



2023 Central Visayas Regional Development Report

Preliminary Report



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Message



One of the primary functions of the RDR is to identify lagging sectors and sub-sectors, pinpointing the areas encountering development gaps. This analysis enables us to prioritize these sectors, ensuring that public resources are targeted towards addressing implementation challenges. By doing so, we can effectively lead these sectors towards achieving their objectives, ultimately delivering public services more efficiently and effectively.

As we navigate the intricate landscape of regional development, the RDR becomes a compass guiding us towards informed decision-making and impactful interventions. It is through the collective dedication and collaboration of our partners that we continue to make strides towards a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous Central Visayas.

I extend my gratitude to all stakeholders for their unwavering commitment and support. Together, let us leverage the insights gained from the 2023 RDR to propel our region towards even greater heights in the years to come.

Central Visayas, SIETE TA!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ERIC ARISTOTLE C. AUMENTADO".

ERIC ARISTOTLE C. AUMENTADO
Governor, Province of Bohol and
Chairperson, Regional Development Council 7

I am pleased to present the 2023 Central Visayas Regional Development Report (RDR), an annual assessment that reflects our region's journey towards inclusive growth and poverty reduction. This report delves into the socio-economic performance of Region VII, offering a detailed analysis of our achievements based on the 2023 targets and commitments outlined in the Central Visayas Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2023-2028.

Throughout the year, our collective efforts have been directed towards realizing inclusive growth, ensuring that the benefits of development reach every corner of our region. The RDR serves as a crucial tool, providing insights into our progress across various sectors, including macroeconomics, governance, economy, social services, and infrastructure.

The meticulous analysis of key indicators within the RDR allows us to assess the extent to which our region has met the targets and commitments set forth in the RDP. By comparing these achievements to the previous year's accomplishments, we gain valuable insights into our strengths and areas that may require further attention.

Foreword



It is with great pleasure to share the Central Visayas Regional Development Report (RDR) for the year 2023, a document that has been put together by the RDC 7 Secretariat in collaboration with key stakeholders in the region such as the regional line agencies, local government units, the state universities and colleges and the private sector. This report serves not only as a comprehensive overview of the region's economic, social, and environmental landscape but also as a faithful tracker of where we are now in terms of realizing the goals and strategies prioritized in our CV-RDP.

As we navigate through the current state of the region's economy and the assessment of the end-of-plan targets, we witness our progress and resilience that have defined Central Visayas amidst global uncertainties.

In Chapter 2, Propelling Economic Transformation and Growth, the commitment to *Promote Financial Inclusion and Improve Public Financial Management* establishes a strong foundation, recognizing the integral role of a robust financial system in fostering economic growth. Simultaneously, emphasis is placed on enhancing the region's business climate, featuring a multifaceted approach that includes *Promoting Trade and Investments*

and a comprehensive effort to *Expand and Upgrade Infrastructure*. The overarching theme encompasses strategies to *Modernize Agriculture and Agribusiness, Revitalize Industry, Reinvigorate Services, and Advance R&D Technology and Innovation*.

Chapter 3 focuses on Promoting Social Development and Transformation. Key initiatives include *Advancing Universal Healthcare and Nutrition, Improving Access to Quality Education towards Learning Recovery, Building Sustainable Settlements and Well-planned Communities, Increasing Income Earning Ability towards Quality Employment and Livelihood, and Sustaining the Provision of Social Safety Nets*. These efforts underscore the region's dedication to inclusive social development.

Chapter 4, Paving the Way Towards Sustainable Progress through Institutional Transformation and Climate Action serves as a compass for *Paving the Way Towards Sustainable Progress through Institutional Transformation and Climate Action*. The region's commitment to environmental stewardship and efficient governance is evident in these ongoing efforts.

Chapter 5, Advancing the National Interest towards Peace and Prosperity, tackles initiatives to *Advancing the National Interest towards Peace and Prosperity*. This segment highlights the region's pivotal role in *Securing and Safeguarding the Nation*, ensuring Peace and Security, and enhancing the *Administration of Justice*.

This 2023 report is the first of a series of annual RDRs intended to assess the performance of the region vis-à-vis the CV-RDP 2023-2028. It is crucial to regularly monitor our performance as a region to provide insights into our next steps and our future interventions so that we can be on track as planned. As we collectively embark on this journey, let us not lose sight of our development vision as embodied in the *Ambisyon Natin* – that of living a *Matatag, Maginhawa at Panatag na Buhay* by 2040.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JENNIFER C. BRENA".

JENNIFER C. BRENA, ENP
Regional Director, NEDA 7 and
Vice-Chair, Regional Development Council 7



Cebu-Cordova Link Expressway
Source: CCLEC

CHAPTER 1

Regional Development Report 2023 Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the socio-economic situationer of Central Visayas as of the third quarter of 2023 and an overall assessment of the headline targets on inflation, employment, and poverty incidence vis-à-vis the 2023 latest accomplishments. It also presents the development trends and key policy directions and strategies for 2024-2025 anchored on the approved Regional Development Council 7 Top 5 Priority Strategies for 2023-2025. Significantly, the strategic directions are also aligned with the Marcos Administration's national thrust of transformation towards a *Bagong Pilipinas* (New Philippines).

Current Socio-economic Situationer, Assessment of the End-of-Plan Targets and Key Policy Directions and Strategies

Latest 2023 indicators point to Region 7 steadily regaining the growth momentum that was disrupted by COVID-19

The region's inflation continued to ease and to move closer towards the high-end inflation target of the government of 4.0 percent. Labor market conditions improved with all employment indicators showing progress. The better performance of the region was facilitated by sustained efforts to fully reopen the economy, increase productivity, boost job-generating investments, improve the region's connectivity, bolster consumer confidence, and streamline processes. Meanwhile, risks to higher economic growth of the region include the El Niño and other weather disturbances and threats from animal and plant diseases that could affect agriculture production, and sluggish global economic growth that could slow down trade and investments in the region.

Current Socio-economic Situationer

Headline inflation rate cools down

The region's inflation continued to ease in the third quarter of 2023. It hovered around the high-end inflation target of the government of 4.0 percent in September 2023 (*see Figure .1*). Average inflation rate of the region from January to September 2023 was 5.5 percent. This was down from the 6.0 percent average inflation recorded in the same period last year. The rate was also lower than the national average in the 9-month period of 6.6 percent.

The top three commodity groups with the highest average inflation rate in the third quarter of 2023 were: alcoholic beverage and tobacco (10.4 percent); education (6.0 percent); and, food and non-alcoholic beverages (5.5 percent). For three straight quarters, alcoholic beverage and tobacco had the highest average inflation rate among the 13 commodity groups. Likewise, food and non-alcoholic beverages recorded the third highest inflation for three quarters in a row.

**Figure 1.1 Inflation Rates, Central Visayas, January 2022 to September 2023
(2018=100)**



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Eight commodity groups led by housing/utilities/gas and alcoholic beverage/tobacco recorded slower inflation in the third quarter of 2023 vis-à-vis the second quarter of 2023. Only two commodity groups (education and personal care) saw a slight acceleration in inflation in the third quarter of 2023 compared to the previous quarter. Health's inflation remained unchanged, while transport saw prices tumble for two quarters in a row.

Food inflation likewise continued to slow down in the third quarter of 2023. Food inflation averaged 5.4 percent, down from 6.6 percent in the previous quarter as most food items registered lower inflation. Corn saw prices plummet for the second straight quarter at -8.9 percent. Substantial decline in the inflation were likewise recorded by oils & fats, sugar, fruits & nuts, and meat.

The top three food items with the highest inflation rates in the third quarter of 2023 were vegetables (18.4 percent), sugar (14.5 percent), and flour, bread & pasta products (10.5 percent). In the case of rice, rice's inflation accelerated to 8.7 percent in the third quarter of 2023 from 3.6 percent in the previous quarter. The month of September saw rice's inflation registering double digit at 14.7 percent, or about double the inflation in August.

Except for Mandaue City, all provinces and highly urbanized cities (HUCs) in Central Visayas recorded lower inflation in the third quarter of 2023 relative to the previous quarter. Negros Oriental had the highest inflation rate at 6.6 percent among the provinces and HUCs in the region. On the other hand, Lapu-Lapu City posted the lowest inflation rate (2.4 percent) in the third quarter of 2023.

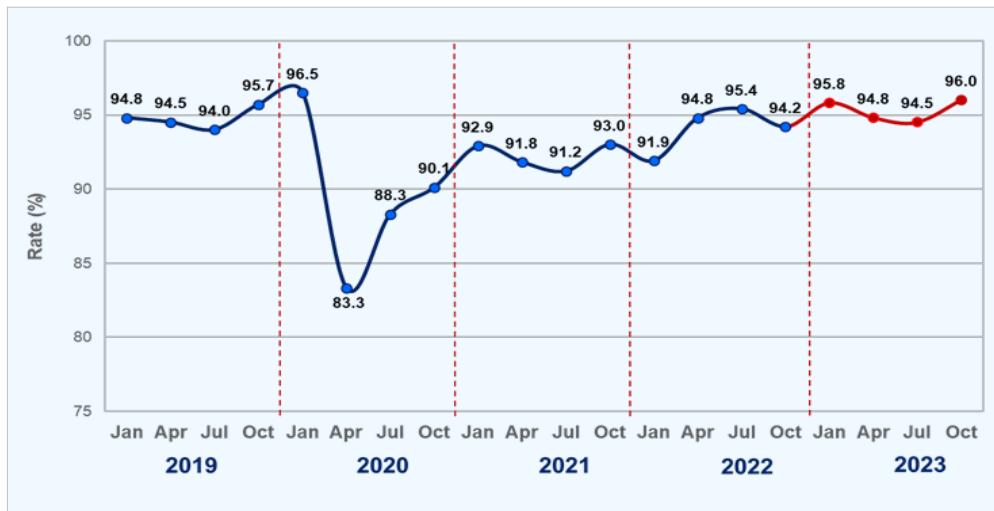
The labor market reveals signs of progress

The region's labor market in October 2023 was the most upbeat as employment, unemployment, and underemployment rates bested previous quarters' figures.

The region's employment rate rose to 96.0 percent in October 2023, the highest recorded by the region since the start of the pandemic. This is so as the regional economy fully re-opened and consumer confidence remained high. This translates to about 3.65 million employed persons in the region in October 2023 or 101,119 more than the number in October 2022 and 377,437 more than the figure in July 2023 (*see Figure*).

With higher employment in October 2023, the unemployment rate of the region fell to its lowest since the pandemic started at 4.0 percent. The rate was lower than the region's target unemployment rate in 2023 of 5.6-6.2 percent.

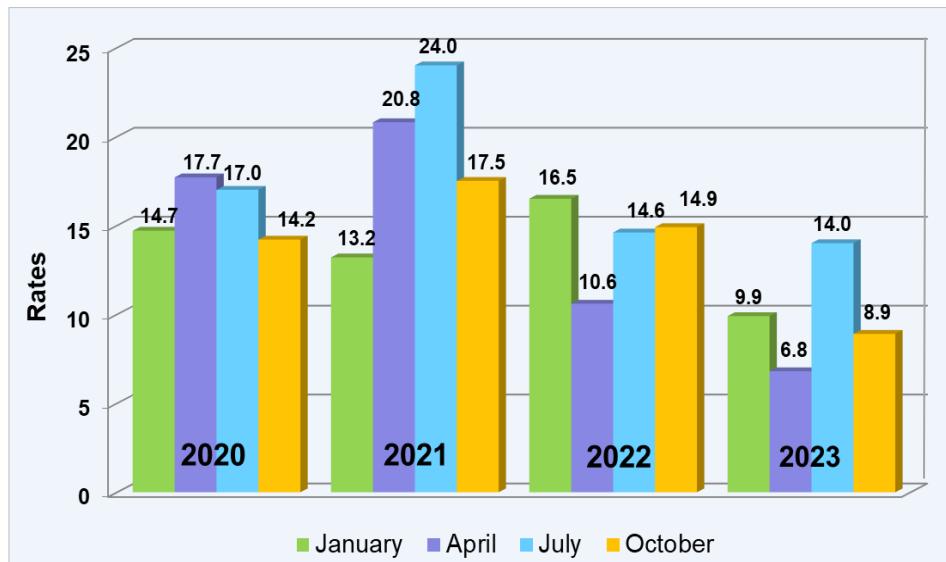
Figure 1.2 Employment Rates, Central Visayas, January 2019 - October 2023



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Underemployment in the region, or the proportion of employed workers who wanted more hours of work, returned to single digit rate in October 2023 after registering double digit ratio in July 2023. The region's underemployment rate in October 2023 was recorded at 8.9 percent, significantly down from 14.9 percent in the same period in 2022 as less people worked under part-time arrangements. It was also much lower and better than the pre-pandemic rate (2019) of 12.3 percent. This translates to 324,147 underemployed workers in the region in October 2023 or 204,088 less than the number in the previous year (*see Figure*).

