



# RDC-1

# CHRONICLE



1st Semester 2018

A publication of the **Regional Development Council**, Region 1

Volume 27 Number 18

## STATE OF THE REGION ADDRESS

**'I was inspired'**  
- Medina



## THE CHRONICLE

The RDC Chronicle is published on a semestral basis by RDC-1 which highlights government programs and projects, success stories, events and matters concerning the various sectors of development.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

This issue focuses on the State of the Region Address delivered by RDC Chairperson Hon. Juan Carlo S. Medina of Vigan City. The SORA spells-out the region's gains in 2017 and its prospects in 2018 and beyond. It also includes significant events and activities.

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# 2017 STATE OF THE REGION ADDRESS (SORA)

(delivered by **MAYOR JUAN CARLO S. MEDINA**, RDC-1 Chairperson)

during the SORDC CIRCA 2017 at SR Paradise, Bauang, La Union on June 7, 2018

Public Servant Jack Lew once said,  
“There's no higher calling in terms of a  
career than public service”.

**W**hen I was elected as the city mayor of Vigan, I knew that I had to reciprocate the trust given to me by my fellow Bigueños - to make a difference in what I do to hopefully change the lives of my people. Unknowingly, a greater plan is about to unfold. A plan that will provide me a platform to serve not only my beloved Bigueños but all the people in the Ilocos Region.

I was surprised when I learned that I was appointed as the new RDC 1 Chairperson. As I told you when I delivered my very first State of the Region Address (SORA) last year, my appointment as the RDC 1 Chairperson did not sink into my systems right away.

Surely, the responsibilities of being the RDC chairperson is a challenge but then more than challenged **I WAS INSPIRED**. Inspired to expand our borders of opportunities to serve, to build and solidify more linkages, to reach out for inclusivity and to work as one to achieve our ideals and aspirations for our region's development.

Twenty - seventeen (2017) is a year where we had laid out our foundations and strategies for the

achievement of Ambisyon Natin 2040 through our Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2017-2022. As they say, the road towards development is never easy. We are bombarded with realities and situation such as our struggle to fight decent jobs, build infrastructure and generate market opportunities, provide health services to our people, make education more affordable and accessible... But, in spite of all these multifarious challenges in our midst, we have to be resilient and remain encouraged. Our passion to deliver service as public servants should never waver and should always remain strong until we have served our purpose.

As I speak today, allow me to summarize our accomplishments for the past year, and share with you what awaits us in the years ahead.

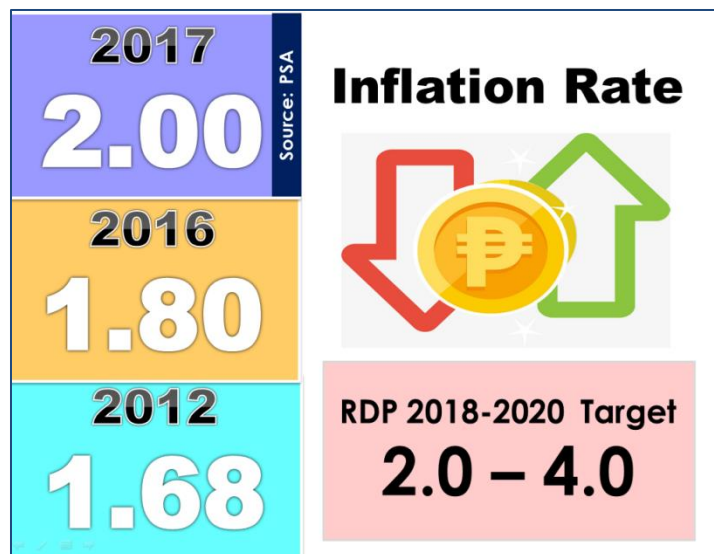
Let me start with the region's economic development.

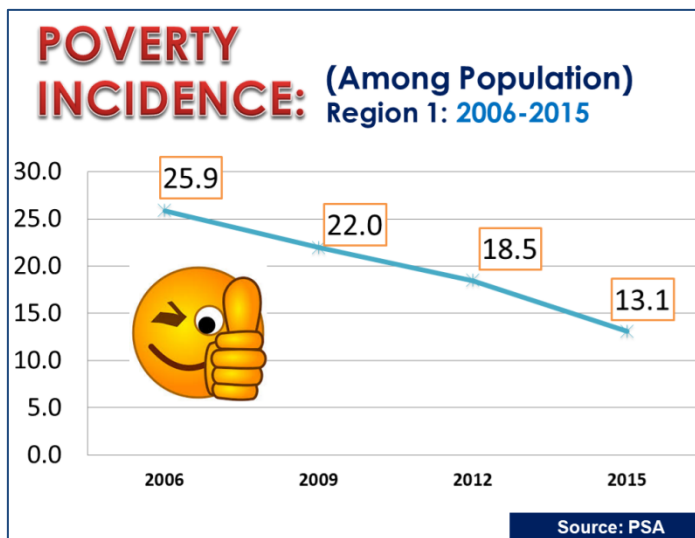


From a very low growth rate of about two percent in 2011, we were able to reach nearly nine percent growth rate in 2016. For 2017, our economy still grew but on a slower pace to almost six percent, falling just below our target in the RDP. The Service sector remains to be the main driver of growth in the region's economy as it accounted almost four percentage points of our growth followed by the Industry sector with around two percentage points and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery sector with approximately one percentage point.

Although we did not surpass or maintain a high growth for 2017, this should not be a reason for us to be disheartened. In fact, this should even fuel our vigor to double our efforts to finally hit our growth target for the next few years. By capitalizing more on government spending, better agri-fishery harvest, creating a favorable macro-economic environment particularly on inflation and investments and expanding our market to boost the manufacturing, construction and tourism sub-sectors, our economy will gain its economic momentum.

