcase the region's achievement through a regional exposition. The activity is envisioned to be led by the private sector members of the RDC with the participation of the LGUs, line agencies, members of the House of Representatives, entrepreneurs, industry chambers, property developers, exporters, among others.

Likewise, as the Calabarzon Region also celebrates its 10th year after its creation under Executive Order (EO) 103 in May 2002, the regional expo is one way of highlighting what the region has accomplished through the years and its significant contributions to national and regional development. The Calabarzon Exposition aims to:

- showcase and demonstrate the regions accomplishments in the form of exhibits, trade fair, conferences and seminars;

- feature the region's diverse character and promote its image in the global arena through its world-class products, best practices and innovations; and
- establish a platform for interchange of ideas, creation of partnerships and networking opportunities

The event components include exhibition through trade and consumer (selling), conferences, seminars, business sessions, exhibits on best practices, inventions, skills demonstrations, among others.

The Expo is spearheaded by the RDC and the Calabarzon-Southern Tagalog Association of Regional Executives. This will be held on March 6-9, 2013 at the World Trade Center CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd. Pasay City.

PinoyWISE...

An Exhibit which will showcase agribased investment packages and business opportunities for OFs, and Ecotour/Agro-tourism destinations of each province will be the highlight for the event.

Other activities include the symbolic MOA Signing of PinoyWISE stakeholders with Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala, Administrator Carmelita Dimzon of Overseas Workers Welfare (OWWA), Governor Alfonso Umali, national president of the League of Provinces, Philippine Embassy UAE, Atikha with migrant organizations of UAE.

PinoyWISE partner institutions joining in the event are Landbank and Development Bank of the Philippines together with Calabarzon's leading cooperatives, namely: Soro-soro Ibaba Development Cooperative and Cavite Farmers Feed milling and Marketing Cooperative. The convenors and technical working group of PinoyWISE Movement is composed of Department of Agriculture-Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Services, OWWA, Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines and Atikha.

(PSR Aileen Constantino Peñas)

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Published by

Regional Development Council IV-A (Calabarzon)
NEDA4A, 4/F Marcelita Bldg., Brgy. Real, National Highway,
Calamba City, Laguna, Philippines

Contact Details

Tel. No. (049) 5457756, (049) 545 00 91
E-mail address: rdc4acalabarzon@yahoo.com
Website: <http://calabarzon.neda.gov.ph>