Figure 1.3 Underemployment Rates, Central Visayas, January 2020 - October 2023



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Total investments continue to rise

The region continued to receive investment commitments from both foreign and domestic nationals in the third quarter of 2023. Total approved investments in the region reached PhP4.88 billion, which was 46 percent higher than the worth of investments approved for the region in the third quarter of last year. This arose out of a surge in foreign investments even as domestic investments declined (*see Figure 1.*).

**Figure 1.4 Total Approved Investments by Source at Current Prices
Third Quarter: 2022 and 2023**



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Foreign investors were more optimistic of the regional economy in the third quarter of 2023 as foreign investments reached PhP3.87 billion. This was more than 13 times the worth of investments received by the region in the third quarter of last year. The amount constituted 79 percent of total approved investments of the region for the quarter. This contrasted with the previous year's third quarter performance wherein local investments accounted for a lion's share of total investments in the region for the period.

Investments of Filipino nationals in July-September 2023 amounted to only PhP1.02 billion. The total was down by 67 percent from the previous year's third quarter total of PhP3.05 billion.

Year-to-date (January-September 2023), total investments in the region were more than three times higher than 2022's investments for the nine-month period. Total investments in January-September 2023 amounted to PhP36.16 billion, up from PhP9.61 billion in the same period of last year. The implementation of the economic liberalization laws that were recently enacted by Congress, such as the Foreign Investment Act, Public Service Act, and Retail Trade Liberalization Act, could have boosted investments in Central Visayas.

Poverty statistics initially decline

Preliminary poverty statistics for the first semester of 2023 reveal that poverty incidence among the population and families fell from their 2021 levels. Poverty incidence among population in the region is down to 31 percent or two percentage points lower than the reported first semester level in 2021, at 33 percent. In terms of population, this means that out of the 2.6 million people classified as poor in 2021, this is now down to 2.5 million people or roughly 100,000 persons getting out of poverty as of the first semester of 2023. With respect to food subsistence, close to 200,000 persons were declared as non-food poor from 2021 levels that is from 1.319 million in 2021 to 1.128 million in 2023.

Key human and social-related statistics continue to improve

Maternal mortality ratio fell to 37.64 per 100,000 livebirths from 50.62 per 100,000 livebirths in 2022 which means that mothers in Central Visayas showed improved health-seeking behavior. With respect to health and nutrition literacy, an improvement was observed for the prevalence rate of stunted children ages 0-59 months from 8.5 percent in 2022 to 7.2 percent in 2023 was recorded while prevalence rate of wasted children ages 0-59 months decreased from 2.2 percent to 1.4 percent for the same period. Moreover, in terms of the proportion of households with access to safe water supply, an improvement of the proportion of households accessing safe and clean domestic water supply of 70.27 percent in 2023 as compared to 65.01 percent in 2022.

Assessment of the End-of-Plan Targets

The Central Visayas RDP for the period 2023-2028 is guided by the headline targets that aim to reduce poverty and attain high and sustainable growth. Below gives an assessment of how the region fared alongside end of plan targets.

End-of-Plan Targets (2028)



6.8 - 8.5%
GRDP Growth



2.0 - 4.0%
Inflation Rate



4.5 – 5.0%
Unemployment Rate



10.5%
Poverty Incidence

2022 GRDP growth rate within target range

The growth of the regional economy of Central Visayas accelerated from 5.4% growth achieved in 2021 to 7.6% in 2022. The regional economy was slightly over the 2019 pre-pandemic level at P1.254Trillion compared to P1.287Trillion in 2022 at constant prices. As a result, Central Visayas maintained its rank as the fourth largest regional economy in the country, accounting for 6.5% of the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Among the sectors, the highest growth rate was recorded by Accommodation and Food Service activities at 47.2%. This is followed by Other Services at 32.8%, Transportation and Storage at 29.1 %, Construction at 16.8% and Information and Communication at 10.3%. Only 8 sub-sectors surpassed the pre-pandemic levels, which are: 1) agriculture, 2) electricity, steam, water and waste management, 3) wholesale and retail, 4) information and communications, 5) financial and insurance activities, 6) public administration, 7) education and 8) human health and social health activities. The rest of the sub-sectors are yet to reach the pre-pandemic levels, as further aggravated by the adverse effects of Typhoon Odette during the last quarter of 2021.

In terms of sectoral share to the regional economy, the Services sector contributes the most at 69%. This is followed by the Industry Sector that accounts for 24.1 % then Agriculture at 6.5 %. Across all sub-sectors, Wholesale and Retail registered the highest share at 22.32%, followed by Manufacturing at 15.36%, Financial and Insurance Activities at 9.7%, then Real Estate and Ownership of Dwellings at 8.55%.

Given the 2022 growth rate, Central Visayas is expected to grow its economy within the range targeted in the CV-RDP 2023-2028. Economic growth measured in terms of GRDP is expected to increase from 6.5-7.5 percent in 2023 to 6.8-8.3 percent in 2024-2025 and 6.8-8.5 percent in 2026-2028. This means that Region 7's economy will expand by about 58-73 percent in 2028 from its level in 2021.

Likewise, data from the 2022 Provincial Product Accounts show that the four provinces in Central Visayas have already exceeded their 2019 pre-pandemic levels. In similar fashion to the regional economy, the economies of the four provinces are also expected to grow in 2023. The economies of Bohol and Negros Oriental grew by 7.1 percent and 7.6 percent in 2022, respectively. These are already beyond the 2023 target range of the CV-RDP 2023-2028. On the other hand, the economies of Cebu Province and Siquijor grew by 5 percent and 5.6 percent in 2022, respectively. These provinces are expected to meet the growth targets of the Plan at 6.5 to 7 percent for Cebu Province, and 6 to 6.5 percent for Siquijor.

Prices steadily decline reaching acceptable levels

As of December 2023, inflation rate in Central Visayas cooled down to 3.9 percent, already below the target range set by the Plan until 2028. Overall inflation will be brought down from 6.6 percent in 2022 to 2.0 to 4.0 percent between 2025 and 2028. Food inflation will likewise be kept within 2.0 to 4.0 percent from 2025-2028. There is a need to ensure that the inflation path stays consistent with the medium-targets through supply-side interventions, such as increasing

domestic productivity and monitoring commodity prices, as well as demand-side interventions, such as the national government's implementation of effective fiscal and monetary policies.

Employment statistics surpass end-of-plan targets

According to the October 2023 Preliminary Result of the Labor Force Survey, unemployment rate in Central Visayas is at 4 percent. This is much lower than the 5.8 percent unemployment rate for the same period in 2022. This is already below the target range of the Plan. Moving forward, the challenge will be maintaining the low unemployment rate amidst any disruptive events that may occur in the future. Unemployment is also targeted to steadily fall so that by 2028, the unemployment rate will be within 4.5-5.0 percent. The percentage of wage and salary workers in private establishments to total employment is expected to be within 52.0 – 54.0 percent.

Poverty incidence for the first semester of 2023 shows positive signs of meeting end-of-plan targets

Poverty incidence among population for the first semester of 2023 fell to 31 percent as compared to 33 percent recorded for the same period in 2021. This means that approximately 100,000 persons in Central Visayas have reached better income levels as compared to the poverty threshold for the region. Similarly, some 13.7 percent or over 190,000 persons were able to meet the food threshold for the region.

Meanwhile, Central Visayas will continue to implement strategies to accelerate poverty reduction by ensuring food security, expanding training and skills development, implementing key infrastructure projects, and transforming the production sectors to generate more quality jobs. With this, it is expected for poverty incidence among population to be further reduced to 10.5 percent by 2028. This translates to a little more than 900,000 poor individuals in Central Visayas by 2028.

Key Policy Directions & Strategies for 2024-2025

Bridging Places: Strengthening Physical and Functional Connectivity

Being a region composed of four island provinces and recognized as a premier tourism destination in the country, increasing physical connectivity to achieve functional integration of the roles of local government units (LGUs) in regional development is paramount. Starting 2023 and in the succeeding years, the Regional Development Council (RDC) 7 will continue to focus on streamlining ports operations and management to address ports issues and make travel experience in Central Visayas seamless both for business and tourism.

Strategies to increase connectivity in Central Visayas include the strengthened monitoring of on-going and planned connectivity projects that are included in PBBM's Infrastructure Flagship Projects (IFPs) such as the Metro Cebu Expressway (Cebu Circumferential Road), New Cebu International Container Port, Cebu Bus Rapid Transit, Panglao-Tagbilaran City Offshore Bridge Connector, New Dumaguete International Airport, and Cebu Urban Mass Rapid Transit-Central Line. Project development will also be strengthened to explore and study the feasibility of new projects such as bridges to connect the provinces of Cebu and Bohol, and the provinces of Cebu and Negros Oriental as well as Transport-Oriented-Development (TOD) projects that would strengthen integrated multi-modal land-water transport.

Focusing on connectivity and mobility in Central Visayas will have far-reaching economic, social, and spatial or urban and regional development impacts both at the local and global levels. Economically, increased connectivity will facilitate local and global trade and competitiveness, increased investments, and massive job creation. In the social aspect, these projects can improve access of people to basic social services such as health and education particularly in the geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, in addition to promoting people-to-people connectivity for cultural exchange. Significantly, greater connectivity can result in spatial transformation and strengthened urban-rural linkage in the distribution of resources and economic activities to reduce disparities and inequalities within the region.

Bridging Places: Harnessing Private Capital and Aggressively Promoting PPP

The passage of Republic Act 11966 or the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code of the Philippines signed into law on 5 December 2023 by His Excellency President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos, Jr. would significantly provide a more competitive and enabling environment for harnessing private sector capital in the delivery of more financially viable, well-structured, and high-quality PPP projects that will impact the lives of Filipinos. This is also seen to further promote the local autonomy of LGUs to become self-reliant communities in the trajectory towards full devolution and increased decentralization.

To support the realization of spatial transformation and equitable regional development, PPP in all its forms shall be aggressively promoted to finance priority public infrastructure projects and development projects at the regional and local government levels.

Efforts will be intensified in coordinating public and private actors in the development of high-impact PPP projects in the region. For the next two years, there will be heightened priority for investments to address the region's major development challenges: infrastructure for increased connectivity and reduced traffic congestion in urban centers; developing other water sources such as surface water, desalination, and air-to-water technology to meet the growing water demand; expanding sustainable power supply; and supporting the delivery of quality basic social services such as investments on health, education, and social protection facilities.

Bridging Places: Revitalizing and Focusing on Food Production

While the Agriculture Sector is not a major contributor to the regional economy, there are subsectors within Agriculture wherein Central Visayas is a leading producer and net exporter to other regions in the country. In 2023, Central Visayas ranked first among the regions in goat and cattle inventory, second in pork inventory, and third in layer chicken inventory. Central Visayas is also the fourth largest producer of chicken eggs in the country.

The region's agriculture sector will be revitalized to achieve food security and temper food inflation. This will be done by focusing evidence-based strategies on provinces with the highest potential for agricultural production. These will be the Province of Negros Oriental, which has the largest land area suitable for agriculture production, and the Province of Bohol, which has the highest production yield for rice and other key crops. Cebu, which has the largest area devoted to corn and high value crops, will also be assisted to increase production of these commodities. The construction of irrigation facilities in Bohol and Negros Oriental will also be supported as one of the strategies to boost local production of key commodities.

Tamlang Valley in Negros Oriental will be developed to be the food basket of the province and of Central Visayas. The region, through the Department of Agriculture (DA) Regional Office, will push for the conduct of feasibility to firm up the priority projects that would be funded and implemented not only by the agency but also by other stakeholders for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

Bridging People: Creating More and Better Quality Jobs

The Information Technology/ Business Process Management (IT/BPM) industry of the region generates about PhP80 billion in revenues per year. Cebu City is among the top five outsourcing destinations in the Philippines. According to CBRE Philippines, one of the largest global real estate services company, Metro Cebu accounted for a larger share of total office space transactions outside Metro Manila in 2022 with 80 percent coming from the IT-BPM sector.

Meanwhile, the region's construction/ real estate industry is among the industries that benefit the most from increased demand for accommodation, office, and retail spaces and projects due to vibrant tourism, IT/BPM, and wholesale/retail trade sectors. The wholesale and retail trade and real estate sectors, for their part, benefit from a rise in consumer spending, OFW remittances, and tourist spending.

The major manufacturing industries in Central Visayas include electronics, shipbuilding, furniture, sugar, food processing, marine, fertilizers, and wearables. They stimulate growth of the sectors/subsectors that feed into the manufacturing industries. In 2022, the region was the 4th largest contributor to the total manufacturing value of the country.

To sustain these key economic growth drivers, support shall be intensified for those with expansive backward-and-forward linkages that will lead to the creation of more quality jobs. These growth drivers include tourism, IT/BPM, trade, manufacturing, and construction / real estate. These subsectors have significant multiplier effects and support the further growth of other industries, such as accommodation, food services, wholesale and retail trade, and transportation.