Over the past 6 years, Region 1 has maintained its low inflation rate, from a nearly two percent annual inflation rate in 2012 and in 2016 and finally reaching two percent in 2017. With the implementation of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion or the TRAIN Law this year, it is no surprise that inflation rate became higher as it reached almost five percent for the first quarter of 2018. Many of us would ask, "Until when do we experience price escalation?" But I think, the more important question is, "how do we intend to ease inflation to protect the most vulnerable sector of





our society – the poor and the informal economy workers. Our informal economy workers include independent, self-employed, small-scale producers, and distributors of goods and services, who are not covered by labor laws and might not have social protection. Thus, I call on our partners in the social protection sub-committee to act on social safety-net protection measures for those affected.

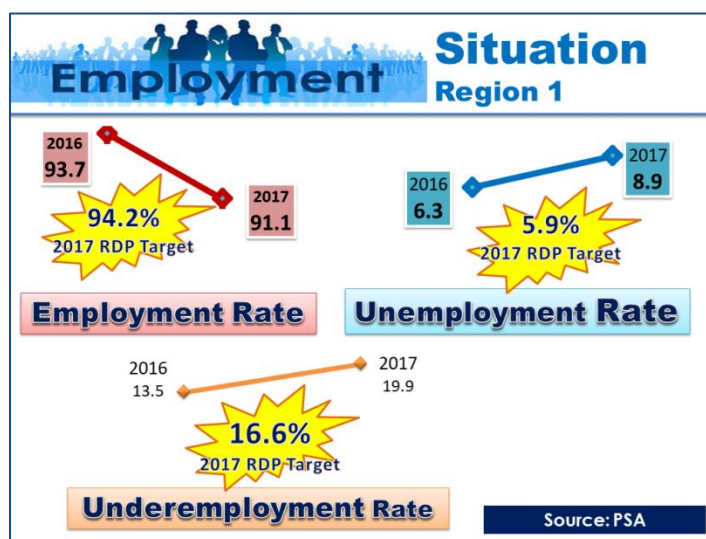
Our sound policies on poverty alleviation have made a great impact on the lives of our constituents. Over the years, the poverty situation in the region has improved. With a high poverty incidence among population of about 26 percent in 2006, it reduced to almost 13 percent as of 2015. Of course we will not be complacent and we will strive harder to reduce this number and attain the target on poverty incidence this year which is approximately eight percent.

One of our answers to poverty is providing decent jobs to our people. Statistics show that there are around 3 million individuals ages 15 and above who are in the labor force and ready to look for jobs in 2017.

Region 1 registered an average employment rate of about 91 percent for 2017 which is slightly lower than the nearly 94 percent target for 2017. The relatively high under-employment rate in the region close to 20 percent which is just about three percentage points behind the target and our unemployment rate which rose almost to 9 percent this year from around 7 percent in 2016 should be given attention.

We are one in realizing the goal to provide decent employment, job security and ending contractualization to our workforce. In celebration of the Labor Day this year, President Duterte signed an EO prohibiting illegal contractualization. We are hopeful that through this measure, we can move forward in providing better job security and better employment terms to our workers.

As we have presented our accomplishments at the macro-level, let me now focus on the accomplishments per sector.





## ECONOMIC SECTOR

### 1. AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is an important source of livelihood for many of us in Region 1. It involves tough work but it contributes to food security and health of our nation. Looking at the agricultural performance last year, we continue to be sufficient in all major food commodities as the value and volume of production still registered an increasing trend from 2011- 2017. On the average, the region's food sufficiency level registered at 165 percent in 2017, higher than the 159 percent registered level in 2016. The agricultural labor productivity improved from nearly 86 thousand in 2016 to around 103 thousand in 2017.

We are also glad to record a positive performance for the value and volume of agri-fishery production in 2017. The value of agri-fishery production increased from approximately 33 billion pesos in 2016 to around 34 billion pesos in 2017 while the volume of agri-fishery production also rose to almost 4 thousand metric tons in 2017.

Moreover, our region continued to exhibit advantage in the AFF sector as it ranked 4th in terms of rice and bangus production and 5th in corn production nationwide in 2017. I would like to commend the Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur for being hailed as the most outstanding quality corn achiever of the Philippines which brought the province a Hall of Fame award for 2017.

### FOOD SUFFICIENCY LEVEL, 2017, REGION 1

Commodity	Accomplishment		RDP Targets
	2016	2017	2017
Rice	179	185	180
Corn	191	237	191
Fruits	207	196	248
Rootcrops	107	110	108
Vegetables	166	171	171
Legumes	108	112	110
Meat	120	119	124
Fish	173		
Source: DA		Food sufficiency 165%	

Our advocacy campaign for crop insurance also paid off. We had a total of 164,771 insured farmers and fisherfolks in 2017, up by almost 60 percent compared in 2016 with only a total of 104,186. This means that more and more of our farmers are protected against losses caused by crop failure mostly due to various weather disturbances and climate-related disasters.

Relatedly, the value of agricultural and fishery production losses and damages due to weather and climate-related disasters dropped by nearly 99 percent.

We owe the upbeat performance of the AFF sector to the effective implementation of various programs. These programs include SIKAT SAKA, Agrarian Reform Community Connectivity and Economic Support Services or ARCESS, construction of farm-to-market roads, post-harvest facilities, irrigation facilities and agrarian productivity credit program, provision of extension and training services, complimented by LGU-led projects such as the construction of mango processing and livelihood center of San Carlos City,

Pangasinan, completion of municipal farmers training of Sta. Cruz, Ilocos Sur, provision of livelihood assistance of the province of Pangasinan, Integrated Farming System (IFS) loan assistance program of the province of Ilocos Norte and among others. With these, we give credits to our partners in the agriculture and fishery sector led by the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and our LGU partners.

Also last year, the RDC 1 has endorsed the Cacao Development Project in Region 1 to support the cacao farmers in the region and to implement the National Cacao Industry Roadmap that aims for a competitive and sustainable cacao industry for the country.

