

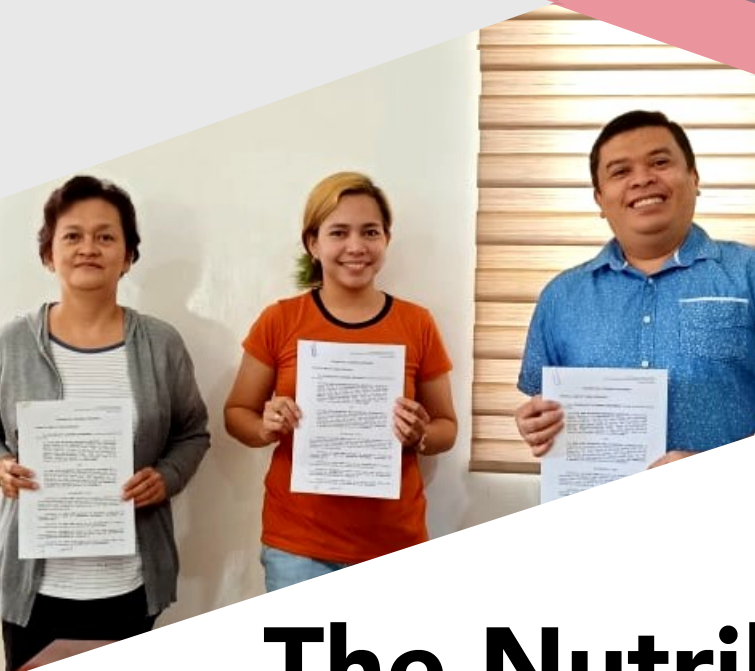
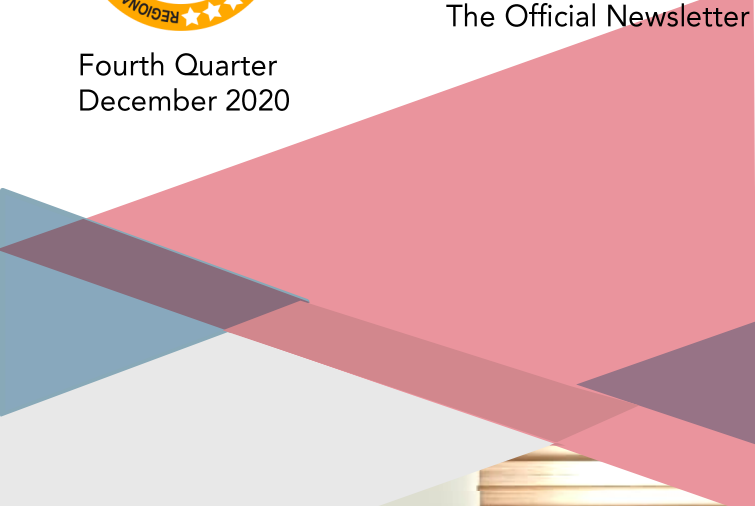


Fourth Quarter
December 2020

there is knowledge in news

CALABARZON

The Official Newsletter of the Regional Development Council IV-A



The Nutribun makes a comeback

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for tsunamis

ABOUT THE COVER

Eight MSMEs sign agreement to produce
enhanced nutribuns in CALABARZON.



The headquarters of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) Philippines is in Los Baños, Laguna.

The institute is the world's premier research organization dedicated to reducing poverty and hunger through rice science; improving the health and welfare of rice farmers and consumers; and protecting the rice-growing environment for future generations.

IRRI is an independent, nonprofit, research and educational institute, founded in 1960 by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations with support from the Philippine government. The institute has offices in 17 rice-growing countries in Asia and Africa, and more than 1,000 staff.



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CALABARZON gets ready for returnees with the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pagasa Action Plan

by Benjamin Jose Bautista, NEDA Region IV-A



Some officials and members during the CALABARZON BP2 Committee meeting. Photo by: NEDA Region IV-A

The CALABARZON Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pagasa (BP2) Committee endorsed the BP2 Action Plan to the Regional Development Council (RDC) during its meeting on November 19, 2020. The meeting which was chaired by DILG

Undersecretary Epimaco V. Densing III also approved the creation of the Regional BP2 Communication Group to take the lead in the information campaign.

The BP2 Action Plan was crafted to prepare the Region

in meeting the needs of the people who wish to return or reside in CALABARZON. The Action Plan focuses on four key result areas: a) empowerment of local industries; b) food security and agricultural productivity; c) housing, social welfare, health, employment, and human resource development; and d) infrastructure development. The Plan ensures the development of sustainable and inclusive communities.

According to NEDA Region IV-A Assistant Director Gina T. Gacusan, "the preparation of the CALABARZON BP2 Action Plan used both the top-down and bottom-up approach".

Going digital for economic recovery

by Benjamin Jose Bautista, NEDA Region IV-A

Shifting to digital transactions is one way to help the economy recover. This was stressed during the 5th CALABARZON Economic and Financial Forum last October 29, 2020. The theme for this year's forum is, "Bridging Digital Gaps: Making Economic and Financial Information Available to All".

The forum was conducted to inform the public on the safe use and practicability of digital transactions,

particularly those involving financial transactions. The use of online financial transactions is necessary to boost the economy.

Financial experts shared the various digital channels of monetary transactions in coping with the "new normal". Online transactions are encouraged to avoid touching money in order to prevent contamination or spread of the virus.

In keeping with the theme, BSP Deputy Director

Cherryl R. Ofracio discussed Digital Peso Equity and Retirement Account or PERA; while BSP Bank Officer Marie Kristine V. Pajarillo talked about the uses and benefits of PESONet and InstaPay.

From the private sector Mr. Joshua Jerald Deomano elaborated on the emerging payments acceptance solutions such as PayMaya, Smart Padala, PayMaya Negosyo, while GCash was discussed by Ms. Mynt Racquel B. Holazo.



Cashless transactions is the new normal. Photo by: freepik.com

6th CALABARZON RSI Forum focuses on achieving sustainable and inclusive development

by Luningning Llamas, NEDA Region IV-A

The 6th CALABARZON Research, Statistics, and Innovation Forum conducted on October 15, 2020 via Zoom webinar focused on how research, statistics, and innovation can help achieve sustainable and inclusive development.

Undersecretary Rowena Cristina L. Guevara of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) said, "DOST believes that research leads innovation and innovation drives sustainable economic growth even in the face of pandemic". She emphasized that accurate statistical data, research and development, and innovation are important in achieving resilience of businesses, communities, and society as a whole in times of pandemic.

Speaking for the business sector, Dr. Dan C. Lachica, President of the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Foundation, Inc. presented how research and technological innovations in semiconductors and electronics industries contribute to the development of the country. He recommended that the semiconductor and electronics industry pursue Integrated Circuits design as this is where the value is highest in the entire value chain. He asked that the colleges and universities include Integrated Circuits Design in their curriculum to prepare their students who will enter this industry.