Thus, foreign and domestic investments in the region shall be vigorously encouraged. Apart from competitiveness of LGUs to enable a well prepared environment conducive for business, increased investments shall be carried out through efficient and well-functioning infrastructure facilities and services such as transportation systems and ICT, reliable and affordable power and water supply services, advanced research and development (R&D) and innovation, and enhanced digital economy to include content, users and producers in the digital world.

Bridging People: Building Resilience and Transforming Communities

Central Visayas has been vulnerable to the adverse effects of natural hazards as exacerbated by climate change. It has had its share of major disasters such as the devastations brought about by typhoon Odette in December 2021 and typhoon Yolanda in November 2013. It also suffered from loss of lives and damage to properties due to strong earthquakes such as the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck Bohol in October 2013 and the 6.9 magnitude earthquake in Negros Oriental in February 2012. Other than these massive disasters, the communities of Central Visayas remained exposed to natural hazards, which coupled by the varied levels of vulnerability of its people, resulted in heightened risk of disasters.

It is therefore imperative for the region to strengthen the resilience of its people through the implementation of disaster risk reduction and management measures. It shall also accelerate purposive actions to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects on the region.

As mandated under the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Act, the region strives to implement the provisions of the DRRM law by ensuring that the National DRRM Plan is adopted and contextualized at the regional and local levels. The region will also pursue the mainstreaming of DRRM and climate change mitigation and adaptation in the various development plans, particularly the Comprehensive Land Use Plans, the Comprehensive Development Plans, and the local DRRM plans. Pursuant to the Climate Change Act of 2009, the region endeavors to

localize the National Climate Change Action by constantly advocating the preparation and completion of the Local Climate Change Action Plans of the LGUs in the region. With the DRRM and climate change laws informing the local plans of the LGUs, the region sees the transformation of communities towards a collective development that is resilient and sustainable.

Bridging People: Capitalizing on Tourism Development to Realize Peace and Development towards Inclusive Growth

In a two-way process, while peace and security are pre-requisites for tourism to flourish, tourism can also have significant multiplier effects to the local and regional economies that will lead to more progressive, secure, and peaceful communities. This is the direction of the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security or CORDS for Region 7 of the Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (RTF-ELCAC). Central Visayas will capitalize on translating the accomplishments of the RTF-ELCAC in peacebuilding towards tourism-related development to provide more livelihood and employment opportunities in the region.

Indeed, tourism, identified as a major competitive advantage of the Philippines along with ICT industry, holds more promise to bring about greater integrated urban-rural growth as it induces investment flows, infrastructure development and employment and income opportunities to lagging or rural regions where unspoiled natural attractions are usually found.

Bridging Policies and Institutions: Promoting Government Digital Transformation and Good Governance, Advancing Research and Innovation

Central Visayas will continue to promote and harness digital technology in making the delivery of government services and performance of public functions more efficient, responsive, transparent, and accountable. The gains started in the acceleration of digitalization during the COVID-19 pandemic will further be expanded and institutionalized to advance the implementation of more public sector innovations. This thrust is further supported by DICT 7's sustained commitment to expand the number of access sites in public places with free Wi-Fi internet from only 139 sites in 2022 to 721 sites in 2023, with a target of increasing further to 1,036 sites this year, and 1,345 sites in 2025.

Further, by aggressively advancing research and development aligned with the priority research themes in the Central Visayas Regional Development Research Agenda (RDRA) as shepherded by the Regional Development Research Council (RDRC) 7, the region will see transformative outcomes in terms of product, process and policy innovations leading to more evidence-based policy formulation and project development.

NEDA 7's Project AGILE (Academe-Government-Industry Linkage Endeavour), a centralized online research portal and database developed in partnership with the Cebu Technological University, will be pilot-tested this year and targeted for full implementation in 2025. Project AGILE will help increase utilization of research works to foster innovation and promote the formulation of evidence-based policies by facilitating access to development research outputs; providing information on funding opportunities; generating research-related reports; and serving as a monitoring tool in the implementation of the RDRA.

RDC 7 also hopes to embark on promoting the Open Government Partnership or OGP initiatives of the DBM and the DILG that aims to establish partnership between the LGUs and the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in making the government more open and bringing it closer to the people using digital technology, and in advancing innovations that would address pressing development issues.

Bridging Policies and Institutions: Closing the Full Devolution Gaps

Devolution and decentralization will continue to be a major preoccupation in 2024 and the succeeding years as the national government implements the full devolution of certain functions and services to the LGUs. More than ever, it is imperative for the national government agencies to extend support in increasing capacities of LGUs especially those belonging to the low-income brackets in planning, project development and investment programming, and implementing and monitoring programs and projects. Importantly, while the LGUs will gain from the advantage of being able to better target programs and projects that their communities need most, there will most likely be uneven progress across the LGUs at the beginning given the differences in the state of readiness of LGUs toward becoming fully self-reliant.

The RDC 7 can have a pivotal role in coordinating and assisting the LGUs in identifying their priority projects and matching these to funding sources either from the national government through the General Appropriations Act (GAA), the Official Development Assistance (ODA) through grants or loans, or the private capital through PPP.

The RDC 7 will likewise continue to advocate for the regional presence of key national agencies such as the Department of Transportation (DOTr) not only to improve coordination and address delays in project implementation but also to be able to directly extend assistance to LGUs in the thrust towards full devolution and local autonomy.



On-going Panglao-Tagbilaran City Offshore Connector Bridge Construction
Source: DPWH 7

CHAPTER 2

Propelling Economic Transformation and Growth

Chapter 2 focuses on driving economic transformation and sustained growth. It provides an assessment on how the region fared with respect to the following within the context of the region's economy: a) promoting financial inclusion and improving public financial management; b) enhancing the country's business climate by promoting trade and investments along with the provision of adequate and reliable infrastructure; and c) promoting productivity and job generation by modernizing agriculture and agribusiness as well as revitalizing trade, tourism, industry and services.

The region's economy continued to expand at 7.6 percent with the services sector growing at 6.5 percent, industry at 1.5 percent and the agriculture sector declining at -0.4 percent. The better performance of the region was facilitated by sustained efforts to fully reopen the economy, increase productivity, boost job-generating investments, improve the region's connectivity, bolster consumer confidence, and streamline processes.

The region maintains a proactive stance in solidifying its role as a prominent contributor to the Philippine tourism industry, spearheading initiatives geared towards cultivating a dynamic and innovative tourism landscape in the region.



Bank of Philippine Islands Main Cebu Branch
Source: Canva Picture Library

Section 2.1

PROMOTE FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND IMPROVE PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Financial inclusion, which allows individuals and businesses effective access to useful and affordable financial products, has been considered an enabler of sustainable development. In its pursuit of inclusive development, Central Visayas has pursued policies that ensure financial products and services are not only available to the region's constituents but are also responsive to their varied needs such as for saving, payments, financing, investments, or insurance.

On matters pertaining to public finances, the region continues to implement strong and sound public financial management (PFM) processes and systems to ensure effective and efficient delivery of public services.

Strategy Framework

Central Visayas hopes to foster an enabling environment, specifically through the promotion of financial inclusion and the improvement of public financial management, that will help bring back the Philippines to a high-growth path and jumpstart the country's social and economic transformation towards a prosperous, inclusive and resilient society.

To intensify the drive for financial inclusion within 2023-2028, the region will adopt the following strategies: (a) enhance/improve financial literacy among the population in Central Visayas; (b) ensure consumer protection; (c) address barriers in opening transaction accounts; and (d) pursue digitalization in the financial sector.

In the enhancement of public financial management, the region will implement these measures: (a) strengthen local government finance; (b) maximize local revenue generation of Central Visayas local government units (LGUs); and (c) capacitate LGUs to assume the fully-devolved functions as mandated in the Local Government Code and other national laws.

Ways Forward

The region shall address the following challenges to the promotion of financial inclusion and the improvement of public financial management: (a) low financial literacy among population in Central Visayas; (b) sustaining the gains of the LGUs in Central Visayas on financial management; (c) increasing the revenue-generating and fiscal management capacities of local authorities; and, (d) enhancing the capacities of local authorities to fully assume their mandates on basic services delivery as per Local Government Code of 1991 and other national laws.

Priority Strategies for the Promotion of Financial Inclusion

Enhance financial literacy among the population in Central Visayas

The region shall continue to develop the financial literacy of its people. It shall implement programs that will build the capability of the citizenry to understand and effectively use various financial skills, including financial management, budgeting, and investing. Towards this end, the region to be spearheaded by the Department of Education Regional Office 7 (DepEd 7) shall progressively integrate financial concepts into the basic education curriculum.

The region will also tap the existing mechanisms such as the cooperatives and financial institutions in developing financial proficiency among their members and clients. Through the formal training that cooperatives and other financial institutions provide, individuals and households in Central Visayas will be able to build effective financial plans, manage savings and expenses, and build short-term and long-term financial goals, including retirement planning, life insurance and pension funds. As more people in Central Visayas become financially literate, they will eventually achieve financial independence through smart investments as well as demand better financial services and conditions for loans and lines of credit.

The region shall also strengthen and provide the necessary support to the cooperatives of Central Visayas, especially the smaller cooperatives as instruments of financial literacy. The cooperatives in the region have been promoting financial literacy among their members, transforming them from merely consumers into investors.

The region shall also ensure the full implementation of the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI), 2022-2028 in Central Visayas. Some of the NSFI policies and measures that the region will strongly pursue are the following: promotion of the PhilSys in the financial sector; expansion of the digital payment uses in government collections and

disbursements; enabling digital payments for all community markets and local transportation; and supporting the digital transformation of rural financial institutions and other last mile providers.

Ensure consumer protection

Financial consumer protection encompasses the laws, regulations, and institutional arrangements that safeguard consumers in the financial marketplace. The region shall ensure that financial literacy programs implemented in Central Visayas include the protection of investors, the promotion and protection of consumer rights, and the establishment of consumer assistance mechanism. Towards this end, the region shall support and monitor the implementation of Republic Act No. 11765 or the Financial Products and Services Consumer Protection Act. The law was enacted in 2022 in order to protect the average financial product and service consumer from unscrupulous practices and to provide victims thereof a convenient means to seek redress.

The region shall also monitor the implementation of Republic Act No. 11934 also known as the Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) Registration Act which was enacted to curb cybercriminal activities. With the implementation of the SIM Card Registration Act, the region will address and prevent the perpetration of crimes using unregistered and unregulated SIM cards. The region will ensure accountability for those using SIM cards and to aid law enforcement in tracking perpetrators of crimes committed through mobile phone activities.

Pursue the digitalization of the financial sector of Central Visayas

Digitalization in the banking sector has been pursued by the banking industry of Central Visayas for quite a time now. Proof of this digitalization has been the shift among banks in the region to offering online and digital services including the utilization of backend services to support digital transformation. Building on the success of the banking industry, the region will also promote digitalization among non-bank financial institutions, particularly the cooperatives in the region. Bigger cooperatives shall be encouraged to spearhead the digitalization of the sector as well as provide assistance to smaller cooperatives.

The region will also ensure that the Paleng-QR Ph program is supported by all LGUs in Central Visayas. The region shall enjoin the LGUs to advocate for the acceptance of digital payments among market vendors, community shopkeepers, and tricycle operators and drivers in all cities and municipalities of Central Visayas. The LGUs shall invest on the required IT-infrastructure in their marketplaces that will allow the market vendors and tricycle drivers to participate in the Paleng-QR program.

The digitalization of the financial sector will also include the promotion and implementation of the digital payment system for government disbursements as mandated under EO No. 170 (s. 2022). Pursuant to the said EO, the member-agencies of the RDC 7 and the LGUs in the region will utilize safe and efficient digital disbursement in the payment of goods, services and other disbursements, including the distribution of financial assistance, as well as the payment of salaries, wages, allowances and other compensation to employees.

Priority Strategies for the Improvement of Public Financial Management

Strengthen local government finance

Central Visayas shall strengthen local government finance by continuing the implementation of the LGU Public Financial Management Program. The LGU PFM Program is a concerted effort among oversight agencies such as the DBM 7, BLGF 7, DILG 7, and NEDA 7 and the LGUs that strengthens the LGUs' capacity to manage public finances,

encompassing the following: budgeting; accounting; auditing; cash management; management of public debt; revenue generation; and public reporting on the LGU's financial operations. To strengthen the local autonomy of the LGUs, the oversight agencies shall provide the appropriate technical assistance to the LGUs.

Through the PFM Implementation Plans of the LGUs, the provision of technical assistance shall be demand driven and tailored fit to the needs of the LGUs based on their PFM assessments. The PFM Regional Inter-Agency Team (RIAT) in Central Visayas shall also be re-oriented and continuously capacitated on its role in providing technical assistance to LGUs on PFM matters.