We are also mindful that when we work together, we can go farther. The conceptualization of the convergence initiative entitled, “Institutionalization of District-wide Agro-industrialization, Innovation, and Tourism” or IDAIT of our dear Congressman of the 1st District of Ilocos Sur and also former RDC 1 Chairperson Deogracias “DV” Savellano in partnership with the Department of Agriculture bring into life this principle. IDAIT is a strategy where various agencies will come together whether it is on agriculture, tourism or innovation and work together bringing in whatever support they can provide to ensure food security, prosperity and environmental sustainability.

In my previous SORA, I expressed my concern on the aging population of farmers and the lack of interest among the younger generation to engage in farming activities. In our Harmonized Region 1 Research and Development Agenda (HRRDA) 2017-2022 which was formulated also last year, we have

identified researches that tackled on the factors affecting the decline of enrollees in agricultural and fishery courses and on the development of design and production of new and low-cost technologies to improve productivity of farmers and fisherfolks. I urge our researchers to conduct studies on these topics so we can start to act and propose some policy recommendations to ensure the sustainability and productivity of our agri-sector and to make farming less labor intensive.

## 2. TOURISM

<b>VISITOR ARRIVALS</b>		
<b>Region 1</b>		
<b>Region/ Province</b>	<b>Accomplishment</b>	
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	2,090,830	2,382,903
<b>Domestic Tourists</b>	1,991,321	2,276,097
<b>Foreign Tourists</b>	99,509	106,806

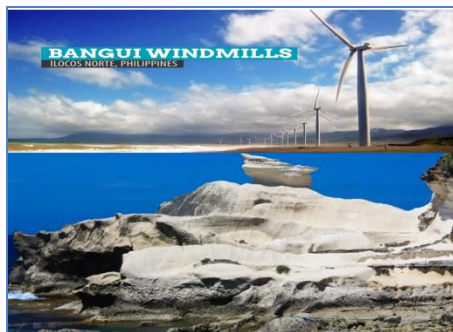


Source: DOT

We continue to reap a good harvest in our tourism industry as we surpassed our accomplishment last 2016 with a total of 2,382,903 tourist arrivals in 2017, higher than almost 13 percent. This is through the vigorous promotional activities of the government led by the Department of Tourism and our LGUs. The implementation of the DOT-DPWH Convergence Project resulted in improved connectivity to our tourism destination areas.

Our tourists were able to enjoy the adrenaline rush for an island hopping at the Hundred Islands, experienced riding the waves of San Juan Beach in





La Union and chased the cool and stunning waterfalls of Tangadan in San Gabriel, La Union, Aw-asen Falls in Sigay, Ilocos Sur and Kaangrian Falls, in Burgos Ilocos Norte and marveled the beauty of Bangui Windmills, Kapurpurawan Rock formation and many others. Religious pilgrims flocked to the miraculous Nuestra Señora del Santisimo Rosario de Manaoag and now our travelers can visit the newly installed 56-foot statue of Jesus Christ the Savior atop the Pilgrimage Island, in the Hundred Islands, Alaminos, Pangasinan. Vigan Calle Crisologo and heritage churches Nuestra Señora Church in Santa Maria and the St Augustine's Church of Paoay, Ilocos Norte serve as our pride in heritage and culture. We are proud to share that this year, MV L'AUSTRAL, an international cruise ship brought hundreds of tourists from Australia to the province of Ilocos Sur to experience the historic tourist destinations. We, in the local communities should continue to promote our heritage and culture. Embrace it as our identity.

The monumental hosting of the Region of the 2018 Palarong Pambansa, the largest sporting event in the Philippines, has also showcased what the region can offer as one of the country's best top destination choice.

The unfortunate case of Boracay came as a wake-up call for the tourism industry and as the government rehabilitates Boracay, we should take it as an opportune time to entice travelers to include Region 1 in their travel bucket list. Our white beaches in Patar, Bolinao and Surip in Bani both in Pangasinan and Saud in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte can readily compete with Boracay in terms of its beauty and crystal clear waters.

We are also exploring another fast growing segment of our tourism industry and that is agri-tourism. More people are now interested to visit our dragon fruit plantation in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, grape farm in Bauang, La Union and Sunflower Eco Park in Tayug, Pangasinan.



I believe that agri-tourism will become a profitable and sustainable sector thus, we need to support it through research and development efforts, promotional activities, and strengthened partnerships. The Magnificent Magic 7 (MM7) which was endorsed last year is a very good initiative towards the promotion of agri-tourism and convergence towards poverty reduction of the seven municipalities in Ilocos Sur namely Quirino, Sta. Cruz, Sugpon, Suyo, Tagudin, Alilem and Cervantes. We are happy to announce that most of the priority projects under MM7 specifically roads leading to various tourism sites were already on-going and some were proposed under the AIP of concerned LGUs and were already endorsed by the RDC 1.

With the influx of tourists, the accommodation and food industry will grow to cater the needs of our sightseers. Various food chains are starting to dock in our tourist destinations.

There is no denying that our tourism industry is becoming a lucrative sector and we are happy to note an increasing trend of tourist arrivals in the region. Yet, as planners and policy-makers who depend very much on statistics, we are faced with the reality that LGUs and tourism establishments have a very low compliance rate on submission of monthly tourism reports for the past five years as reported by DOT in one of the Regional Statistics Committee (RSC) meetings last year.

Thus, I call on the cooperation of all our stakeholders, especially our LGUs and tourism establishments to conscientiously submit monthly tourism report to DOT so we can make better plan

and decide to further advance our tourism industry.

Truly, if we continue to exert our efforts towards promoting our tourism sites, development is inevitable. I may have failed to mention some of them today but I know that we are in unison in promoting our region as the tourism powerhouse in northern Philippines!