From Singapore, Ms. Ng Aik Min of Singapore Polytechnic shared the Learning

Express Program of Singapore Polytechnic. As the Country Manager for the Philippines of Singapore Polytechnic, they have engagements with several State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). She shared the Learning Express program with these SUCs wherein students learn through exposure with the people they are tasked to help and explore various innovations in the process.

The CALABARZON Regional Development Council-Regional Research and Innovation Committee awarded the winners for the best papers and posters from the Social, Environment, and Agriculture sectors during the Oral and Poster presentations held in August and September. Mr. Teofilo Palsimon Jr. of DOH was awarded the overall best paper and best paper in Social sector, while Mr. Micklare Angelo Zepeda and Mr. Clayre Gerald Villas, both from SHS in San Nicholas III were awarded the best paper in Environment and Agriculture sectors, respectively. For poster presentations, Mr. Aaron Tristan Arbolado of SHS in San Nicholas III won 1st place, Dr. Helene Daya of SLSU won 2nd place, Mr. Allen Christopher Estabillo of SHS in San Nicholas III won 3rd place, and Ms. Sheryl Andal of Rosario National High School won the Viewers' Poster Choice Award.

This year's forum was in partnership with DOST Region IV-A, PSA Region IV-A, and CHED IV-A Research Council Inc.

"DOST believes that research leads innovation and innovation drives sustainable economic growth even in the face of pandemic".

Undersecretary Rowena Cristina L. Guevara
Department of Science and Technology





Aerial view of part of Tagaytay City. Photo by: projectlupa.com

Study reveals carrying capacity of Tagaytay

by Michael R. Lavadia, NEDA Region IV-A

A study by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Region IV-A revealed that Tagaytay City had reached critical levels on road capacity, water supply and air quality, causing pressure on its physical and natural resources.

The most critical concern is the water supply as the current supply of 23,340 m³/day is not enough to meet the daily demand of 28,176 m³/day which includes not just the residents but commercial establishments catering to tourists. Without the tourists, the current water supply will be enough for the projected population in 2026. The water shortage is evident as water rationing is being experienced by those interviewed in the study.

Another major concern is road capacity. The major roads leading to the City already have moderate to heavy traffic throughout the year. Heavy traffic is a norm during weekends and holiday seasons making travel to the City very challenging to tourists, while locals opt to stay at home to avoid heavy traffic.

Air quality has also suffered. Carbon emissions of motor vehicles have reached over the capacity for carbon sequestration of the City's green cover. According to public opinion, Tagaytay City has grown warmer.

According to NEDA Assistant Secretary Carlos Bernardo O. Abad Santos, "NEDA intends to promote the conduct of Urban Carrying Capacity (UCC) studies across the country to improve planning of the local government units and provide inputs for

various development plans to prioritize and implement short and medium-term interventions."

According to NEDA IV-A Regional Director Luis G. Banua "knowing a city's urban carrying capacity will help the local government and the region's planners and decision-makers to formulate more responsive plans, policies and priority programs and projects, especially during periods of economic shocks such as the recent Taal Volcanic eruption and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic".

According to Assistant Regional Director Gina T. Gacusan, the pandemic bought the local government time to act on the critical indicators presented. She added that time is of the essence in addressing the challenges on the carrying capacity of Tagaytay towards the central goal of improving the quality of life of the City.

The results of the study under the Tagaytay City Urban Carrying Capacity Research Project of NEDA Region IV-A were presented during the Public Consultation, and Regional Dissemination Forum held on October 30 and November 25, 2020, respectively via Zoom Videoconference. Both activities were participated by local officials and planners from the provincial and city government, regional line agencies, academe and private sector.

NEDA Region IV-A through the REECS and Tractebel Consultants also conducted a Training on the Methodology in Estimating the Tagaytay UCC to local planners and the academe from November 17-18, 2020.

Cellula™: a locally-developed plant tissue culture growth chamber

by Cavite State University

The "Cellula™" developed by the National Coffee Research, Development and Extension Center of the Cavite State University, is a locally-fabricated plant tissue culture growth chamber.



Cellula™ machine. Photo by: CavSU

This growth chamber creates a suitable environment for tissue-cultured plantlets. A programmable logic controller (PLC) controls the temperature, relative humidity, and photoperiod inside the chamber which is crucial for the growth of the

plant embryos. The chamber can hold a maximum of 384 plantlets per operation. A plant germination efficiency of 92.5 percent and 7.50 percent plant contamination were observed based on the conducted performance evaluation.

The tissue culture growth chamber was developed through the research project entitled "Design and Development of a PLC-Based High Capacity Tissue Culture Growth Chamber" led by Engr. Gerry M. Castillo. The research was funded by the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, Emerging Technology Research and Development thru their Grants-in-Aid program. The grant aimed to produce low-cost equipment for the

enhancement of growth, increase the germination efficiency, and decrease the plant contamination of the micropropagated coffee and makapuno plantlets.

There is a growing demand for quality planting materials for coffee, makapuno, and other high-value crops exhibiting the "true-to-type" traits of their mother plants. This increasing demand has led to government and private entities to venture into income-generating tissue culture laboratories. Typical laboratories do not have growth rooms for their tissue-cultured plants and this makes the plants prone to contamination. Moreover, their tissue-culture plants were observed to have a lower plant germination rate.

BioSyn-F: the aquafeed supplement that can boost milkfish production

by Laguna State Polytechnic University

In these challenging times, focus is on sustainable food production. Providing safe and affordable food is one of the top priorities of government. The Laguna State Polytechnic University responded to this call through its College of Fisheries headed by Prof. Christian Paul P. de la Cruz and his team which developed a technology to increase milkfish aquaculture production.

The research team created a supplement called BioSyn-F. This supplement

has probiotics and prebiotics that enhance the nutritional value of the aquafeed. When BioSyn-F is fed to the milkfish, there is an improvement in their survival rate and growth.

With the use of BioSyn-F in cultured milkfish production, the Philippines may regain its title as the world's leader in milkfish production. BioSyn-F can help address the problems in the milkfish industry such as high mortality rate, low growth, and emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Feeding



BioSyn-F products. Photo by: LSPU

the milkfish with BioSyn-F enriched aquafeed can lead to increased milkfish production which can revive the declining fish industry.

The development of BioSyn-F was made possible through the support of the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development.

Controlling electrical devices at home through your cellphone

by Dr. Marites M. Rio, URS



Complete System for SMS, WiFi and Bluetooth. Photo by: URS

What will you do if you are on vacation and forgot to switch off your electric stove at home? This is one nightmare that Prof. Leo C. Rio of the University of Rizal System tried to solve with his research entitled "SMS, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth-Based Electrical Loads Control System".