The region shall also pursue the digitalization of the PFM in Central Visayas. The digitalization of the PFM services will ensure clean and efficient governance at the local level. This will require the LGUs to invest in digital infrastructure to improve their revenue collection as well as promote efficiency, transparency and accountability in the use of public funds.

The DBM has committed to continue to prioritize the digitalization of the country's public financial management. Among others, the following tools will be made available to LGUs to strengthen the use of technology to enhance bureaucratic efficiency, including in the area of government fiscal reporting: (a) eBudget for LGUs as a tool to deliver results-focused budgeting to Philippine LGUs, and (b) enhanced PFMAT which is a self-assessment instrument designed to assist LGUs in evaluating their PFM performance.

The region shall advocate for the adoption and implementation of the Integrated Financial Management Information System that will facilitate data synchronization on PFM matters being required by the DBM, BLGF and the Commission on Audit (COA).

[Maximize the local revenue raising powers of the Central Visayas LGUs](#)

The region through the PFM oversight agencies shall provide technical assistance and capability development program to strengthen the LGUs' revenue generating measures. The LGUs shall also be capacitated to access funds from the Government Financial Institutions and to enter into public-private partnerships and joint ventures with the private sector.

[Capacitate the Central Visayas LGUs to assume the fully-devolved functions as mandated by the Local Government Code and other national laws](#)

The region shall ensure that the LGU DTPs are faithfully implemented by the LGUs in the region. Technical assistance may be provided to facilitate the carrying out of the provisions of the DTPs as prepared by the LGUs.

The region shall ensure that the capacity development (CapDev) agenda of the LGUs are implemented, and regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of CapDev interventions. The region through the DILG 7 and other stakeholders shall conduct the necessary CapDev interventions to enhance the performance of the LGUs.



Ayala Center, Cebu City
Source: Picture Gallery

Section 2.2

ENHANCING THE BUSINESS CLIMATE

This section delves into critical strategies aimed at enhancing the business climate within the Central Visayas region. At the forefront of these endeavors is the concerted effort to promote trade and investments. The government's vision includes the implementation of transformative initiatives such as the Export Development Program and MSME Development Program by DTI 7, strategically designed to mitigate challenges such as limited diversification in export products and markets, as well as streamlining cumbersome business processes.

Section 2.2.2 underscores the pivotal role of infrastructure expansion and upgrade in catalyzing social and economic progress. Infrastructure development stands as a cornerstone for facilitating the transformation of Central Visayas, with ongoing efforts from various agencies aimed at realizing a sustainable, resilient, and modernized infrastructure network. However, persistent challenges such as funding constraints and right-of-way issues have impeded the timely implementation of crucial projects. The recent enactment of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code of the Philippines in December 2023 marks a significant milestone, poised to usher in a new era of collaboration between the public and private sectors. Anticipated increases in private sector participation are expected to accelerate the closing of infrastructure gaps, ultimately paving the way for enhanced connectivity and economic prosperity across the region.



Cebu IT Park
Source: Kkday.com

Section 2.2.1

PROMOTE TRADE AND INVESTMENTS

Introduction

The Central Visayas, with its goal to reinvigorate and strengthen the region's export sector and promote increased investments, focused on implementing targeted strategies leading to a remarkable surge in approved investments. From PhP1.804 billion in 2022, the total approved investments of the region increased to PhP6.817 billion. Notably, 56% of this investment influx, totaling PhP3.832 billion, originates from foreign investments, underscoring the region's attractiveness to international business. While domestic investments contributed 44% of the total approved investments, reaching PhP2.847 billion. The number of investment projects also increased to 16 projects from 11 projects in 2022. Consequently, these investment projects generated jobs and employed over 10,670 people, which is more than twice the number from the previous year.

To further strengthen the trade and investment in the region, the government is eyeing on the development and implementation of major projects such as the Export Development Program and MSME Development Program of DTI 7. These projects are poised to address some of the challenges in enhancing the business climate in the region such as lack of diversification in export products and markets and tedious process of transacting business.

Strategy Framework

Aligned with the strategic framework outlined in the Central Visayas Regional Development Plan (CVRDP) 2023-2028, the region is committed to strengthening the export sector and further increase investments. Specifically, the region will further support efforts aimed at diversifying the region's export products and expanding market reach. Diversification of both export products and target markets is seen as a key strategy to mitigate risks and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

Along with these efforts, the region is dedicated to supporting measures that streamline business processes, with the overarching goal of improving the ease of doing business. This involves identifying and addressing impediments that hinder operational efficiency and introducing policies to facilitate a more cost-effective business environment.

Figure 2.2.1.1 Strategy Framework for Promoting Trade and Investments



Major PAPs

The region, through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI 7), is proposing for the funding and implementation of the Export Development Program. This program primarily aims to develop, facilitate and promote both foreign and domestic exports. It further aims to implement and regionalize the Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP). This plan lays out a three-year plan of providing a business environment supportive of trade, growth and innovation that would enable domestic industries to establish their niches in regional and global markets, in turn, raising the status of the Philippines in the global value chain. Despite it being a guide for the government in planning activities and decision-making related to the business environment of the country, it lacks context for the regional level business climate. Thus, PEDP needs regional planning and implementation to better address the challenges in the local level and capitalize on the strength of the region.

Another priority program of DTI is the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Development Program, anchored on the MSME Development Plan implementation to promote growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises. The program further envisions more globally competitive MSMEs that are regionally integrated, resilient, sustainable and innovative. It revolves around three core focus areas: business environment, business capacity, and business opportunities. To achieve its objectives, the program is structured around five strategic goals: (1) enhanced business climate; (2) improved access to finance; (3) heightened management and labor capacities; (4) increased access to technology and innovation; and (5) expanded access to markets.

The successful implementation of these priority projects, the Export Development Program and the MSME Development Program, is poised to significantly contribute to the region's economic advancement. These initiatives underscore the commitment of the government to create an environment that does not only support trade and exports but also nurture the growth and innovation of local businesses, ultimately contributing to the region's economic resilience and sustainability.

These two projects according to their target strategies in the CV-RDP are summarized in [Annex A](#).

Results Matrix

As part of the thrusts to support efforts to diversify the region's export products and markets, the government continues to collaborate with the private sector specifically in the provision of machinery, equipment, tools, systems, skills and knowledge under the Shared Service Facilities (SSF). The government, through DTI, established SSFs across the region of which 95% have been operational in 2022. Despite notable progress, challenges persist in achieving full operational status for SSFs, with 5 remaining non-operational, mainly in Bohol (4) and Cebu (1). These challenges

include ongoing facility renovations, damaged infrastructure, dissolution of SSF cooperators, and non-disposal of unserviceable SSF equipment.

In 2023, Central Visayas experienced a commendable increase in SSF beneficiaries, with operational SSFs rising from 87% (62/71) to 91% (49/54). Notably, Cebu and Siquijor provinces successfully operationalized their non-operational SSFs, significantly contributing to job creation for beneficiaries. This accomplishment surpassed the target by 115%, highlighting the positive impact of these initiatives on regional development.

The new Negosyo Center in Ayungon, Negros Oriental was established through collaboration between DTI and LGU. LGU Ayungon provided office space and counterpart support, emphasizing the significance of this partnership. This collaboration brings DTI assistance closer to constituents, facilitating easier access for MSMEs and promoting local economic development.

Table 2.2.1.1 Results Matrix for Promoting Trade and Investments

INDICATOR	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
% of Shared Service Facilities (SSF) in operation	95% (2022)	95%	95%	91%
Number of Shared Service Facilities (SSF) beneficiaries	4,670 (2022)	2,750	3,000	3,164
Number of Negosyo Centers Established	77 (2022)	77	78	78
Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) growth rate (%)	7.64 (2022)	6.5 - 7.5	6.8 - 8.3	
New indicators from BOI that are not included in the RDP (as elaborated in the intro)				
Amount of approved investments (in PhP M)	1,803.89 (2022)			6,816.68
Number of projects registered	11 (2022)			16
Number of jobs generated	3,366 (2022)			10,670

Source: DTI 7 and BOI

Ways Forward

With the substantial increase in investment in 2023, the region is poised to sustain and intensify its endeavors in diversifying both its export products and market channels. This entails fostering a more robust collaboration between the academic sector, industry players, and government entities. The objective is to cultivate a skilled workforce capable of contributing to higher value services, enabling the region to broaden its export portfolio.

Priority Strategies

Support efforts that will diversify the region's export products and markets

To systematically drive export diversification, the region is committed to implementing and developing comprehensive programs. The Export Development Program focuses on identifying key sectors with export potential, formulating strategies to penetrate international markets, and providing necessary support for businesses entering global trade. Simultaneously, the MSME Development Program aims to empower small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) by offering financial assistance, capacity-building programs, and market access initiatives. These programs collectively contribute to a dynamic and diversified export landscape.

Support measures that improve ease and lower cost of doing business

Recognizing the critical role that a favorable business environment plays in attracting investments, the government is prioritizing efforts to ease and reduce the cost of doing business within the region. Streamlining bureaucratic processes, reducing unnecessary regulations, and implementing transparent and efficient systems are central to these initiatives. By creating a business-friendly environment, the region aims to attract both foreign and domestic investors, fostering an atmosphere conducive to sustained economic growth.



Legislative Agenda

The region will continue to pursue policies that will improve the opportunities of the export sector that will enable them expand their market and compete globally.

Table 2.2.1.2 Legislative Agenda for Promoting Trade and Investments

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Amendments to the PEZA Law	This will update the 27-year-old PEZA law to adopt to the digitalization of the locators. The region supports this initiative as it will help its export products become globally competitive. It will also enhance policy coordination and participation among agencies and institutions and improve the overall investment climate.



Section 2.2.2

EXPAND AND UPGRADE INFRASTRUCTURE

Introduction

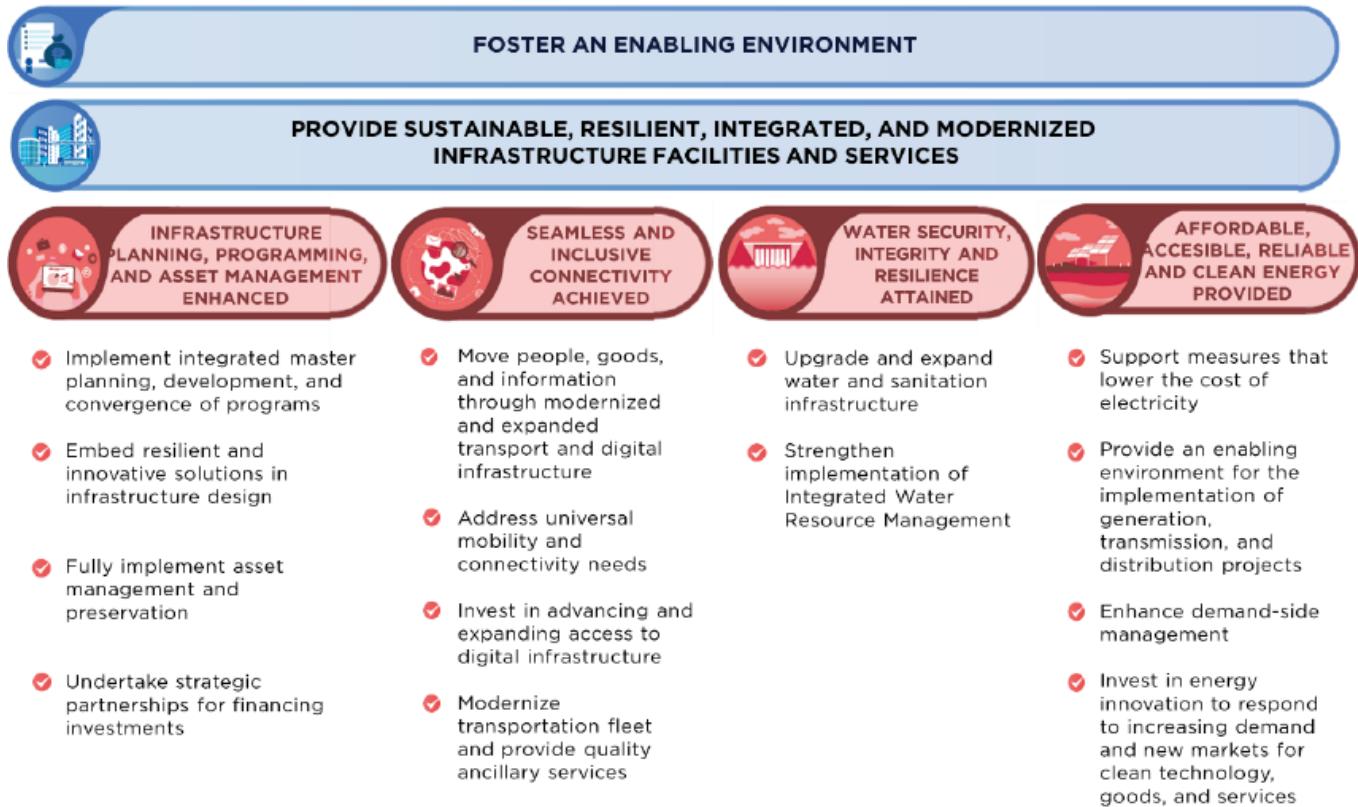
Infrastructure development is key in facilitating social and economic transformation in the Central Visayas region. Infrastructure agencies continue to push for and implement projects leading towards a sustainable, resilient, integrated, and modernized infrastructure and services. However, issues and challenges such as funding constraints and right-of-way (ROW) issues resulting in implementation delays continue to hamper the implementation of key infrastructure projects in Central Visayas. With a more enabling environment through the enactment of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code of the Philippines in December 2023, more participation and involvement from the private sector is anticipated to accelerate the closing of infrastructure gaps in the region.