### 3. TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Our Micro, Small and Medium-sized

Enterprises play a critical role in our economy. As an employment and value adding generator, they help us attain national and regional

development. Shortages in skills, poor management practices, inadequate workforce and training limit their productivity. We continue to provide interventions that will enable our MSMEs to become productive and competitive, and we do that through the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SET-UP) of DOST, Shared Service Facilities (SSF), Negosyo Centers of DTI and a lot more. In 2017, we noted an increase in the investments generated from around 0.5 billion pesos in 2016 to around 0.7 billion pesos in 2017. Our aim is to see our MSMEs participate in export market and we are happy to share that the region's export receipts significantly increased to about US\$51 million in 2017 from roughly US\$25 million in 2016, surpassing our plan target. Tobacco remains to be the main export driver in the region.

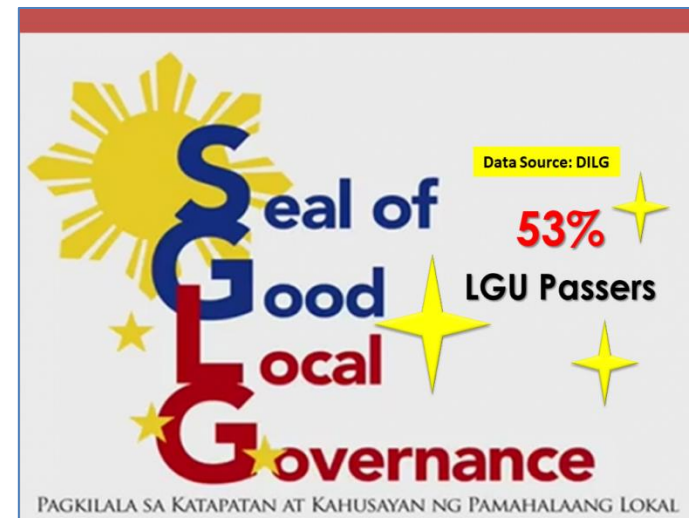
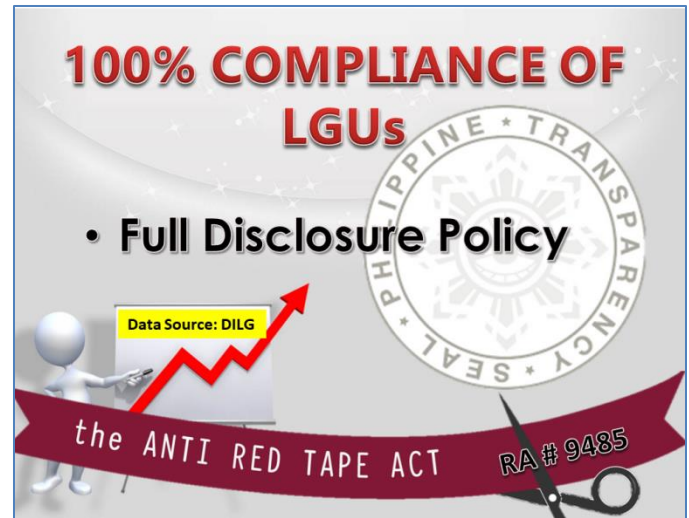
...MSME plays a critical role in economic development

## GOVERNANCE SECTOR

Transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency - these are just few of the elements of good governance. As in the previous years, we continue to strive for excellence in good governance by continued compliance of all LGUs in the Anti-Red Tape Act, and increased number of LGUs conferred with the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG). From an accomplishment rate of 35 percent in 2016, we now have a total of 53 percent of the total LGU passers in 2017. Since we are already 100 percent compliant to the Full Disclosure Policy in 2017, we should also endeavor to comply with the provisions of Executive Order No. 2 series of 2016 or the Freedom of Information which guarantees the right of the people to information on matters of public concern.

Talking about culture, we recognized the role of culture as a building block of the region's development as embodied in the RDP 2017-2022. Through the initiative of the Sub-Committee on Culture under the Governance Sectoral Committee, the 1st Regional Cultural Summit was held at Vigan City on December 8, 2017.

The occasion drew support of our stakeholders with the signing of the Manifesto of Commitment dubbed as Vigan City Declaration. The manifesto signifies the commitment of development partners in implementing different endeavors related to cultural preservation, protection and development as stipulated in our Ilocos RDP.





## Crime Solution Efficiency Rate, Region 1

Region/ Province	Accomplishment		RDP Target
	2016	2017	2017
Region 1	71.00	72.00	65.00



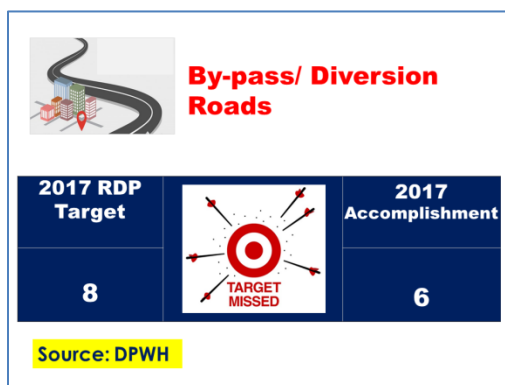
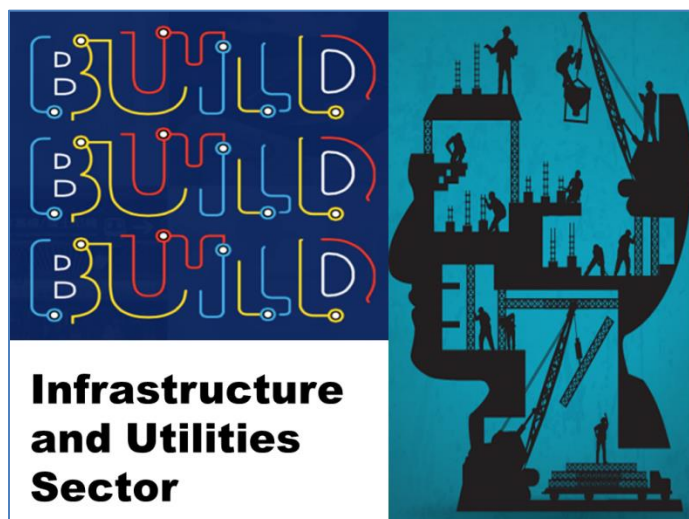
## CRIME CLEARANCE EFFICIENCY RATE, Region 1