Many of us have probably encountered that problem of forgetting to turn off appliances when we leave our house and rush back to turn them off. Knowing this as somewhat a common problem, Prof. Rio embarked on a research that uses the cellphone to turn off, on, or monitor electrical devices. His research merged the use of Bluetooth, SMS, Wi-Fi to develop a mobile communication-based security system.

The design was based on wireless communication principles and their respective technology applications using electronic circuits, module/boards, components and devices for signal and data transmission and reception. A pre-programmed communication apps was installed in a mobile phone to establish exclusive

wireless communication between the transmitter and receiver module of the system. The control system having the SMS, Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth components allows multiple electrical devices to be controlled and monitored from different distances or locations at any time of the day.

The SMS, Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth components were all found very accurate in sending and receiving signals to switch on and off electrical devices and monitor them as well. The capability to monitor electric load can alert the user of overloading which can prevent fires due to electrical problems.

The publication of the research of Prof. Rio last October 25, 2020 in the Solid State Technology, a Scopus-indexed journal, created an avenue for him to articulate the meaning of doing and being engaged in research as he quoted, "There is always a way to make something old new, something small big; and something simple as something amazing. That is the very essence why we should keep on researching, developing, and innovating."

SIGAW: an early warning system for tsunamis

by Batangas State University

As communities near the shore are vulnerable to tsunamis, the Batangas State University (BatStateU) developed the Solar-Powered Isotropic Generator of Acoustic Wave or SIGAW.

SIGAW is a network of cost-efficient tsunami early warning systems. Communities are warned of a tsunami through an alarm and a text message. Data from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology triggers the sensor of the SIGAW before the tsunami hits the shore, which gives enough time for the residents to prepare and proceed to safer areas.

SIGAW was first deployed in 2016 in the province of Batangas. The project was funded by the United Nations - World Food Program. Through this partnership, 17 units have been installed in the different coastal areas in the municipalities of Batangas.

In November 2017, BatStateU, through the funding of DOST CALABARZON, deployed three units of Tsunami Early Warning System in Quezon province. A total of 20 SIGAW units have been installed in the provinces of Batangas and Quezon. And at present, three more units are being developed and are set to be installed before the end of 2020. The university takes care of the maintenance of all the units.



A SIGAW unit being installed in San Luis, Batangas. Photo by: SMART Communications

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Cavite targets 10,000 for COVID testing

by Sheryll H. Loyola and Evelyn M. Reyes, Cavite PCLEDO & PICAD

The Provincial Government of Cavite together with the National Task Force targets to conduct Aggressive Community Testing on COVID-19 to 10,000 Caviteños from the 23 cities and municipalities of Cavite.

A molecular laboratory was established in partnership with the De La Salle Medical Health and Science Institute to increase the testing capacity of the province while testing stations were installed.

Governor Jonvic Remulla has been proactive in his social media posts to increase people's awareness on health and safety protocols while the Sangguniang Panlalawigan is also very responsive in the fight against COVID-19.

Other activities to stem the spread of the virus

were the conduct of province wide disinfections, sanitary inspections, and assistance on the transport of Locally Stranded Individuals including that of Returning Overseas Filipinos. A Contingency Plan on Biological Hazard (COVID-19) and a Recovery Rehabilitation Program were already prepared.

To cope with the New Normal, the provincial government is conducting trainings and seminars online to build the skills and capabilities of government workers. It also adopted alternative work arrangements for its employees without compromising the operation of offices and strictly observes minimum health protocols in the workplace in order to continuously serve Caviteños.

Boosting local economic development for a stronger Laguna

by Laguna Provincial Information Office



Laguna Governor Ramil L. Hernandez (foreground-L), together with 2nd District Representative Ruth Mariano-Hernandez (middle) during the distribution of Hanapbuhay starter kits with modules on November 18, 2020 at the provincial capitol. Photo by: PIO Laguna

Through its Local Economic Agenda, the province of Laguna is working to give a boost not only to the sectors that are already performing well, but also those that are underperforming. It will help the province maintain its existing job opportunities while creating wider opportunities for its constituents.

The latest project of the provincial government under Governor Ramil L. Hernandez is the online livelihood training program "Ratsada

Hanapbuhay - Simulan sa Tahanan" specifically designed for thousands of members of Serbisyong Tama Kababaihan women's groups in Laguna, featuring demos on paper bag, doormat/potholder making, paper beads, crochet, dishwashing liquid, fabric conditioner, candle making, bread and pastry, meat processing, herbs and spices, plant propagation, artificial insemination, nail/ beauty care, massage, and welding, among others.

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Batangas Launches “Hakbang Ikaw, Magiting” Project

by Batangas Provincial Information Office

“Being tired is not an excuse when helping others”, said Governor Hermilando I. Mandanas during the unveiling of the Provincial Government of Batangas’ new project, “HAKBANG IKAW, MAGITING: Tsinelas para sa mga binaha sa Batangas” at Brgy. Libjo, Batangas City, last November 5.

The project is an initiative of the Governor in partnership with the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office to provide slippers to those who were severely affected by Typhoon Rolly. The slippers were from the donations of different partners of the government in providing services for community development.

Mandanas emphasized that the Provincial Government is always ready and on the move in giving assistance to the

residents of the affected areas. Apart from the slippers, relief goods, hygiene kits and necessities were also provided. The provincial government is also in continuous coordination with private partners and investors to immediately provide jobs.

The governor also acknowledged the significance of the volunteers like Barangay Nutrition Scholars, Barangay Health Workers, and Barangay Tanods as they offered significant contributions in helping the community.



Residents of Brgy. Libjo, Batangas City lining up as they are about to receive their free slippers. Photo by: PIO Batangas

Modernization key in resilient agri-industry

by Patricia Bermudez , PIA Region IV-A

Agricultural provinces must modernize local farming practices with research and technology to improve their productivity and become more resilient to disasters.

During the launch of the Cash and Food Subsidy for Marginal Farmers and Fisherfolk (CFSMFF) program in Brgy. Mayuwi, Tayabas City, Quezon, Agriculture Secretary William Dar recognized the contribution of the province not only as the country’s leading producer of coconut and livestock, but also for its hardworking and committed farmers and fisherfolk.

“CALABARZON continues to show agriculture industrialization in many ways, but of course [a] value adding business approach will be critical.” Dar said.

According to the Agriculture chief, mechanisms, such as post harvest facilities and financial safeguards; including crop insurance, partnership with reliable financial institutions, distribution of farming inputs and encouragement of loan guarantee funds are available to farmers to help them become more productive.

THE NUTRIBUN MAKES A COMEBACK

by: Demee Angelica S. Ludia, DOST IV-A

With calamities shaking our country one after another, having nutritious and healthy food is difficult to attain with the standard relief food packs. Hence, the Department of Science and Technology through its Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI) launched the “ready to eat complete meal”- Enhanced Nutribun (E-Nutribun).