Strategic Framework

The main thrust for the infrastructure development sector in Region 7 is to provide sustainable, resilient, integrated, and modernized infrastructure facilities and services.

The various strategies identified for the sector seek to attain the four main development outcomes of enhanced infrastructure planning, programming, and asset management; seamless and inclusive connectivity; water security, integrity, and resilience; and affordable, accessible, reliable, and clean energy.

Figure 2.2.2.1 Strategy Framework for Expanding and Upgrading Infrastructure



Major PAPs

Programs, activities, and projects (PAPs) implemented in Region 7 continue to support the overarching goal of the infrastructure development sector of providing sustainable, resilient, integrated, and modernized infrastructure facilities and services (*See Annex B*).

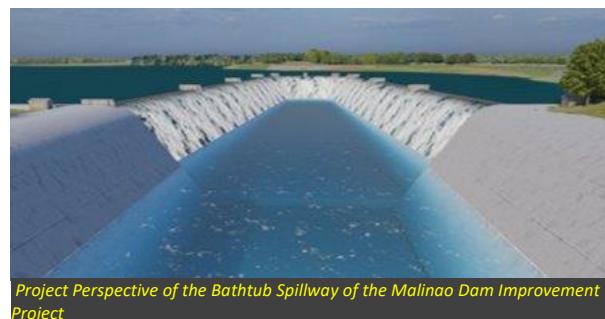
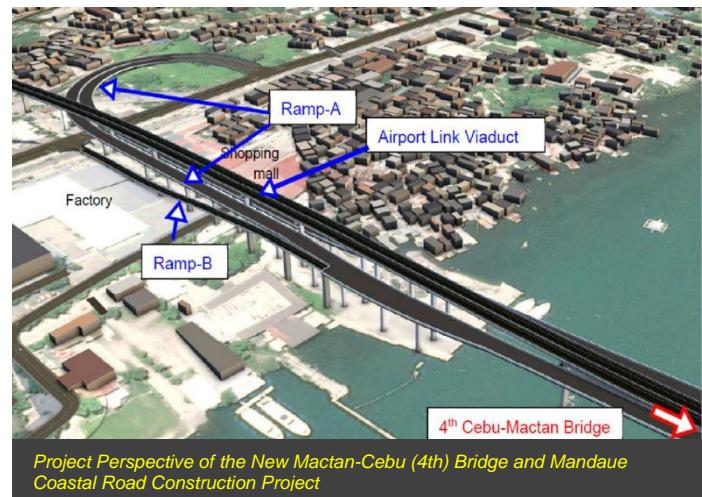
The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), as the main infrastructure agency of the government, remains steadfast in implementing their mandated programs to ensure safe and reliable national road system, protect lives and properties against major floods, and provide infrastructure support to other sectors through its convergence and special support programs. These PAPs consist of rehabilitation and upgrading of damaged paved roads and bridges, and drainage and flood control structures along national roads, road and bridge widening, construction of bypasses, diversion roads, missing links, and new bridges, construction and rehabilitation of flood mitigation structures and drainage systems, among others.

Notable big-ticket infrastructure projects being implemented by the DPWH are the New Mactan-Cebu (4th) Bridge and Mandaue Coastal Road Construction Project, whose detailed engineering design is currently under review; Panglao-Tagbilaran City Offshore Bridge Connector Project, whose approaches are already completed; and the Metro Cebu Expressway, Segment 3 of which is partially complete, while its Segment 1 and remaining sections of Segment 3 was proposed as a PPP project. Included in the Infrastructure Flagship Projects (IFPs), these projects, once completed, are seen to address congestion along key corridors in the region.

The Cebu Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project, which aims to improve the urban transport system along selected corridors in Cebu City, stays non-operational due to delays in project implementation. The Department of Transportation (DOTr) targets to start the partial operations of the BRT system in 2024, and its full operations by 2027.

The implementation of the New Cebu International Container Port (NCICP) Project likewise has been stalled. The request of the DOTr for the extension of the implementation period and the loan validity for the project is still subject to Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) review following DOTr's submission of the ICC requisite documents just in January 2024. The NCICP, once implemented and completed, will address the congestion inside and outside the Cebu International Port, reduce vessel's waiting time and logistics cost, and open up new opportunities to develop industries in the region.

In terms of addressing congestion in aviation infrastructures, the New Dumaguete Airport Development Project in Bacong, Negros Oriental, approved by the NEDA Board in February 2023, has already commenced pre-implementation activities, specifically, the acquisition of lot for the new airport site. Targeted to be completed and operational in 2029, this new airport shall replace the existing Dumaguete Airport in Sibulan, Negros Oriental, and will have a higher capacity of 2.54 million passengers annually by 2035. The construction of the Siquijor Airport Development Project, on the other hand, is also currently ongoing. However, right-of-way acquisition issues still yet to be resolved. The NEDA Board likewise approved on 13 October 2023 the Upgrade, Expansion, Operation, and Maintenance of the Bohol-Panglao International Airport Project. An unsolicited PPP project, negotiation between the DOTr, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), and the original proponent has already commenced in November 2023.



The National Irrigation Administration similarly continues to implement the construction, rehabilitation, and upgrading of irrigation systems in the region, which include the Malinao Dam Improvement Project, Catungawan Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (SRIP) and Hibale SRIP in Bohol, Tanjay-Bais Irrigation Project and Kinalan SRIP in Negros Oriental. These projects would support agricultural development, climate resilience, and sustainable water management, among others.

Results Matrix

Connectivity. For the land transportation sector, poor road condition persists, with the region having an average International Roughness Index (IRI) of 4.22 meters/kilometers, despite paving 99.8 percent of the national road network. This exceeds the 3.0 m/km threshold considered by DPWH to be an acceptable IRI. In terms of road safety,

DPWH 7 data shows that the number of identified black spots along the national roads with completed engineering interventions/countermeasures has increased from 13 in 2022 to 19 in 2023, surpassing its target of 15 for 2023.

Both the maritime transport and aviation sectors recorded remarkable growth in key indicators. Passenger transported by air and sea recorded a growth of 69.48 and 46.92 percent, respectively, in 2023. This can be attributed to increasing demand for travel, normalized conditions post-pandemic, and improved overall economic conditions. Cargo traffic, on the other hand, also increased, both for air and sea, at 65,753 MT, and 74,707 MT, respectively. These figure however fell short of their 2023 targets of 94,085 MT of cargo shipped via air, and 77,692 MT of cargo shipped via sea. According to the Cebu Port Authority (CPA), operations were adversely affected by the overall decline in foreign trade, stemming from a global economic slowdown and the repercussions of the still on-going Russia-Ukraine War. Unfavorable weather conditions further disrupted shipping operations.

The digital connectivity landscape in Central Visayas likewise generally improved in 2023, surpassing the previous year in terms of increased government connectivity and public access. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) 7 successfully reached its target to provide internet access to 81 government offices in the region in 2023, through its Government Network (GovNet) Program. The GovNet Program aims at interconnecting government agencies, hospitals, state universities and colleges, and public schools through a fiber optic cable network. Moreover, the DICT intensified its implementation of the Free Wi-Fi for All Program, expanding its reach to 721 public areas in the region, more than double its previous year's accomplishment of 326 sites.

Water Resources. Data from the NIA 7, showed notable expansion in the firmed-up service area (FUSA) with irrigation facilities in the region, from 42,107 hectares in 2022 to 43,424 hectares in 2023. FUSA represents the net service area of an irrigation system, accounting for deductions made for converted areas and permanently non-restorable areas. Furthermore, the overall irrigated area in the region, for both the dry and wet cropping seasons, saw an increase of 381 hectares in 2023. However, the year also witnessed a decline in cropping intensity, dropping to 168.34 percent from the previous year's 172 percent. This reduction is mainly due to the impact of El Niño and the heightened cost of farm inputs which resulted in the reluctance of several farmers to cultivate their crops.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 7 met its target for water resource inventory, successfully tracking 137 water bodies in Central Visayas. Targets for 2023 for other key indicators in the water resources sector were likewise achieved by the DENR. In terms of bridging the water supply-demand gap, the needed large-scale dam for residential, commercial and industrial use are still not implemented, such as the proposed Mananga Dam Project Phase 2 to serve the metropolitan area of Cebu. The allocation of PhP 31 million in the DPWH's FY 2024 budget for the preparation of the feasibility study for the Mananga Dam 2 is a welcome development to address the region's water supply problem, which is described in the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan to be having absolute water scarcity.

Flooding remains a problem, especially in the metropolitan area of Cebu. For instance, successive heavy rainfall, particularly in September 2023 had inundated key cities in Metro Cebu. Out of the 103 projects with estimated total cost of PhP 44.29 billion identified in the DPWH-commissioned Metro Cebu Flood Control and Drainage System Master Plan, only 21 projects with an equivalent amount of PhP 4.03 billion had been funded as of January 2024. Issues related to project implementation, including funding constraints, right-of-way acquisition issues, obstructions with other facilities impede the implementation of the Master Plan. In 2023, the Infrastructure Development Committee (IDC) of the Central Visayas RDC created a technical working group (TWG) to serve as platform for coordination among the concerned local government units, different units of the Department of Public Works and Highways, and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) to ensure the implementation of the Master Plan.

Energy. Based on the data from the Department of Energy-Visayas Field Office (VFO), power requirements, reflecting available capacity over peak demand in the region was met at 102 percent, albeit not meeting the 2023 target of 138 percent. Renewable energy capacity installed stood at 337.4 MW in 2023, a decline of 50.7 MW from 2022. (For the full list of results indicators for the infrastructure sector, refer to Table 2.2.2.1.)

Ways Forward

To address the infrastructure gap in the region, investments in infrastructure projects to improve the transportation and digital connectivity, water and sanitation, irrigation, and power shall be promoted, tapping the help of the private sector through the PPP scheme. To avoid duplication of efforts and wastage of resources, master planning and convergence among all concerned stakeholders shall be advocated and pursued. With the on-going big ticket infrastructure projects facing delay in project implementation, project monitoring shall be intensified to fast-track their implementation and completion.

Priority Strategies

Promote public-private partnerships (PPPs) to fund and accelerate implementation of projects that will address the infrastructure gaps in transportation, water supply and sanitation, energy, and even ICT

The recent enactment of Republic Act No. 11966 or the PPP Code of the Philippines shall provide a more enabling environment for collaboration between the government and private sector in addressing the gaps in infrastructure financing and implementation. As such, PPP, as a financing and implementation scheme, shall be promoted to fund and accelerate the implementation of projects that will address the infrastructure gaps in transportation, water supply and sanitation, energy, and ICT in Central Visayas. Potential infrastructure projects in the region that may be explored for PPP implementation include mass transportation systems, airport and seaport construction and operation, expressways, water supply and sanitation systems, and ICT, among others.

Implement integrated master planning development and convergence programs to ensure prudent use of government resources and avoid duplication of efforts

Existing master plans shall be continually referred to in project identification, investment programming, and budgeting, as they provide a sound basis for the proper sequencing of projects for implementation. These include the Metro Cebu Integrated Flood Control and Drainage System Master Plan, Master Plan Study on Urban Transport System Development in Metro Cebu, DOE's Power Development Plan 2023-2050, and the JICA's Data Collection Survey for National Water Resources Development and Management, among others. The proposed formulation of the Metro Cebu Road Network Master Plan shall also be actively promoted. The terms of reference for the conduct of said master plan was already endorsed by the Central Visayas RDC to the DPWH in March 2023.

Further, Central Visayas shall continually advocate for the formulation and updating of master plans. For instance, the Regional ICT Committee shall spearhead the formulation of the Regional ICT Roadmap. As master planning and convergence activities require vertical and horizontal coordination, and collaboration among the national and local government, and private stakeholders, the Central Visayas RDC shall initiate these coordination efforts.

Intensify monitoring of funded projects

Several big-ticket infrastructure projects in the region which are already approved by the NEDA Board and have already been allocated funding, such as the Cebu BRT Project, NCICP, Panglao-Offshore Bridge Connector Project, Metro Cebu Expressway, among others, face acute implementation delays and suspensions due to implementation issues and concerns. The Central Visayas RDC, through its Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) shall intensify its monitoring activities to ensure that implementation timelines are upheld by implementing agencies, and that issues on the ground are addressed. Monitoring these funded projects and resolving issues, where possible, shall help fast-track their implementation and completion, to ultimately realize the economic benefits of these projects.