Region/ Province	Accomplishment		RDP Target
	2016	2017	2017
Region 1	82.00	86.00	82.00



We are fortunate in the region to have a relatively peaceful and safe environment. Thanks to the intensified anti-criminality efforts of our stakeholders from the peace and order sector led by PNP, AFP and peacekeepers, among others, presence of functional Local Peace and Order Council (LPOC), and the implementation of Peace and Order and Public Safety Plan (POPSP) and other endeavors. Our statistics show an improved Crime Solution Efficiency Rate (CSER), Crime Clearance Efficiency Rate (CCER), decline in the total crime volume, non-index crime and index crime. Relatedly, we are also responsive to the call of the president to address the worsening problem of illegal drugs in the country. At this juncture, we would like to laud the efforts of Alaminos City as it was declared as the first drug-cleared city in the country in 2017 and the Province of Pangasinan for the construction of a two-hectare Pangasinan Reformation Center. I know all our LGUs are doing their part to implement their anti-illegal drug campaigns and advocacies.

In terms of the region's competitiveness, we are proud to say that we have improved from an average competitiveness score of nearly 27 points in 2016 to almost 35 points in 2017. The province of La Union, Ilocos Sur and Pangasinan ranked 12<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, respectively while Ilocos Norte ranked 34<sup>th</sup> out of the 72 ranked provinces in the country. Most of our cities also have improved in their competitiveness scores and rankings in 2017. For the years ahead, we hope to improve further our efforts to address the three pillars of competitiveness, namely: economic dynamism, government efficiency and infrastructure.



Moving further, the Build Build Build Program of the administration is now underway and we have seen its benefits in the region with the opening of the Binalonan Exit spanning up to Pozorrubio, Pangasinan and the extension of the Tarlac–Pangasinan–La Union Expressway or TPLEX up to Rosario, La Union, the construction for the widening of the MNR bridges, and By-pass roads in Urdaneta, Candon and Laoag City. We are also on road connectivity for industry and trade development as our projects on roads and infrastructure leading to manufacturing, trading and economic zones under the DTI-DPWH Roads Leveraging Linkages for Industry and Trade (ROLL-IT) Program which were proposed last year are already on-going this year.

We are also expectant that the TPLEX will not only be extended to San Fernando City in La Union but also to Ilocos Sur as the proponent submitted an offer to the DPWH to extend the expressway with an estimated stretch of 100 kilometers that will further ease travel time and transportation costs. Furthermore, we are hopeful that with the formulation of the Philippine Transport System Master Plan this year, our country will be able to develop an intermodal transport network and finally solve the notable problems besetting the sector such as traffic congestion, slow travel time, illegal parking, unsystematic transport design and a lot more.

We are likewise pleased to inform that a total of 55 LGUs benefited from the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) free wifi project.



## ENVIRONMENT SECTOR



Striking a balance between economic development and environmental protection is a strenuous endeavor. However, by practicing the principle of sustainable development, this is possible. Statistics show an improvement in overall quality of environment compared in 2016. Air quality was maintained at fair to good while the Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) level of our river systems, the Sinocalan-Dagupan River System and the Naguilian River System, continued to be lower than the threshold.

Thanks to the National Greening Program (NGP) of DENR and the adoption of the Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) by the LGUs, we have expanded our total areas planted from 6,703 hectares in 2016 to 9,899 in 2017. The survival rate is recorded at roughly 90 percent which means that 9 out of 10 seedlings we planted survived. Last year, we were able to close 16 open dumpsites. All in all, we already closed a total of 52 out of 125.

La Union has also continued its environmental sustainability program through the conduct of a search for the Cleanest, Safest and Greenest LGU to encourage its municipalities to promote environmental sustainability.

We are also making a proactive measure to ensure that our beaches will not suffer the same fate as Boracay. For this, the DENR created a task force to conduct coastal assessment to ensure our coast in the Ilocos Region is clean and safe.

### Air Quality

AREA	2017 Targets	2017 Accomplis hment	Remarks
			Attained
Ilocos Norte - Batac	Good	Good	
Ilocos Sur – Vigan	Fair	Fair	
La Union - SFC	Good	Good	
Pangasinan			
- Urdaneta	Fair	Good	
- Dagupan (PM2.5)	Fair	Fair	
- San Carlos	Fair	Fair	

Source: EMB

### Water Quality

BOD Level	2017 RDP Target	Attained	2017 Accomplishment
SDRS	≤7		6
NRS	≤7		2

Source: EMB

### Land Quality



**52 out of 125 open dumpsites were shut, 16 of these were closed in 2017**

2017 RDP Target

26 open dumpsites

Source: EMB

### LGUs with Forest Land Use Plans



2017 RDP Target	Attained	2017 Accomplishment
12		12

Source: DENR



## SOCIAL SECTOR

The provision of basic social services is also given much attention in the region specifically in terms of health, education, housing and social welfare.

On health, we are saddened by the controversy surrounding the Dengvaxia immunization program affecting in general the Immunization Program of the government. Hence resulted to the low proportion of children getting full immunization from nearly 76 percent in 2016 to around 68 percent in 2017. Nonetheless, we will not cease in our advocacies to attain our yearly plan target of 95 percent.

Other relevant indicators such as infant, under-five and maternal mortality rates, proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, prevalence of malnutrition among children under 5 years old, and skilled health personnel to population ratio have improved. These are made possible through the continuous and collaborative efforts in the implementation of Maternal, Newborn, Child Health, & Nutrition (MNCHN) Program, Health Facilities Enhancement Program, deployment of Human Resource for Health (HRH), and the expansion of the Service Delivery Network (SDN) in the region that allowed more men and women, especially the adolescents, to reach health facilities and avail of the needed services such as nutrition, reproductive health, and other services related to health emergency response.