And guess what? The CALABARZON region will soon get a taste of the E-Nutribun from none other than their “kababayan” bakers and manufacturers in the Region.

Eight DOST CALABARZON-assisted micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)

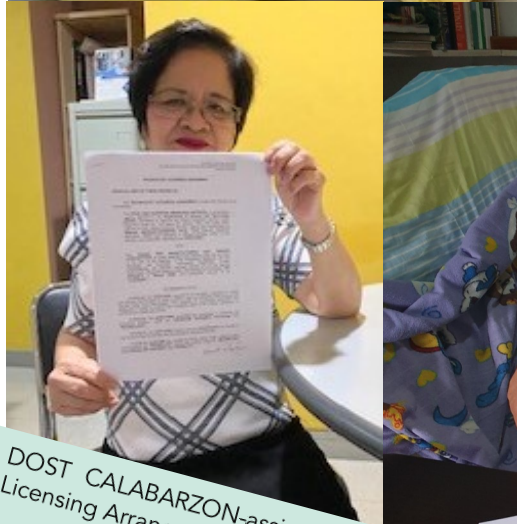
have sealed the deal by signing a Technology Licensing Agreement (TLA) as the official first batch of producers of the E-Nutribun in the Region.

The eight E-Nutribun technology adopters, after undergoing several virtual evaluations, have successfully passed the set standards and are now closer towards becoming full-fledged adopters. One of the eight technology adopters is the San Jose Workers' Multipurpose Cooperative from San Jose, Batangas.

DOST CALABARZON-assisted micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have sealed the deal by signing a Technology Licensing Agreement (TLA) as the official first batch of producers of the E-Nutribun in the Region. Photo by: DOST Region IV-A

When asked about their decision to adopt the E-Nutribun, Mr. Emmanuel Munda, the General Manager, said that this adoption is in line with their cooperative's vision- “Our coop's tagline is Kooperatiba para sa malusog na Pilipino. [This] partnership with DOST-FNRI is a golden opportunity to promote healthy products such as E-Nutribun.”

DOST-CALABARZON since September of this year has been actively endorsing and contributing to the efforts for the adoption and commercialization of the E-Nutribun. From series of orientations with DOST-FNRI and different MSMEs, to intensive promotions by the Provincial Science and Technology Centers, to a consultative



E-Nutribun produced by the MSMEs. Photo by: DOST Region IV-A



Small and medium enterprises signing the Technology Licensing Agreement

meeting with DSWD Region IV-A and DepEd Region IV-A, even up to paving the way for the conduct of the very first DOST-FNRI virtual site visit and ocular inspection.

The initiative to have MSMEs as E-Nutribun technology adopters also aims to help the MSMEs recover from economic losses they have experienced. Initial coordination with DepEd Region IV-A and DSWD Region IV-A have already been made to ensure that the eight technology adopters can become the suppliers for the agencies' feeding programs.

Swisspharma Research Laboratories, Inc. from Cabuyao Laguna, another technology adopter, noted that the E-Nutribun as well as the partnership with DOST is a promising angle for their enterprise.

The technology adopters have undergone a three-day Virtual Technology Transfer Training on the Production of E-Nutribun which included topics on food safety, 5S, and good manufacturing practices. A test production of the actual E-Nutribun was also conducted. Some MSME technology adopters have already begun their commercial production and selling.



The making of the E-Nutribun by one of the MSMEs. (Photo by: DOST Region IV-A)

As part of DOST-CALABARZON's Regional E-Nutribun Launching, DOST will be giving away samples to partner national government agencies, local government units, state universities and colleges, and private organizations.

Meanwhile, assistance to aspiring technology adopters is still on-going. With the CALABARZON region receiving the most number of Letters of Intent for E-Nutribun adoption, DOST-CALABARZON continues to assist more MSMEs in their E-Nutribun journey. For interested adopters, send an email to foodsafety.dost4a@gmail.com or through DOST-CALABARZON's Facebook page.

"At this point, business is a matter of adopting technology, raw materials, market access [which is highly dependent] ... on your partnerships. This pandemic, I think E-Nutribun is going to be a promising product".

Benjamin Tantiasu
Swisspharma



Benjamin Tantiasu of Swisspharma signs the Technology Licensing Arrangement as one of the producers of E-Nutribun in the Region. Photo by: DOST Region IV-A

Remembering a dedicated public servant

by Office of the Presidential Adviser for Southern Tagalog



1948-2020

**Secretary Jose Maria
Nicomedes F. Hernandez**
Presidential Adviser for
Southern Tagalog

Secretary Jose Maria Nicomedes “Dennis” Hernandez was a constant presence in the RDC and other regional bodies. As the Presidential adviser for the Southern Tagalog region, he would always say that he serves as the eyes and ears of the President in Southern Tagalog. This he has taken to heart by finding ways to be with those in need and by giving assurance that the President will know of their situation.

His untimely demise last October 18, 2020 at the age of 72 left a void in the RDC and in the many institutions and committees he has closely worked with. Foremost among these is the Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict. With him at

the helm, CALABARZON was the first to organize the Regional Task Force. His interest in ending armed conflict in CALABARZON led him to participate in the RDC Community Outreach activities and in personally providing the venue where rebel returnees can officially surrender. He strongly believed and supported the Community Mobilization Support Program as it addressed both the problems of insurgency and drug addiction.

His advocacies on combating insurgency, drug addiction, and making Southern Tagalog a better place is his legacy to us. We honor his memory by continuing the work he has left behind. To a dedicated public servant, we say THANK YOU.

Nutrio™: the biofertilizer for sugarcane and eggplant

by Ana Margarita Palma, UPLB



Sugarcane plants sprayed with Nutrio at one of the field trials conducted near the UPLB BIOTECH. Photo by: Regina Ongkiko

Nutrio™, a microbial-based foliar spray biofertilizer that promotes plant growth and replaces up to 50 percent of the required chemical fertilizer for eggplant and sugarcane.

Nutrio was developed by Dr. Virginia Padilla when she was at the UPLB National Institute of Microbiology and Biotechnology with the thought of helping farmers. Her research was funded by the Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD).

Dr. Padilla did not stop from improving and introducing Nutrio™ to farmers even when she retired last year. Despite being in the market already, Dr. Padilla continues to test and

improve Nutrio™ through field trials, which have been mostly successful especially in promoting the technology to end-users.

Dr. Padilla has applied for patent for the biofertilizer and was granted the trademark for the name Nutrio™. The technology is also registered with the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority.