Table 2.2.2.1 Results Matrix for Expanding and Upgrading Infrastructure

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
Physical Connectivity				
Average National Road Roughness Index decreased (m/km)	4.58 (2019)	3.0	N.A.	4.22
Ratio of paved national roads to total national road length increased (%)	99.75	99.75	100	99.80
Number of identified black spots along the national road with completed (100%) engineering interventions/ countermeasures increased	13	15	17	19
Aircraft traffic increased	68,089	102,134	107,241	105,924
Airport passenger movements increased	7,298,038	10,947,057	11,494,410	12,368,464
Cargo shipped via air increased (in thousand MT)	62,724	94,085	98,790	65,753
Passengers transported (domestic) by sea increased (in thousand persons)	19,665	26,263	30,267	28,893
Cargo shipped via sea increased (in thousand MT per year)	71,632	77,692	124,382	74,707
Number of ship calls	138,726	53,634*	62,658*	63,644*
Container traffic (in thousand TEU)	1,015,732	83,460*	79,697*	648,035*
Digital Connectivity				
Number of sites in public places with Free Wi-Fi internet access	326	341	1036	721
Number of NGAs, SUCs, LGUs, Government Hospitals, Public Schools with internet access	79	81	97	81
Number of LGUs with user's training and operational eBusiness Process Licensing System (eBPLS)	41	51	54	47
Water Resources				
NIA's Target potential area to be developed (ha)	98,576	58,344.3	58,936.3	58,363.3
Target firmed-up service area [FUSA] monitored with irrigation facilities (cumulative, ha)	42,107	43,424.07	44,470	43,424.07
Irrigated area [Dry/1st cropping season] increased (ha)	36,484	37,495.89	29,341.22	36,633.44
Irrigated area [Wet/2nd cropping season] increased (ha)	36,145	37,495.89	35596.94	36,466.21
Total irrigated area increased (ha)	72,628	74,991.78	64,938.16	73,099.65
Ratio of irrigated area to FUSA increased, cropping intensity (%)	172	172.70	146.03	168.34

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
Ratio of actual irrigated area to the total potential irrigable area increased (%)	73.68	128.53	110.18	125.25
Percentage of implementation of programs and projects identified in the Integrated River Basin Master Plans (IRBMP), in %	100	100	100	100
Number of updated IRBMP	2	-	2	-
River Basins with established River Basin Organizations (RBO) operationalized	2	2	2	2
Number of water sources inventoried	150	125	125	137
Water users inventoried both legal (permittees) and illegal, including water sources identification and mapping thereof (i.e. springs, creeks, etc.)	152	125	125	137
Energy				
Power requirements met (available capacity over peak demand, in %)	128	138	146	102
Proportion of population with access to electricity increased (in %)	91.93	87.46	87.72	Data not yet available
Share of renewable energy (RE) in the optimal generation mix increased (in %)	25	26	27	Data not yet available
Renewable energy capacities installed (in MW)	388	392.50	392.50	337.4
Projected Peak Demand (MW)	1,066.58	1,157.65	1,204.84	1,141.04
Installed capacity (MW) (projections based on existing capacity + committed power projects + indicative power projects)	1,562.20	1,713.69	2,227.39	2,336.20
Required reserve (MW) (peak demand + 4% peak demand + contingency reserve + dispatchable reserve)	1,447.24	1,541.95	1,591.04	1,524.68

Source: Data from Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) only.

Table 2.2.2.2 Priority Legislative Agenda for Expanding and Upgrading Infrastructure

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Creation of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Water Regulatory Commission (WRC)	<p>The creation of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) is seen to address the fragmentation in all water-related policymaking, planning, programming, and implementation in order to efficiently orchestrate, coordinate, and integrate the development and management of water resources using integrated water resources management (IWRM) principles and science-based decision support systems.</p> <p>The establishment of the Water Regulatory Commission (WRC), on the other hand, seeks to separate economic regulation from resource regulation, and create a business and regulatory environment that is level, transparent, and conducive for public and private domestic and foreign</p>

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
	<p>investment in water supply and sanitation services through implementing fair, just and reasonable tariffs, rates, and charges.</p> <p>On 7 December 2023, the Central Visayas RDC passed <u>Resolution No. 84 (s. 2023), Supporting the Creation of the Department of Water Resources and Water Regulatory Commission by 2024</u>.</p>
Amendments to Batas Pambansa (BP) No. 344 or the Accessibility Law	<p>Several provisions and specifications under BP No. 344, or the Accessibility Law are no longer adequate in providing barrier-free environments with appropriate architectural or structural features specific to the needs of persons with disabilities and the elderly.</p> <p>The Central Visayas RDP 2023-2028 therefore advocates and includes as part of its legislative agenda the amendment of BP No. 344.</p> <p>House Bill No. 7216 or the <i>Universal Accessibility Act of 2023</i>, which was filed by Bohol First District Representative Edgar M. Chatto in the 19th Congress, calls for the application and mainstreaming of universal design principles, standards, and policies to ensure and enhance the dignity, independence, mobility, safety, and convenience of persons with apparent or non-apparent disabilities, senior citizens, women, children, and other sectors.</p> <p>The approval and enactment of this bill shall support the RDP strategy and objective of addressing universal mobility and connectivity needs through adopting policies that promote barrier-free facilities for persons with disabilities, elderly, pregnant women, and children.</p> <p>On 14 June 2023, the Central Visayas RDC passed <u>Resolution No. 32 (s. 2023), Supporting the Approval of House Bill No. 7216, or the Universal Accessibility Act of 2023</u>.</p>
Allocation of Funds for the Creation of Department of Transportation (DOTr) Regional Offices	<p>Despite the presence of project implementing units for its various projects in the region, the absence of a DOTr regional office has resulted in inefficiencies in the coordination, implementation, and monitoring of its projects at the regional level, since vital project implementation functions such as financial and procurement management are still retained at the DOTr Central Office.</p> <p>The Central Visayas RDP 2023-2028 advocates the establishment of a DOTr office in Central Visayas in order to ensure effective coordination with concerned agencies, offices, and stakeholders in the region in the implementation and monitoring of its transportation projects.</p> <p>On 14 June 2023, the Central Visayas RDC passed <u>Resolution No. 33 (s. 2023), Requesting His Excellency President Ferdinand R. Marcos to Amend Executive Order (EO) No. 125, as Amended by EO No. 125-A, for Purposes of Establishing Regional Offices of the Department of Transportation in Central Visayas and Other Regions</u>.</p>



Source: AFP

Section 2.3

PROMOTING PRODUCTIVITY

In this section, the focus shifts towards promoting productivity across various sectors within the Central Visayas region. A multi-faceted approach is outlined to address the diverse needs of the economy, encompassing the modernization of agriculture and agribusiness, the revitalization of industry, the reinvigoration of services, the advancement of R&D technology and innovation, and the reinvigoration of tourism. These strategies are strategically crafted to bolster the region's competitive edge, foster sustainable growth, and harness its full potential for economic prosperity.

The modernization of agriculture and agribusiness is paramount for ensuring food security, increasing rural incomes, and driving rural development. Concurrently, efforts to revitalize industry aim to enhance manufacturing capabilities, promote industrial diversification, and attract investments, thereby fostering job creation and economic resilience. Complementing these initiatives, the reinvigoration of services seeks to capitalize on the region's service-oriented sectors, such as BPO and healthcare, to fuel inclusive growth and generate employment opportunities.

Advancing R&D technology and innovation further underscores the commitment to fostering a knowledge-based economy, enabling businesses to innovate, adapt, and compete on a global scale. Lastly, the reinvigoration of tourism acknowledges the sector's significant contribution to economic growth and employment generation, with plans to enhance infrastructure, promote sustainable tourism practices, and diversify tourism offerings.

60th FYSHCON

Masaganang Pangisdaan, Maunlad na Ekonomiya



FISH CONSERVATION WEEK

September 18-22, 2023



Fish Conservation Week 2023
Source: BFAR 7

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Section 2.3.1

MODERNIZE AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS

Introduction

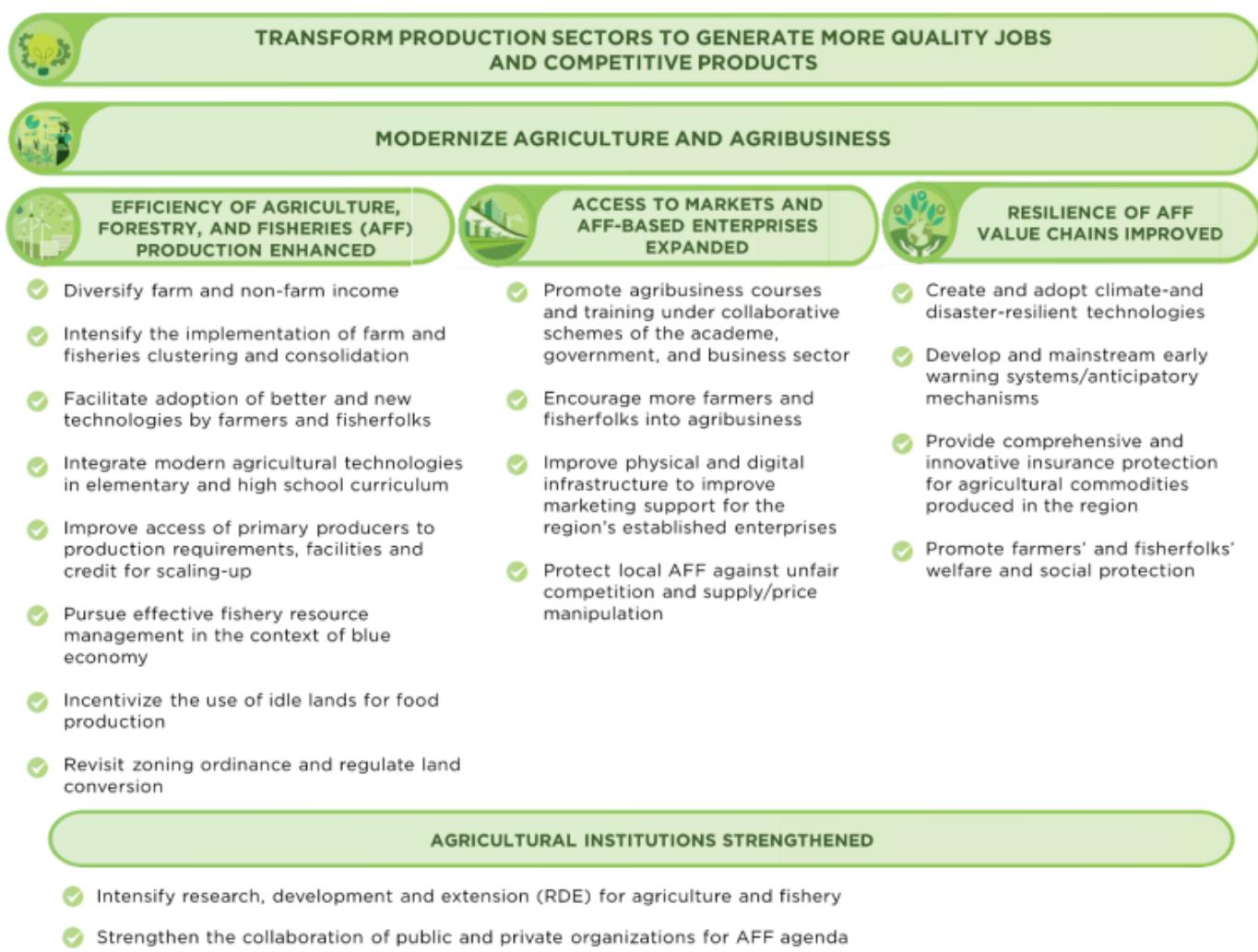
Central Visayas, despite its agricultural potential, faced various challenges in 2023 that impacted farmers and overall productivity. Threats from diseases such as avian influenza and foot and mouth disease, overfishing, high cost of agricultural inputs, and rising oil prices were some immediate issues that continued to affect agriculture's performance. Bohol's successful eradication of the African Swine Flu (ASF) disease in the province and increased cooperation among the provinces of Cebu and Negros Oriental on common protocol against the spread of the ASF in both provinces helped prop up the sector. Delay in the replacement of chicken broilers due to strict measures implemented by Central Visayas authorities to protect the region from the Avian Influenza (AI) virus or bird flu could have affected production. Global price hikes impacted the input costs for farmers, squeezing their margins and making it difficult to invest in essential resources. While unstable prices for agricultural products made it difficult for farmers to secure stable income. The lingering effects of the pandemic and disruptions in global trade affected the movement of agricultural goods. Many farmers still lacked access to modern technologies and advancements that could improve efficiency and productivity. The agricultural sector also continued facing challenges in attracting young people, creating concerns about the future of farming in the region.