We are also successful in reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy in the region, from almost 13 percent in 2016 down to around 10 percent in 2017. This was achieved through the collaborative interventions done by local government units, concerned regional line agencies, and civil society organizations. However, we still need to work together in achieving the plan target of reducing the teenage pregnancy rate to 4 percent. We also make health services accessible to our people. In 2017, we constructed two new rural health units (RHUs) and 25 barangay health stations (BHS) through the Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP) of the Department of Health (DOH).

On the other hand, we are happy to report that we achieved most of the targets under basic education. These include completion rate, cohort survival rate, drop-out rate and school leavers rate. The K+12 program also has completed its first batch of graduates for this year. The challenge now is to track whether these graduates who opted to seek for employment get absorbed in the labor market. Through the partnership between DepEd and DPWH, we constructed a total of 2,063 new classrooms in 2017 in addition to the 2,644 classrooms in 2016. Although this performance is slightly lower than the 2016 performance and the 2017 target, our region is getting closer in addressing the issue on lack of classrooms.

Another important highlight in the education sector is the enactment of the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act last year. We are very happy to inform that in the region, all our six State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and four





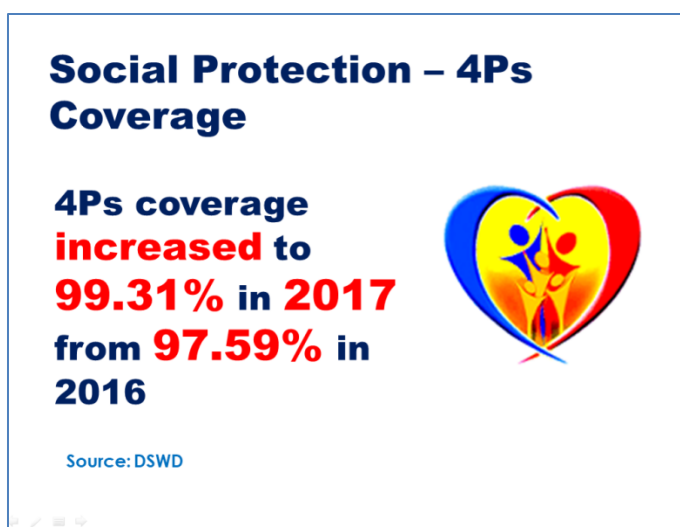
still need to address the issues in the sector such as the increasing housing backlogs, creation of Local Housing Board, inadequate titled lands for government housing programs and others.

The root cause of vulnerability is poverty. That is why we are taking our efforts to ensure that the poor and marginalized members of our society are covered by social insurance. In 2017, around 97 percent of 4,968,210 (members and dependents) of the 5,136,129 projected population in Region 1 for 2017 are financially protected from high health cost. The continuing implementation of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program also increased close to 100 in 2017 from almost 98 percent in 2016.

We had laid the foundation of our aims and aspirations as embodied in the Ambisyon Natin 2040 and translated into tangible strategies through the RDP 2017-2022. We had also come up with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Roadmap for all sectors, that contains strategies and programs, projects and activities to ensure that we can implement and track the attainment of our international commitment.

local colleges and universities (LCUs), namely: Ilocos Sur Community College, University of Eastern Pangasinan, Binalatongan Community College and Urdaneta City University will implement the free tuition for the coming school year. In terms of technical education, we have seen an increase in the total enrollment in TVET by almost 3 percent in 2017 recording a total of 153,146 enrollees, exceeding the annual plan target of 151,109 enrollees. This is also true for the number of total TVET graduates, which posted an increase in 2017 by about 4 percent. By providing better access to higher education and skills and technical education, we are forming a bridge for a dream to become a reality.

In the housing sector, all 125 target LGUs in the region had already formulated their Local Shelter Plan (LSP) in 2017. A total of 830 households in the region were provided with social housing assistance thru the Resettlement Assistance Program, Home Material Assistance Program, and the Settlement Upgrading program. However, we





We also made a stand as one region to protect the welfare of our cooperative sector, as we submitted our position to the Congress and the Senate on the proposed removal of the 12 percent VAT exemption of cooperatives under the tax reform package. Fortunately, in the TRAIN Law, the removal of the 12-percent VAT exemption of cooperatives is excluded. At this point, it is proper to commend our PSRs for taking the cudgels for this concern.

All these achievements will not be realized if not for our concerted and deliberate efforts. Yet, the tasks that lie ahead of us are still enormous. As our organization gets bigger for embracing PEZA, DBP and CDA as additional members of the RDC 1 in 2017, we at the same time get stronger. Stronger and more holistic to respond, as we have strengthened also our structure through the operationalization of the sub-committee on Migration and Development under the Regional Social Development Committee (RSDC) this year to address the concerns of our Filipino overseas in the region.

Surely, we will not stop until we have delivered the promise to provide our constituents with equitable economic opportunities and make Region 1 and as home for competitive, happy, resilient people and earning a mark as the “agribusiness and tourism hub in Northern Philippines”.

Together, we will bring that promise to our people, that is our obligation and commitment. That is our purpose as a public servants - a legacy that we can pass on to our children and the future generation.



# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

## RDC-1 Chair meets Committee Chairpersons

*by: John F. Gagucas*

In a rare occasion, the Regional Development Council (RDC) - 1 Chairperson Mayor Juan Carlo S. Medina of Vigan City met the Councils Sectoral, Sub Committee and Support Committee Chairpersons right after the 1<sup>st</sup> RDC-1 Regular Meeting last 21 March 2018. The meeting served as a venue for the RDC-1 Chairperson to get to know more his colleagues in the RDC.

During the meeting, chairpersons presented their respective CY 2017 committee accomplishments and attendance monitoring report, and CY 2018 work programs. Likewise, they presented some issues concerning their committees specifically on improving the attendance of their members to meetings and getting their support in the implementation of their planned activities.