To continue producing Nutrio™ so that more farmers can benefit from it, Dr. Padilla applied for its commercialization by establishing a spin-off company. She and her husband created a small family corporation called Fullmight Agricultural Corp., and signed a licensing agreement with UPLB, to market and distribute the biofertilizer nationwide.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATIONER

Third Quarter 2020

by NEDA Region IV-A Policy Formulation and Planning Division

Improved Performance

Increased

- Employment rate
- Underemployment rate
- Palay, corn, sweet potato, and cassava production
- Chicken eggs production
- Total ship calls
- Number of passengers in Batangas and Lucena Ports
- Total cargo throughput
- Volume of shipping containers

Declined Performance

Increased

- Average inflation rate
- Average consumer price index

Decreased

- Average purchasing power of Peso
- Coconut, banana, and pineapple production
- Hog, cattle, carabao, and goat production
- Chicken, duck, and duck eggs production
- Aquaculture, municipal, and commercial fishing
- Same-day and overnight tourist arrivals

Prices and Inflation

Average Inflation Rate



Figure 1. Quarterly average inflation rate, 3rd Quarter 2019 to 3rd Quarter 2020.

Third quarter inflation rate was recorded at 2.70, 0.70 percentage points higher than last quarter and 1.07 percentage points higher than the same period last year.

Average Purchasing Power of Peso

Average purchasing power of Peso declined by PHP0.01, from PHP0.83 during the last quarter to this quarter's PHP0.82.



Figure 2. Average Purchasing power of Peso, 2nd Quarter 2020 and 3rd Quarter 2020.

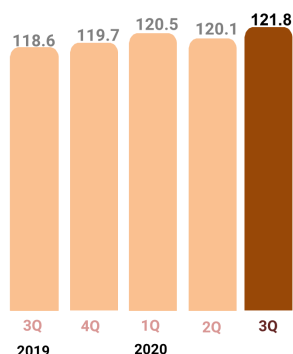


Figure 3. Quarterly average consumer price index, 3rd Quarter 2019 to 3rd Quarter 2020.

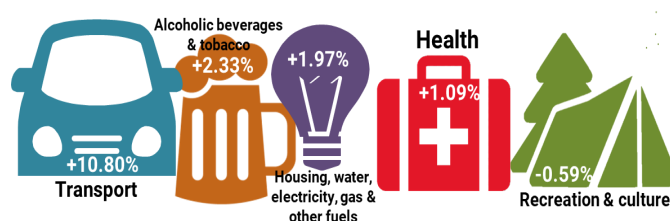
Average Consumer Price Index

Average consumer price index increased by 1.42 percent from last quarter's PHP120.10 to PHP121.80 this quarter.

This quarter's transport prices increased by more than 10 percent from last quarter while prices of alcoholic beverages and tobacco and housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels increased by 2.33 and 1.97 percent, respectively.

High transport price was a result of surge in tricycle fares due to restrictions on number of passenger. Multiple oil price hikes were also experienced during this quarter which prompted higher prices of transport.

3Q Inflation Rate Growth Drivers



Higher prices in housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels were brought by increase in prices of cooking gas which was driven mainly by international market rates coupled with price increase in home rentals and water supply during this quarter.

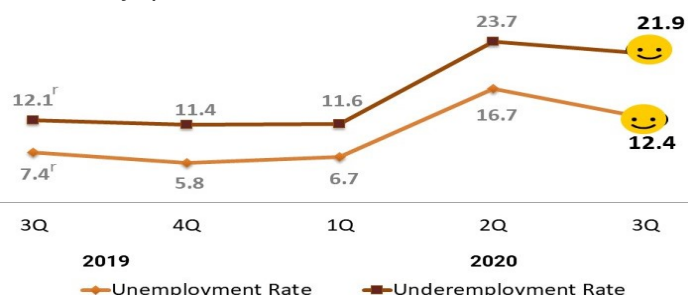
Safety restrictions and quarantine protocols continue to affect recreational and cultural services as reflected by 0.59 percent decline in prices.

Food prices, which constitutes the bulk of inflation rate, continue to increase at a steady pace as a result of slow increments in prices of fish and meat and lower prices of vegetables.

Labor & Employment*



Employment rate in the region increased to 87.6 percent, higher by 4.3 percentage points compared to the previous quarter but 5.0 percentage points lower compared to the same quarter in 2019. This quarter-on-quarter increase is due to more workers returning to work due to the easing of community quarantine.



Underemployment rate at 21.9 percent is 1.8 percentage points lower than the previous quarter but 9.8 percentage points higher year-on-year.

Financial loss and loss of market caused most of business establishments to retrench and permanently close. All the temporarily closed establishments declared the enforcement of community quarantine as reason for the temporary cease

of business operations. Temporary closure of 53 establishments affected 4,024 employees.

A total of 777 establishments reduced their work force affecting 22,985 employees while 86 establishments had to shut down affecting 2,117 employees. The implementation of flexible work arrangement in 279 establishments affected 12,830 employees.

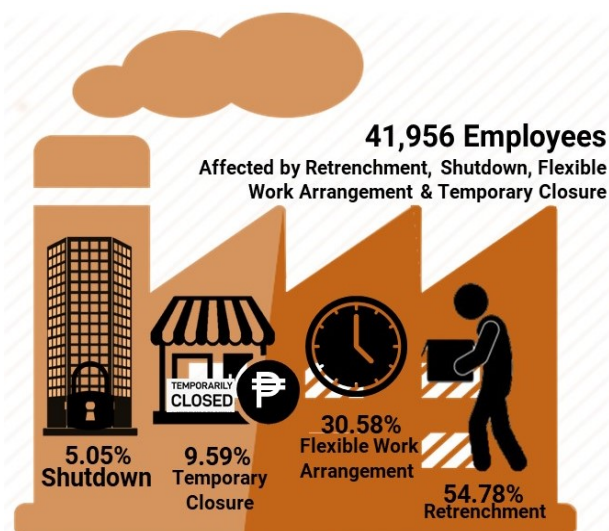


Figure 4. Percentage of employees affected by retrenchment, shutdown, temporary closure, and flexible work arrangement, 3rd Quarter 2020

Sources: Philippine Statistics Authority Region IV-A
Department of Labor and Employment Region IV-A

*Estimates are preliminary and subject to change.
r— revised

Agriculture

Production of major agricultural commodities declined from third quarter of 2019 compared to the same quarter in 2020. There were decline in production of livestock and poultry, fisheries, and some crops like coconut, banana, and pineapple.

Crops

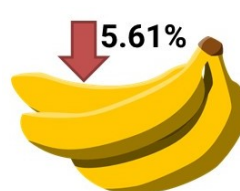


Palay, corn, sweet potato, and cassava production increased while coconut, banana and pineapple recorded production decrease.

Palay production increased by 26.95 percent from 31,837 metric tons in the third quarter of 2019 to 40,418 metric tons in the third quarter of 2020.