Strategy Framework

The plan outlines four key outcomes for Central Visayas' agricultural sector: Enhanced Efficiency, Expanded Markets and Enterprises, Improved Resilience, and Strengthened Institutions. Through initiatives by the Department of Agriculture (DA) 7, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) 7, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) 7, Philippine Fiber Industry Authority (PhilFIDA) 7, and local government units (LGUs), farmers and fisherfolk are being led to diversify crops/fisheries and embrace technology to boost production and income. Support includes training, infrastructure, and land use initiatives. Attracting young talent through education and fostering value-adding activities like processing and marketing is also critical. This involves infrastructure improvements, digital platforms, and marketing efforts.

Climate-resilient technologies and information systems will be prioritized, alongside insurance coverage (via the DA 7 and Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation or PCIC) and social protection programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) 7 to build adaptability. Support for research institutions and universities will be bolstered, along with improved coordination between government agencies and collaboration with other stakeholders. Overall, the framework seeks to create a more secure, efficient, and resilient agricultural sector in Central Visayas through diversification, technology adoption, value chain development, and institutional strengthening.

Figure 2.3.1.1 Strategy Framework for Modernizing Agriculture and Agribusiness



Major PAPs

Major programs, projects, and activities in the region aimed mainly to address the strategies in the Regional Development Plan 2023-2028 are shown in [Annex C](#). The key implementing agencies of the programs are the Department of Agriculture Region (DA) 7, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) 7, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) 7, Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) 7, and the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation. The programs and their projects are recurring initiatives of the agencies in the region especially that recovery is still ongoing from the agricultural damage from typhoon Odette and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Philippine Coconut Authority 7 sustains the coconut production in the region by improving access of primary producers in the coconut industry to production requirements, facilities, and credit for scale-up through Sustainable Coconut Planting/Replanting of Local Cultivars and Seed Farm Development. The agency is also promoting diversification of farm and non-farm income by implementing the Incentivized Coconut Planting and Replanting Project and facilitating the adoption of better and new technologies through Rejuvenation thru Coconut Fertilization Program.

The Department of Agriculture 7 (DA 7) has several recurring initiatives in the region. To intensify the implementation of farm and fisheries clustering and consolidation (F2C2), the DA continues its ongoing Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) which is also used in extending farmers' and fisherfolk's welfare and social protection. The agency is incentivizing the use of idle lands and urban and peri-urban communities with idle plots for food production through the Special Area for Agricultural Development Program Urban, and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program, respectively. Moreover, the agency continues to encourage more farmers and fisherfolk into agribusiness through the programs on Rice, Livestock, Corn, High Value Crops Development, and Organic Agriculture. To create and adopt climate-change and disaster-resilient technologies, the DA 7 has submitted for endorsement for funding in 2025 the Proposed Retrofitting of the Philippine Rural Development Project Additional Funding (PRDP-AF 2) which aims to improve the income, productivity, and competitiveness of rural areas and targets specific geographic areas with high potential for agricultural and fisheries development. On the back of these initiatives, the DA 7 has the ongoing Research and Development studies program as its initiative on intensify research, development and extension (RDE) for agriculture and fishery strategy of the RDP.

The Philippine Fiber Development Authority (PhilFIDA) 7 is implementing the Fiber Development Program to sustain the fiber production in the region as fiber has been identified as one of the potential products that could be diversified for export. It also implements Fiber Industry Regulatory Program to deter supply/price manipulation.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) 7 has its Fisheries Development Program (BFAR) that ensures sustained fishery production. In support of the program on fishery production, the Philippine Fisheries and Coastal Resiliency (FishCoRe) Project which aims to revitalize the fisheries and aquaculture industries in strategic areas by addressing key challenges like access to quality fish fry, post-harvest losses, and climate vulnerability. It has been rolling out the Fisheries Regulatory and Law Enforcement Program to protect the fishery sector against unfair competition and supply/price manipulation. To promote agribusiness courses and training under collaborative schemes of the academe, government, and business sector, the BFAR is implementing the Fisheries Extension Program

Results Matrix

Preliminary assessment of the performance of the agriculture sector suggests improvement in most crops production. Many indicators reached or exceeded their annual targets for 2023 even with only preliminary data. Yield per hectare of crops have reached their target yield within the first semester of 2023 owing to the fruits of the recovery efforts initiated by the DA 7 post typhoon Odette. The significant drop in coconut production is due to the crops still recovering from physiological stress due to typhoon Odette devastation and the effects of coconut planting/replanting in 2022 and 2023 can be felt after 3-5 years.

Abaca production declined to unfavorable growing conditions brought about by rain and flooding. Registration of farmers in the Registry System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) dropped due to difficulty in reaching remote farming areas which brings attention to the delay of construction of farm-to-market roads attributed to sudden increase of construction material's cost right-of-way issues and unfavorable weather condition.

On fisheries, seaweed production declined because of disease whereas milkfish production was hampered by adverse weather. Tilapia production increased as fish farms shifted from catfish or carp production to the more marketable tilapia.

Table 2.3.1.1 Results Matrix for Modernizing Agriculture and Agribusiness

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Rice				
Hybrid Seeds	100	100	100	100
Inbred Seeds	100	100	100	100
Corn				
White corn seeds	100	100	100	100
Yellow corn seeds	100	100	100	100
Seeds	100	80	80	100
Planting materials	100	80	80	100
Organic				
Seeds	100	100	100	No more inputs distributed due to change in thrust and directives of the program
Planting materials	100	100	100	No more inputs distributed due to change in thrust and directives of the program
Livestock				
Inputs	75	90	90	100
Materials	100	100	100	100
Yield per Hectare				
Rice	3.03	3.62	3.8	3.12 *based on Jan-Sep 2023
White Corn	0.81	0.85	0.88	0.95 *based on Jan-Sep 2023
Mango	6.45	6.64	6.84	8.41 *1st semester performance only
Banana	10.28	10.59	10.91	12.69 *1st semester performance only
Mongo	0.48	0.49	0.51	0.42 *1st semester performance only
Peanut	0.81	0.83	0.86	1.04 *1st semester performance only
Cabbage	11.13	11.46	11.81	11.17 *1st semester performance only
Eggplant	6.11	6.29	6.48	6.43 *1st semester performance only
Tomato	7.54	7.77	8.00	8.47 *1st semester performance only
Ube	5.95	6.13	6.31	4.43 *1st semester performance only
Ginger	6.21	6.40	6.59	7.79 *1st semester performance only
Cacao	0.34	0.35	0.36	0.39 *1st semester performance only
Coffee	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.02

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
				*1st semester performance only
Number of Farm Clusters formed				
Rice	11	3	4	2
Corn	4	3	4	3
HVC	9	3	4	3
Organic	1	2	2	2
Livestock	1	1	2	1
Number of small farmers and fisherfolk groups organized and registered	109,729	120,702	132,772	111,807 (DA) 193,971 (BFAR)
Number of small farmers' associations organized and registered	96,751	106,426	117,069	122,814
Number of farmers registered in RSBSA	105,599	145,200	20,000	95,411
Number of Registered Fisherfolk (Group Beneficiaries)	98	179	215	298
Number of Agri-Aqua Fair exhibit conducted	300,000	2	2	8
Number of Fishing Gears/Paraphernalia Distributed	19,000,000	774	1066	851
Number of Seaweed Nurseries Established	455,000	3	8	3
Number of Cages for Livelihood	16,128	46	37	46
Number of regional AFF maps updated (fisheries, soil fertility and suitability maps)				
Number of IEC publications produced on resource conservation measures and compliance with fishery laws conducted	4,537	875	875	875
Mango				
Production level (mt)	60,533.63	62,349.95	64,220.45	90,829.19
Area harvested (has)	11,271.68	11,497.11	11,727.06	11,159.40
Yield per hectare	5.37	5.42	5.48	8.14
				*1st semester performance only
Coconut				
Production level(mt)-with husk	300,047.09	790,941	843,318	270,241.9
Area harvested (has)	112,050.00	117,653	123,535	112,371.1
Yield per hectare	28	56	57	26.52
Cacao				
Production level (mt) dried beans	53.90	54.79	56.43	58.92
Area harvested (has)				
Yield per hectare	267 0.20	272.34 0.20	277.79 0.20	149.468 0.39
				*1st semester performance only
Coffee				
Production level (mt) Green Coffee Beans	29.83	30.73	31.65	22.48
Area harvested (has)				
Yield per hectare	2,176.50 0.01	2,219.72 0.01	2,264.12 0.01	1,050.316 0.02
				*1st semester performance only
Bamboo				
Production level (mt) Bamboo Shoot only	107.74	115.99	119.47	38.73
Area harvested (has)	43.40	44.26	45.15	645.5

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
Yield per hectare	2.48	2.62	2.65	0.06 *1 st semester performance only
Abaca Production level (mt)	183.57	192.75	202.39	160.12
Volume of production (mt)				
Seaweeds	628,000	6	6	3.99
Milkfish	500,000	3,852	3,852	3,283
Tilapia	467,000	1,969.80	1,969.80	2,525
Carp	50,000	85.60	85.60	34.58
Catfish	50,000	82.65	82.65	55.6
	(allocation for Fingerlings distribution from BFAR managed hatcheries)			
FMRs constructed (in km)	52.75	77.94	93.53	15.69
Number of trade fairs	9	9	10	9
Market matching activities conducted	2	1	2	1
Rate of climate- and disaster-responsive technologies and innovations adopted	11,798,000	73	90	121
Crop Insurance Coverage				
Number of hectares/head/policies covered	45,606.78	44,919	49,400	44,959.48
- Rice	24,603.48	22,868	25,059	19,717.44
- Corn	17,485.38	14,047	15,734	13,398.33
- High Value Crops	296,773	347,399	375,483	376.00
- Livestock	204	234	306	1,427.00
- Fisheries	863	1,280	1,955	252,959
- Non-Crop Agri Assets	248,862	234,361	260,930	
Number of farmers covered				

Source: Department of Agriculture 7 and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources 7

Ways Forward

The region can move closer towards a thriving modernized and resilient agricultural sector - especially in improving agricultural production, reliability of harvest, and competitive pricing of farm-fisheries goods that offers improved market access, diversified income streams, and attractive career prospects for the next generation through the following priority strategies. Priority should be given to strategies that have less or yet to be given attention in the region particularly the dwindling number of agri-sector workers and the plight of farmers losing income due to recent market shocks and disasters.

Priority Strategies

Improve physical and digital infrastructure to improve marketing support for the region's established enterprise to mitigate risks faced by vulnerable groups

To revitalize Central Visayas' agricultural sector, a multi-pronged approach focusing on infrastructure development, income diversification, and human capital development is imperative. Firstly, addressing the physical and digital isolation of rural communities is crucial. Investments in robust farm-to-market roads, incorporating climate-resilient construction and multi-modal options are essential for connecting remote farms to markets and distribution hubs.

Modern cold storage facilities strategically placed near production areas will minimize post-harvest losses and extend shelf life for perishable goods, enhancing market value. Alongside physical infrastructure, a regional agricultural information platform providing real-time market data, price updates, weather forecasts, and best practices is vital for informed decision-making and improved marketing reach. E-commerce platforms that connect farmers directly to consumers should be promoted and integrated with digital literacy training programs. Priority allocation of budget resources towards strategic infrastructure projects, with an emphasis on public-private partnerships, will lay the groundwork for physical and digital development.

Diversify farm and non-farm income

Diversifying farm and non-farm income sources is crucial to reduce vulnerability to market shocks, climate risks, and disease outbreaks. Encouraging post-harvest processing, packaging, and branding of agricultural products through value-adding activities will increase market value and income for farmers. Promoting agri-tourism initiatives, including farm stays, educational tours, and rural festivals, can offer alternative revenue streams while showcasing the region's cultural heritage. To foster non-farm employment opportunities, skills training programs and support for micro-enterprises and cooperatives in rural areas should be implemented. Additionally, adopting climate-smart agricultural practices, such as drought-resistant crops, flood-resilient techniques, and sustainable aquaculture, will enhance long-term resilience and income stability. Financial and technical assistance through subsidies, grants, and loans can empower farmers and fisherfolk to adopt new technologies, diversify income sources, and access digital infrastructure. Building government personnel and extension worker capacity through training programs will ensure effective support for rural communities.

Promote agri-business courses and training under collaborative schemes of the academe, government, and business sector

Finally, there has to be more initiatives to foster a new generation of agri-entrepreneurs, farmers, and fishermen aside from helping existing agricultural workers and businessmen. Collaborative schemes between academic institutions, government agencies, and businesses are crucial in developing targeted agri-business courses and training programs aligned with regional needs and market demands. Fostering industry-academia partnerships through internships, field placements, and joint research projects will bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Implementing scholarship and incentive programs can attract young talent to the sector, while strengthening existing training institutions will ensure relevant skills development for rural communities. In addition, streamlining regulatory frameworks and streamlining licensing and permitting processes for agribusinesses will improve ease of operation and market access.