Furthermore, Medina presented the major accomplishments of the RDC such as the formulation of the RDP and its corresponding Results Matrices, Regional Development and Investment Program 2017-2022, Harmonized Region 1 Research and Development Agenda 2017-2022, Harmonized RDP and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Ilocos Region Roadmap 2017-2019, FY 2018 Regional Budget Review and Conference, review and endorsement of the Lower Agno River Irrigation System Improvement Project (LARISIP) to NEDA Board-Investment Coordination Committee together with 17 proposed projects for possible funding under the ER 1-94 Share of the region, approval of project monitoring reports, staging of the State of the Region's Development Conference, conduct of press conferences and advocacy activities, provision of various technical assistance to stakeholders, and capability-building, among others.



Said activity will be done on an annual basis or as needed to tackle issues within the Council.

## **RDC-1 in its 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr Meeting**

*by: John F. Gagucas*

Attuned with the various works and emerging challenges in Region 1, the Regional Development Council 1 spearheaded by RDC-1 Chairperson Mayor Juan Carlo S. Medina conducted its 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Full Council Meeting at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Convention Hall on June 27, 2018. The meeting covered various works and agenda items along sectoral concerns.

As a result, the body approved the creation of the Investment Promotions Group (IPG) and adoption of the action plan. The IPG will serve as an institutional support mechanism to accelerate the development and promotion of the region's competitive advantage on major strategic commodities and tourism products through intensified investment activities in the region. The body also approved the implementation of the Basic Oral Health Care for 12-71 months old program under the Regional Social Development Committee and the Regional Statistical Development Program (RSDP) 2018-2023 of Region 1. The RSDP is essential towards having a unified, responsive, secured and gender-sensitive regional statistical system towards an informed and responsible planning and evidence-based decision-making in all spheres of development.

Cognizant to the crucial role of Information and Communications Technology in development, the RDC-1 favorably endorsed the request of the Department of Information and Communications Technology for stakeholder support in the implementation of its priority programs on broadband infrastructure. These include the Secure GovNet, Regional GovNet and Pipol Konek projects that aim to ensure the availability and accessibility of ICT services to enhance key public services.

Further, the body endorsed the 65 proposed projects under the Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Public Works and Highways convergence program on road connectivity also known as Roads Leveraging Linkages for Industry and Trade (ROLL IT) Convergence Program, and the 86 proposed projects under the Department of Tourism (DOT) – DPWH convergence program on enhancing tourism access. Social preparation, road right of way, safety, environment and households affected by the projects were among the concerns that surfaced during the discussion. However, according to the concerned agencies, these were already considered in the groundworks of the project proposals.

Moreover, with the increasing population and rapid motorization, and high incidence of untoward traffic incidents resulting to damages to properties and fatalities in the region, the body saw the need for the creation of Traffic Management Strategy, of which a resolution was duly approved. This also included its action plan and the creation of a Technical Working Group (TWG). Relative to that is the revival of the Tri-City Ferry System that also aims to address traffic congestion in the Region 1 aside from spurring and strengthening economic, tourism and cultural ties in the region. The project which was first conceptualized in 2008 includes the cities of Alaminos and Dagupan in Pangasinan, and San Fernando in La Union. The inclusion of private sector representatives to form part of the TWG members in the two projects will be considered as discussed in the meeting.

During the meeting, the participants were apprised on the development updates in the Poro Point Freeport Zone in San Fernando City and on the New Generation Currency Coin Series of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. Other matters included the endorsement of the proposed construction of Philippine Statistics Authority



– Ilocos Sur Provincial Building for inclusion in the FY 2019 Budget Proposal of the Philippine Statistics Authority.

Subsequently, the RDC-1 awarded Mr. Paul Stanley Ramos as the winner for the RDC-1 Logo Making Contest.

Overall, the RDC-1 approved six resolutions, one for ratification and shall endorse three resolutions to respective concerned agencies and entities.

Participants during the meeting include the RDC-1 Officials and its Sectoral and Support Committee Chairpersons, regional line agencies, local government units, private sector representatives and



## **Revival of the Tri-Ferry System connecting the cities of Dagupan, Alaminos and San Fernando in La Union being pushed**

*by: Marissa Gerospe*

The Tri-Ferry system was first conceptualized in 2008 by officials of the three cities with the support of the DOT Region 1 and the Regional Development Council (RDC) of Region 1. It aims to physically link the three cities through the establishment of a ferry system within the Lingayen Gulf, which could be linked later on to other ports in the region like the Currimaog Port in Ilocos Norte which already has a cruise ship berth; and the ports of Subic and Manila.

Last 13 June 2018, Mayor Belen T. Fernandez of



Meeting on the revival of the Tri-Ferry System at Dagupan City, Pangasinan on June 13, 2018.

Dagupan City hosted a meeting at the Stadia VIP Room in Lucao, Dagupan City on the possible revival of the Tri-City Ferry System. Mayor Arthur Celeste of Alaminos City, Engineer Reyzalina Cristobal, acting City Planning and Development Coordinator of the City of San Fernando, Director Martin Valera of the DOT Region 1 Office and officials and staff of the NEDA led by Assistant Secretary for Regional Development Mercedita Sombilla and Assistant Regional Director Donald James Gawe of the National Economic and Development Authority Regional Office 1 (NEDA RO 1) attended the meeting.

Director Martin Valera presented a brief background of the proposed project and the possible steps which could be undertaken to realize the project. He emphasized the need for a feasibility study to ascertain the project's financial, economic and technical viability. He said that the ferry system did not materialize then because of the lack of private sector interest on the project.

Asec Sombilla informed the group that the NEDA has a feasibility study fund which could be tapped to study the economic, financial and technical viability of the

ferry system especially in light of the already developed road network connecting the 3 cities. She said that the ferry system could turn out to be more expensive for prospective users compared to land transport. Asec Sombilla also suggested that the ferry system can be undertaken through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP). The government counterpart will be the construction of the ports while the private sector could be tapped to operate the ferry system.

Asec Sombilla requested the local officials present to prepare a proposal for the revival of the ferry system project and submit the same to the NEDA Region 1 Office for review and evaluation prior to further action by the RDC-1. She also requested Director Valera and the NEDA RO1 to provide technical assistance in the preparation of the proposal.