Corn production also went up by 24.93 percent from 22,428 metric tons to 28,019 metric tons for the same time period.

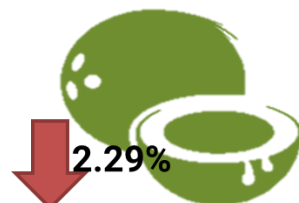
Increased production of major crops is due to favorable weather condition for rice and other crops as well as increased demand for rice, corn and root crops during the peak of COVID-19 quarantine.



Coconut and banana recorded a continued year-on-year reduction in volume of production with 2.29 percent and 5.61 percent losses, respectively. This

downtrend can be due to the strong typhoons in the province of Quezon.

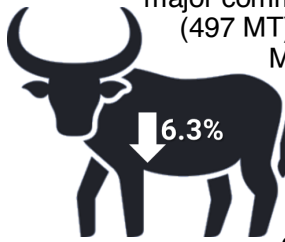
A similar trend can be observed for pineapple production and this was exacerbated by the effect of Taal Volcano eruption in the production areas in the provinces of Batangas and Cavite.



Livestock & Poultry

The livestock and poultry sub-sectors suffered production losses for all commodities except for chicken eggs which posted an increase of 4,222 metric tons (MT) in the third quarter of 2020.

The following declines in production were recorded for major commodities: hog (5,857 MT), cattle (497 MT), carabao (307 MT), goat (78 MT), chicken (14,631 MT), duck (36 MT), and duck eggs (65 MT).



The decline in production of livestock and poultry can be due to the decline in demand

from institutional buyers such as hotels and restaurants who were greatly affected by the pandemic.



Fisheries



Fisheries Subsector

All fishing sub-sectors posted production downtrends. Aquaculture production is down by 11,522 metric tons (23.4 percent). Municipal fishing declined largely because of decrease in production of marine municipal fishing by 9.26 percent and inland municipal fishing by 4.56 percent. Meanwhile, commercial fishing recorded a loss of 1,107 metric tons for the same time period.

The lower production can be due to limited mobility and fishing activities in the third quarter of 2020 compared to the same quarter in 2019.

Total fisheries production went down from 81,434 metric tons in the third quarter of 2019 to 67,293 metric tons in the same quarter of 2020.



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority Region IV-A
Revised data on 2019 municipal and commercial fisheries

Ports

Batangas Port

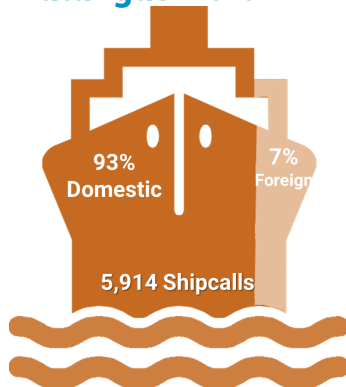


Figure 5. Total shipcalls in Batangas Port, 3rd Quarter 2020

Domestic ship calls comprised 93 percent of the total ship calls in Batangas port. The Batangas Port is the only government port with international operations in the Region.

Total ship calls in Batangas port including government and private ports significantly increased by 43 percent in the third quarter compared to the previous quarter. However, compared with the same period in 2019, fewer ship calls were recorded due to the pandemic.



Figure 6. Foreign cargo throughput in Batangas Port, 3rd Quarter 2020

There was an increase of 9 percent in foreign cargoes from the second to third quarter of 2020 but this was lower by 17 percent compared to the same period last year.

Domestic cargoes declined quarter-on-quarter by 4 percent but higher by 22 percent compared with last year.

Container volume, imports and exports, significantly increased in the third quarter compared to the previous quarter with increase in exports by around 30 percent.

The gradual restarting of economic activities contributed to the positive performance compared in the previous quarter. However, this was not enough to match the performance in the same period in the previous year, pre-pandemic.

Source: Philippine Ports Authority-PMO Batangas

Lucena Port and Private Ports in Quezon

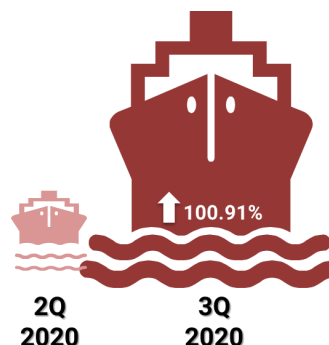


Figure 7. Total shipcalls in Lucena Ports and Private Ports in Quezon, 3rd Quarter 2020.

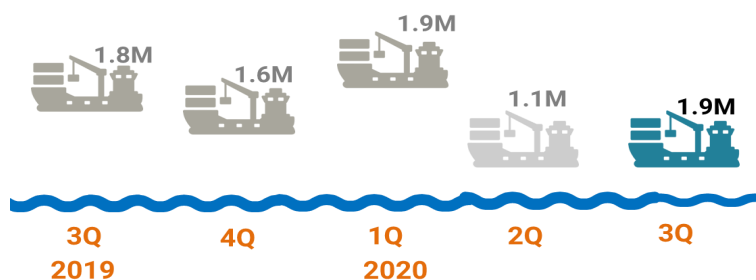
Total ship calls in Lucena port and other private ports in Quezon doubled quarter-on-quarter while passenger traffic increased by 81 percent quarter-on-quarter. This can be attributed to higher ship calls in transportation of cargoes.

Year-on-year total ship calls slightly declined by 3 percent while total passenger traffic significantly declined by 70 percent.

Total cargo throughput in Lucena Port and private ports increased by around 76 percent in the third quarter compared the previous quarter.

Source: Philippine Ports Authority-PMO MarQuez

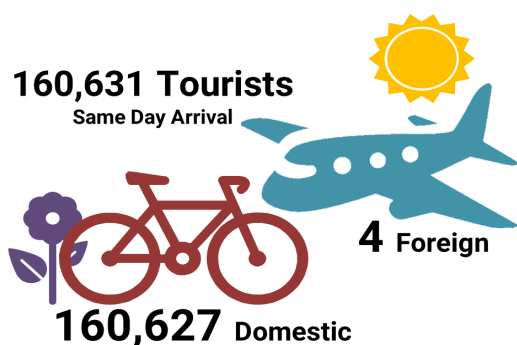
Cargo Throughput



Compared to the same period in 2019, there was also a slight increase of 2.26 percent. The top commodities transported in Lucena Port were coconut oil and copra. Less restrictions in the Quezon Province due to its lower COVID-19 cases contributed to higher mobility in the Province's ports.

Figure 8. Total cargo throughput in metric tons, 3rd Quarter 2020

Tourism



Tourism was significantly affected by travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, only around 2 percent of same day tourists recorded in the third quarter in 2019 were able to visit the region in same period in 2020. The same is also true for overnight tourists.

Based on the partial report of the provinces, the region recorded 160,631 same-day tourists and 31,400 domestic overnight tourists during the third quarter of 2020. As expected, there were almost no foreign visitors in the region.

Figure 9. Same-day tourists arrival, 3rd Quarter 2020

Source: Department of Tourism Region IV-A

Development Prospects and Challenges

- Recent reforms such as the Rice Tariffication Law contributed to the stability of food prices, however, several typhoons and series of adverse weather conditions in the recent months might induce food price upticks in the region in the last quarter of 2020.
- To prevent significant disruptions in food prices, there is a need to ensure stable food supply which can be done by prolonging the shelf life of agricultural products, particularly during times of unfavorable weather conditions.
- Due to higher electricity demand following the re-opening of the economy and transitioning to modified general community quarantine in the region, higher electricity rates may be effective in October which may affect inflation rate in the next quarter.
- Surge in global crude oil prices following the positive developments in COVID-19 vaccines will likely push prices up but price freeze in kerosene and household liquefied petroleum will be implemented in areas under state of calamity due to recent typhoons.
- Intensified implementation of Prevent, Detect, Isolate, Treat, Reintegrate strategies will likely maintain current jobs and create new job opportunities as these will boost business confidence and restore consumer demand.
- Upskilling and retooling of displaced workers and new entrants to the labor force are needed to develop the essential and in-demand skills in the new normal.
- The gradual reopening of economic activities, including travel destinations, hotels and restaurants, while ensuring strict compliance in health and safety protocols is expected to contribute to the recovery of the industry and tourism sector.

RPMC Bulletin

by NEDA Region IV-A Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division

Outstanding Local Project Monitoring Committees in 2020

The Outstanding Local Project Monitoring Committees (LPMC) in 2020 are the Provinces of Quezon and Batangas, San Pablo City, and Municipality of Carmona, Cavite. Quezon Province bagged the Hall of Fame Award for being the Outstanding LPMC at the provincial level for three consecutive years.

These four LPMCs exemplified remarkable performance in project monitoring and facilitation with their timely submission reports and conduct of field monitoring activities. They also actively participated in trainings to further equipped themselves and assisted other LPMCs through the provision of training on the Regional Project Monitoring and Evaluation System. These efforts resulted in the early resolution of projects issues at the local level.

In recognition of the performance of the LPMCs the Regional Project Monitoring Committee conducts the Search for the Outstanding LPMCs every year.

For this year, the NEDA Region IV-A chaired the Search Evaluation Committee with DILG, DBM, OP-PMS and two RDC private sector representatives as members. The Search Evaluation Committee was able to complete the assessment of the shortlisted LPMCs through virtual validation.

The 2020 SOLPMC Awardees will be recognized during the fourth quarter meeting of the CALABARZON RDC on December 10.

RPMC Secretariat provides training to newly organized Candelaria and Nagcarlan LPMCs

Newly organized LPMCs are being encouraged to undergo training on project monitoring in order to effectively operationalize the RPMES at the local levels. In line with this, the Secretariat provided an online orientation seminar on Regional Project Monitoring System (RPMES) for the newly created LPMCs of Candelaria, Quezon and Nagcarlan, Laguna on October 18 and November 18, respectively.

The objective of the training was to orient the

members of LPMCs on RPMES monitoring and evaluation concepts, activities, and procedures. The project development cycle and logical framework were also discussed during the training.

The quarterly submission of the RPMES input forms and how to accomplish it were highlighted during the training to guide the LPMC secretariat. More orientation seminars will again be conducted before the end of 2020 as requested by Provinces of Laguna and Batangas.

Virtual Problem Solving Sessions for three projects

Three projects were subjected to a virtual Problem Solving Session by the RPMC on October 13 to address issues in implementation. The School Building Program of DepEd, the Health Facilities and Enhancement Program of DOH, and the Lipa-Padre Garcia Diversion Road of DPWH were experiencing delays which prompted the RPMC to call for a Problem Solving Session.

The Taal Volcano Eruption and the COVID-19 Pandemic caused the delay in the School Building Program and the Health Facilities and Enhancement Program. However, for the Lipa-Padre Garcia Road, right-of-way issues are causing the delay in construction.

During the Problem Solving Session, it was recommended to have a catch-up plan to



Subgrade preparation at the boundary of Lipa City and Padre-Garcia, Batangas.

expedite project implementation amidst the pandemic while frequent coordination with the LGUs and stakeholders was needed to address right-of-way problems. In the future, a more stringent post-qualification of contractors was suggested to avert project delays.

RPMC prioritizes 55 major projects for 2021 monitoring

Fifty-five projects were identified as priority for monitoring by the RPMC for 2021. These projects were identified based on the following criteria: a) priority projects of the President; b) projects for monitoring requested by NEDA Central Office; c) projects amounting to PHP 500 million and above; d) inter-provincial/regional projects; e) projects with implementation issues/concerns or best practices; and e) other priority projects identified by the RPMC and RDC.

- **LRT Line 1 Cavite Extension**
- **LRT Line 2 East Extension**
- **South Long Haul Project**
- **Cavite-Laguna Expressway**
- **South Luzon Expressway Toll Road 4**
- **Quezon-Bicol Expressway**
- **Alaminos-San Pablo City Bypass Road**
- **Gumaca Bypass Road**

- **Cavite Industrial Area - Flood Risk Management Project**
- **School Building Program**
- **Health Facilities Enhancement Program**
- **Sustainable Livelihood Program**
- **Cash Grant for Centenarians**
- **Comprehensive Program for Street Children, Street Families & Indigenous People**
- **SAP - Emergency Subsidy Program**
- **Last Mile School Project**

- **Catanauan Diversion Road**
- **Mauban Bypass Road**
- **Bacoar Diversion Road**
- **Lobo-Malabrigo-Laiya-San Juan Road**
- **Tagkawayan - Labo Diversion Road**
- **Pulo-Diezmo Road**
- **Sangley Airport Development Project**
- **Flood Risk Management Project for Imus River**

- **Molino- Daang Hari Flyover**
- **General Aguinaldo-Magallanes-Nasugbu Road**
- **STAR Tollway-Pinamucan Bypass Road**
- **Taal Lake Circumferential Road**
- **Tagaytay Bypass Road**
- **Angono-Antipolo Diversion Road**
- **Magallanes Drive Diversion Road**
Connecting Tagaytay-Batangas Arterial Highway & Tagaytay-Manila via Silang Road

- **Quipot Irrigation Project**
- **Manila Bay Rehabilitation Project**
- **National Greening Program**
- **Free WiFi for All Program**
- **TECH4ED Project**
- **RRP Taal Projects**
- **RRP Covid Projects**
- **Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Projects**