Mayor Celeste volunteered to host the next meeting in Alaminos City to discuss the proposal to revive the proposed ferry system. He emphasized the need for all three mayors to work closely together and to personally attend scheduled meetings for faster decision-making about the project.



## **NEDA RO1 hosts PPP Knowledge Corner**

*by: John F. Gagucas*

“We have big goals and we do not want development planners to lose sight of these goals! We want to help regions fund their investment pipelines contained in their respective Regional Development Investment Programs,” stressed Usec. Adoracion Navarro of NEDA



Usec. Adoracion Navarro during the launching of the PPP Knowledge Center at NEDA Regional Office 1 on June 14, 2018.

during the establishment of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) Knowledge corner to its new host, the NEDA Regional Office 1, San Fernando City, La Union on June 14, 2018.

Navarro added that the establishment of PPP Knowledge corner in each region is a nationwide initiative to help regions accelerate investment and ease pressure on public finance that will redound to inclusive development. She emphasized that such activity aims to inspire regional stakeholders to take action and pursue PPPs that will positively improve the delivery of basic services, construct vital infrastructure projects, generate livelihood and eventually bring progress to the people.

Further, Dir. Maria Theresa L. Laranang of the PPP Center said that the activity is timely and relevant as the entire nation pushes towards achieving a strongly rooted, comfortable and secure life for all Filipinos as embodied in the Ambisyon Natin 2040. She also mentioned that the government is intensifying its development efforts, with infrastructure at its core and



when actively tapped, PPPs at the local government level contribute in pursuing long-term economic growth and advancement. Likewise, the collaboration between the PPP Center and the NEDA will help to expand the use of PPPs by local government units (LGUs).

During the event, Ms. Caroline Castro of NEDA Region 1 presented the Regional Development Investment Priorities of Region 1 which includes the Extension of the TPLEX from San Fernando City to Ilocos Sur, Construction of IT Building for BPO and Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) site in Ilocos Norte, Sual Commercial Seaport (Phase II and III), Tri-City Ferry System, Establishment of a sewerage and septage treatment facility, and processing plants, among others.

The undertaking was highlighted by a ribbon cutting of the PPP Knowledge Corner and simultaneously by the unveiling of the Regional Development Knowledge Center (RDKC). The RDKC is a repository and access point of data and information on development concerns that aims to bring knowledge assets to the region's stakeholders. It also caters to the data and information needs of program implementers, policy makers, students, researchers and development advocates. It can be recalled that the NEDA RO1 launched its first RDKC Satellite at DMMMSU-Mid-La Union Campus, Main Library on May 28, 2018. Both the PPP Knowledge Corner and the RDKC aim to provide relevant information to our stakeholders that will aid them in planning, programming and decision-making processes.

Participants during the event were representatives from various local government units, regional line agencies, PPP center staff and the NEDA RO1 Staff.



The physical location of the PPP Knowledge Corner at NEDA Regional Office 1.



Usec. Adoracion Navarro (left) together with Dir. Maria Theresa Laranang (right) led the ribbon-cutting during the PPP KC launching).



The Regional Development Knowledge Center located at NEDA Regional Office Library.



# SNAPSHOTS



Representatives from the Municipality of Dumalneg, Ilocos Norte with NGO partner Kalipunan ng Liping Pilipina (KALIPI) with program Bilag na Babbai ka Dumalneg (Empowered Women of Dumalneg) Program receive award as Champion in the Search for Best NGO-LGU Partnership.



Friends from media actively participated in the press conference right after the delivery of the State of the Region Address of the RDC-1 Chairperson. Their questions revolved around the speech and other controversial issues in the country and in the region.



Signing of PCW-RGADC Partnership Agreement



*"To be able to help and serve others selflessly without expectation of material reward is to me, ...the highest form of prayer to God!"*

**Maria C. Ang**, Most Outstanding Volunteer National Awardee shared her inspiring story on VOLUNTEERISM and the Values in Life during the SORDC CIRCA 2017.



# USEC. NAVARRO'S PRICELESS VISIT TO REGION 1



Usec. Adoracion Navarro together with NEDA Region 1 officials met with the officials of Mariano Marcos Memorial State University in Batac City, Ilocos Norte and the University of Northern Philippines in Vigan City, and participated in the brainstorming session on the tobacco industry with the National Tobacco Administration in their Candon City branch last May 27-28, 2018. The visit was a rapid appraisal of Region 1's development initiatives, potentials and possible hindrances in achieving the Regional Development Plan 2017-2022. They consulted with development experts and key stakeholders of the region and conducted field observations to some of the major projects.



NEDA RO1 and DMMMSU ink partnership for Satellite Regional Development Knowledge Center at DMMMSU-MLUC, Main Library, San Fernando City, La Union on May 28, 2018. The MOA signing was led by NEDA RO1 Regional Director, Nestor Rillon and DMMMSU President, Benjamin Sapitula. Witnessed by NEDA Undersecretary Adoracion Navarro, DMMMSU-MLUC Chancellor Paulito Nisperos, NEDA RO1 ARD Donald James Gawe, and NEDA RO1 & DMMMSU-MLUC staff and faculty.



Usec. Adoracion Navarro speaks before the local planners in Region 1 during the NEDA RO1 Local Planners Link meeting in the province of La Union on May 29, 2018. She emphasized that her visit in Region 1 made her realize that entities in the region are good in optimizing resources leading to productivity. She likewise emphasized that her 3-day visit in the region is more of a "Malasakit Visit" rather than an assessment or validation visit of some programs and projects. She also saw the need to help border municipalities in the region so that no one will be left behind in the country's quest for development.





# **Malasakit Pagbabago Patuloy na Pag-unlad**

*A friendly reminder from*  
**Regional Development Council-1**  
**NEDA Regional Office 1**



## **AMBISYON NATIN 2040**

**See you as it happens...**