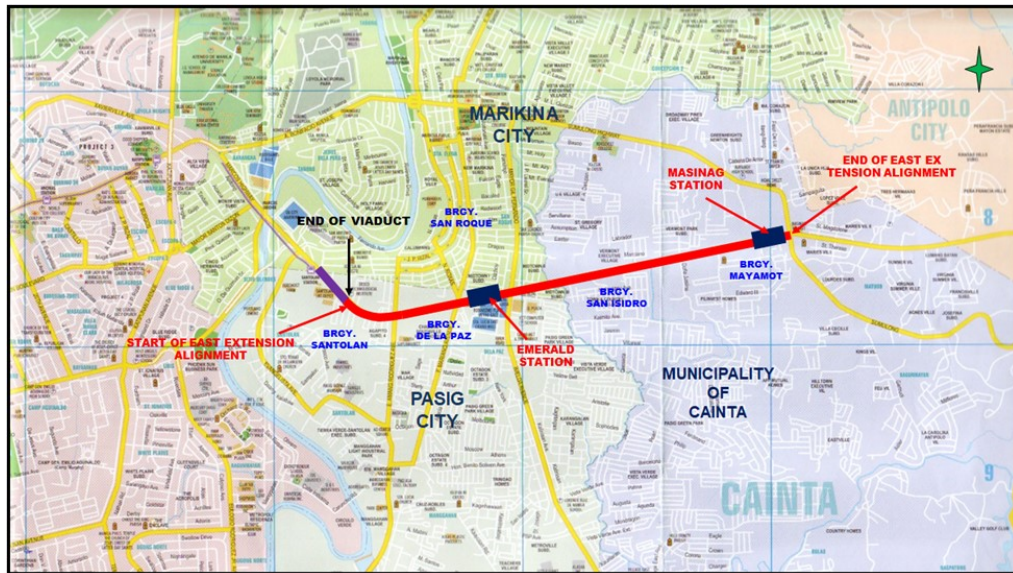
- **General Nakar - Dingalan Road**
- **Sariaya Bypass Road**
- **Atimonan - Mauban Road**
- **Carmona-Biñan Diversion Road**
- **Link Road Connecting Aguinaldo Highway & Governor's Drive**
- **Lipa City - Padre Garcia Diversion Road**
- **Guinayangan-Tagkawayan Diversion Road**
- **Real Bypass Road**

- **KALAHI-CIDSS National Community Driven Development Program**
- **Social Pension Program for Indigent Senior Citizens**
- **Recovery & Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons**
- **Disaster Response Assistance & Management**
- **Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program**
- **Philippine Rural Development Project**
- **New Centennial Water Source - Kaliwa Dam Project**
- **Macalelon Small Reservoir Irrigation Project**



Scan or visit
rpmes4a.com
for project updates

LRT Line 2 East (Masinag) Extension Project to be completed in mid-2021



Map showing LRT Line 2 East (Masinag) Extension Alignment

Going to Antipolo City and Cainta, Rizal will be faster with the targeted completion of the LRT Line 2 East (Masinag) Extension Project in the second quarter of 2021. The LRT Masinag Extension is expected to provide a rapid and reliable mode of transportation from Rizal to the other commercial, industrial and commercial centers of Metro Manila. The 3.79-kilometer eastern extension of the existing Line 2 from

Santolan Station at Marcos Highway fronting SM Marikina will end at Masinag Junction or the intersection of Marcos Highway and Sumulong Highway. The constructed two stations are located at (a) Emerald Drive in front of Robinson's Place Metro East in Cainta, Rizal and (b) Masinag Junction in Antipolo City, Rizal. The project started in 2016 with funding assistance from Government of Japan.

Free Wifi in public spaces



Free Wifi access installed by DICT in Bagong Cainta Municipal Hospital in Rizal.

A total of 496 free Wifi access sites and 105 Tech4ED centers were established by the DICT paving way for a more virtually connected CALABARZON. The Free Wifi for All Program aims to provide free internet access in all public places. As of October 20, 2020, there are still 128 remaining sites to be established in the region, out of the 624 sites targeted for the region, or an overall accomplishment of 79 percent. Among the five provinces, Rizal Province has completed its free public Wifi project.

On the other hand, the Technology Empowerment for Education, Employment,

Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (Tech4ED) Project is a partnership of DICT with the LGUs which aims to establish sustainable ICT centers in the communities. The centers will be equipped with computers with internet connection for the use of the general public and students at any reasonable hours on weekdays.



One of the Tech4ED centers established in CALABARZON Region.

Free access to information on ICT, government services, non-formal education, skills training, telehealth, job markets, and business portals will be provided in the centers. The Tech4ED projects in the Provinces of Rizal and Quezon are already complete.



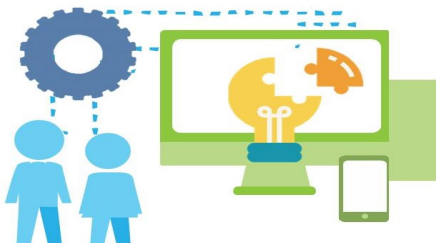
“PATULOY NA PAG-UNLAD” Increasing Growth Potential



STI utilization in agriculture, industry, and services sector increased



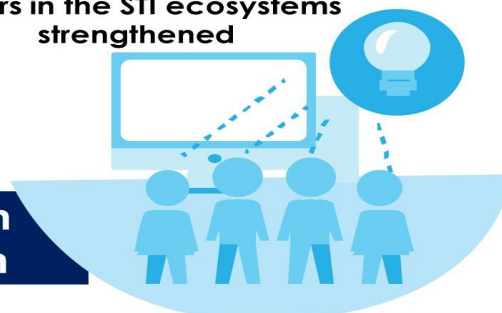
Investments in STI-based start-ups, enterprise and spin-offs increased



Creative capacity for knowledge and technology generation, acquisition and adoptions increased



Open collaboration among actors in the STI ecosystems strengthened



Promote technology adoption and stimulate innovation



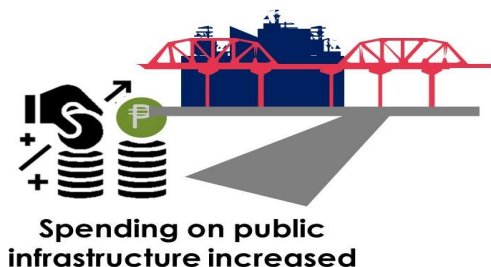
NEDA CALABARZON

CALABARZON Regional Development Plan 2017-2020

“Malasakit”
Enhancing Social Fabric

“Pagbabago”
Inequality-Reducing Transformation

“Patuloy na Pag-unlad”
Increasing Growth Potential



Spending on public infrastructure increased



Asset preservation ensured



Infrastructure-related research and development intensified

Accelerate infrastructure development



NEDA CALABARZON

CALABARZON Regional Development Plan 2017-2020