Legislative Agenda

Table 2.3.1.2 Legislative Agenda for Modernizing Agriculture and Agribusiness

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Strengthening the agricultural extension system	<p>This aims to provide additional funding for provincial LGUs to incentivize them in investing and/or improving the provincial agri-fishery extension system.</p> <p>The provincial LGU can pass local ordinance improving the agri-fishery extension system by capacitating agricultural extension workers (AEW) in providing extension services/ methods to farmers and fisherfolks; allocating a certain percentage of the LGU's total budget in agricultural extension services; designing enticing incentives for farmers and fisherfolks with improved productivity; and creating a feedback mechanism at the LGU level for farmers and fisherfolks.</p> <p>Implementers: DA, DAR, LGUs, BFAR</p>
Scholarship grants to promote Agriculture and Fisheries track	<p>This seeks to address the concern on the ageing farming population which calls for the provision of scholarship grants to students who want to pursue Agriculture and Fisheries track.</p> <p>The local legislation will also include the provision of start-up capital to provide graduates with capital to start their own business ventures.</p> <p>Implementers: LGU, DILG, CHED, DAR 7, DA 7</p>



Section 2.3.2

REVITALIZE INDUSTRY

Introduction

In 2022, the GRDP of Central Visayas grew 7.6% surpassing the 5.6% growth in 2021. The industry sector accounts 24.1%. The largest share in the industry sector is the manufacturing which accounts for 63.7%.

Creating a conducive business environment and ensuring a level playing field are essential for achieving the sector's growth potential. The reform of the PPP code anticipates increased private sector involvement, particularly benefiting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The MSMEs constitute the majority of the industry sector in terms of employment and asset size. Micro enterprises employs 1 to 9 individuals with maximum asset of PhP3.0 million. Small enterprises, on the other hand, employs 10 to 99 employees with maximum asset of PhP15.0 million while medium enterprises employs 100 to 199 employees with maximum asset of PhP100.0 million. Meanwhile, large enterprises has 200 employees or more and with assets exceeding PhP100.0 million.

In the 2022 List of Establishments Report by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), MSMEs account for 99.59% of establishments and 65.10% to total employment.

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) poses an inevitable threat to MSME employment, necessitating proactive government measures to address workforce displacement and formulate policies to mitigate future risks like the COVID-19 pandemic.

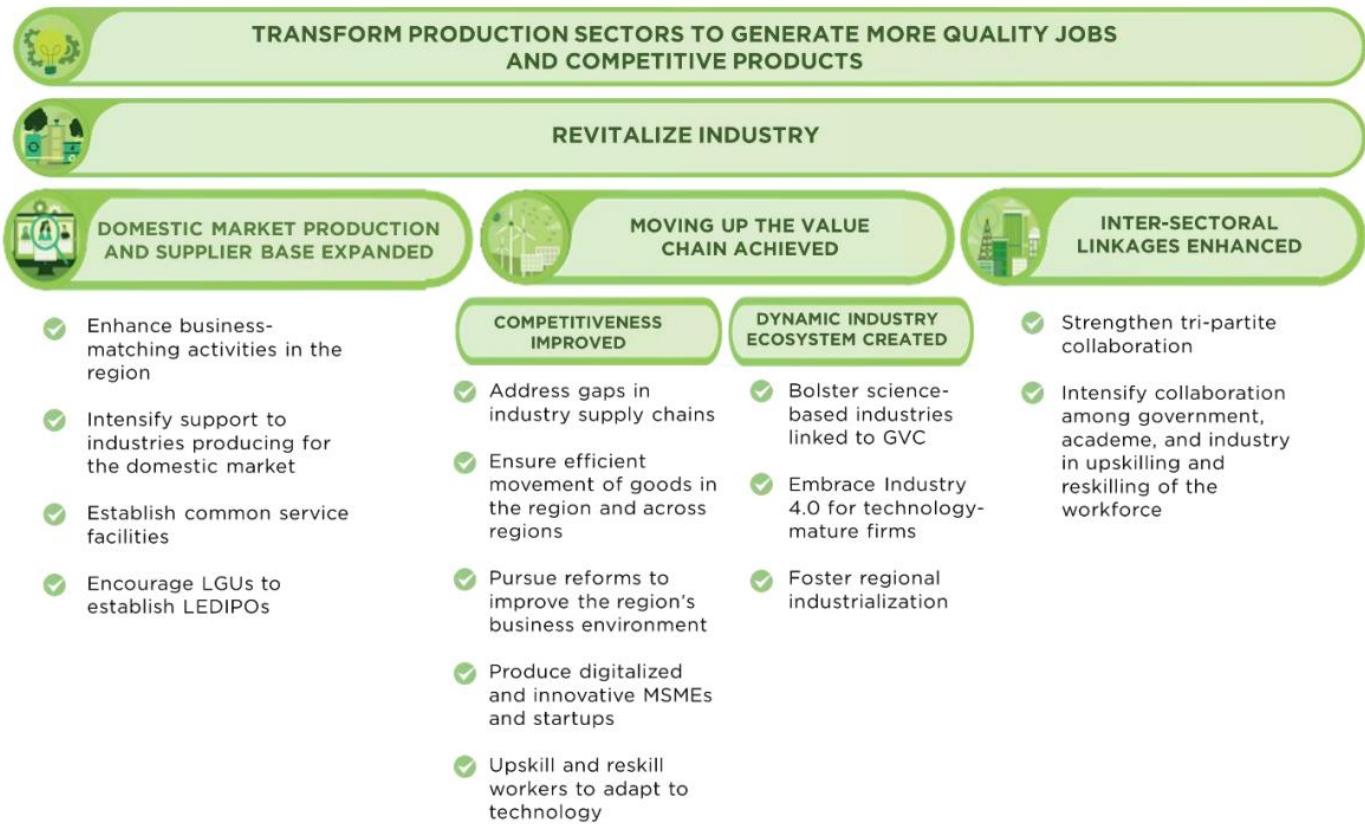
Given the substantial demand for labor and materials in the industry sector, the need to upgrade the region's skills training development, enhance support to startup enterprises, MSME digitalization, research and innovation, are necessary.

Strategy Framework

To foster the creation of higher-quality jobs and more competitive products, it is imperative to revitalize the industrial sector. This can be achieved through the expansion of the domestic market and supplier base, the advancement along the value chain, and the strengthening of inter-sectoral linkages. Broadening the domestic market production and supplier base entails enhancing business-matching activities, establishing common service facilities, and instituting Local Economic Development and Investment Promotion Offices (LEDIPOs).

Progressing along the value chain involves enhancing the competitiveness of industries and fostering a dynamic industry ecosystem. This dynamic ecosystem will facilitate improved access for firms, particularly Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), to science, technology, and innovation, which serve as pivotal drivers of industrialization.

Figure 2.3.2.1 Strategy Framework for Revitalizing Industry



Major PAPs

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) laid out programs, projects and activities towards creating a favorable economic and business environment in the region. These PAPs are the Industry Development Program and MSMEs Development Program (*See Annex D*).

The Industry Development Program outlines a multifaceted strategy designed to enhance economic growth by implementing targeted interventions in key priority sectors. These priority sectors include cacao, coffee, bamboo, PFN (processed fruits and nuts), W&H (wearable and home-style), and the creative industries. By directing attention and resources to these sectors, the program seeks to create a more resilient and diverse economic landscape.

Another critical element in the Industry Development Program is the establishment of an innovation ecosystem through entities such as Research and Innovation Committee (RICOM) and Regional Inclusive Innovation Center (RIIC). These structures are envisioned as catalysts for fostering innovation and technological advancements in the industry sector aimed to propel industries towards higher levels of competitiveness.

The increase and continuous support to the creative industries underscores its vital contributors to economic growth. This program employs a collaborative approach, utilizing focus group discussions (FGDs) and consultative sessions to harness the collective creativity of stakeholders.

Lastly, the implementation of the Cities and Municipalities Competitive Index (CMCI) survey is a vital program in assessing and benchmarking the competitiveness of different localities. This index provides a comprehensive evaluation of the economic dynamism, government efficiency, infrastructure, and overall competitiveness of cities and municipalities. This information is invaluable for strategic planning, as it helps identify best practices, encourages healthy competition among localities, and guides the allocation of resources for sustainable development.

Results Matrix

Shown below are the indicators monitored by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 7 to assess the implementation effectiveness of its programs, projects, and activities.

Table 2.3.2.1 Results Matrix for Revitalizing Industry

INDICATOR	BASELINE	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	
Number of MSMEs SSF beneficiaries increased	4,670	2,750	3,000	3,164
Number of OTOP MSMEs assisted increased	1,141	891	766	1,187
Sales from OTOP MSMEs assisted increased, PhP million	614.40	504.00	651.50	736.35
Sales from non-OTOP MSMEs assisted increased, PhP million		30.00	33.00	30.97

Source: DTI 7

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 7 has exceeded its target for the number of beneficiaries of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) shared-service facilities (SSF). The actual number of beneficiaries has grown by 15.05% compared to the 2023 target of 2,750 MSMEs. Although the actual percentage of SSF in operation fell short of its 2023 target by 4 percentage points (see section 2.3.3), the increase of the MSMEs SSF beneficiaries is attributed to the sustained operationalization of most SSFs.

The number of assisted OTOP MSME's has exceeded its target of 891 by a substantial 33.22%, equivalent to 1,187 OTOP MSMEs. The growth is attributed to the support to the RA 119601 or the OTOP Law, which facilitated opportunities for MSMEs to advance and fortify their businesses.

Similarly, OTOP sales have significantly surpassed the 2023 target of PhP504 million, reaching an impressive 46.1% increase or a total of PhP736.35 million in sales. This notable growth can be attributed to the proactive organization of trade fairs, capacity development and skills training, workshops and seminars, establishment of OTOP hubs, and various market matching activities.

Additionally, in terms of non-OTOP sales of assisted MSMEs, the DTI 7 recorded PHP 30.97 million, exceeding the target by a margin of only 3.25%. Nonetheless, all sales of assisted MSMEs surpassed their 2023 targets.

Ways Forward

The RDC Economic Development Committee (EDC) will continue to push for strategies that will promote for better movement of goods and services and market expansion.

Priority Strategies

Ensure efficient movement of goods in the region and across regions

This will involve the construction of better transport and logistics infrastructure, as well as, sufficient and strategically located facilities and terminals. Efficient transport facilities and logistics process will ensure timely provision of production inputs and outputs to users and markets at affordable and predictable prices.

The EDC will continue for reforms to improve port management and services of shipping industry. It will collaborate with LGUs, Cebu Port Authority, Philippine Ports Authority and Maritime Industry Authority to require shipping lines to adopt e-ticketing and cashless transaction to ease port congestion due to queues for the purchase of tickets and terminal fees as paid separately.

Bolster science-based industries linked to the global value chain

This aims to build supply chain resilience for science-based industry, adopt a probabilistic mindset to better prepare for the new normal, intensify promotion of the Strategic Investment Priority Plan, and promote and strengthen industry clustering.

Legislative Agenda

The region will push for policies that will make the industry efficient and competitive.

Table 2.3.2.2 Legislative Agenda for Revitalizing Industry

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Science Technology Parks Act	This proposes the establishment of Science and Technology Parks (STP) to promote the culture of competitiveness and innovation through active promotion of investments from tech-based enterprises and knowledge-based institutions.
Philippine Ports Corporation Act	This seeks to separate the conflicting commercial and regulatory functions of the PPA by transferring the regulatory functions to MARINA and converting PPA in the Philippine Ports Corporation.



Section 2.3.3

REINVIGORATE SERVICES

Introduction

The Central Visayas economy is dominated by the services sector which is largely attributed to the contribution of the accommodation and food service activities subsector. The integration of innovative and advanced technologies to the services sector is crucial to sustain its high-growth momentum. This involves, among other measures, introducing cashless transactions in public spaces like ports, transportation hubs, and public markets. This is exemplified by the endorsement of RDC 7 for the PalengQR PH Plus by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). Moreover, the RDC 7's proposal to the Cebu Ports Authority (CPA) and the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) for the full implementation of e-ticketing transactions in all seaports in Central Visayas would establish a resilient supply chain, thereby attracting increased investments from both local and foreign companies.

Further, according to the latest FY 2022 Provincial Product Accounts report from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) 7, the services sector contributes significantly, constituting 74.0% or PhP126.61 billion for the Province of Bohol, 61.3% or PhP237.91 billion for the Province of Cebu, 71.3% or PhP118.68 billion for the Province of Negros Oriental, and 72.2% or PhP8.68 billion for the Province of Siquijor. Additionally, two of the three highly urbanized cities in the region are also characterized by a services-oriented economy, except for Lapu-Lapu City, which is an industry-driven economy.

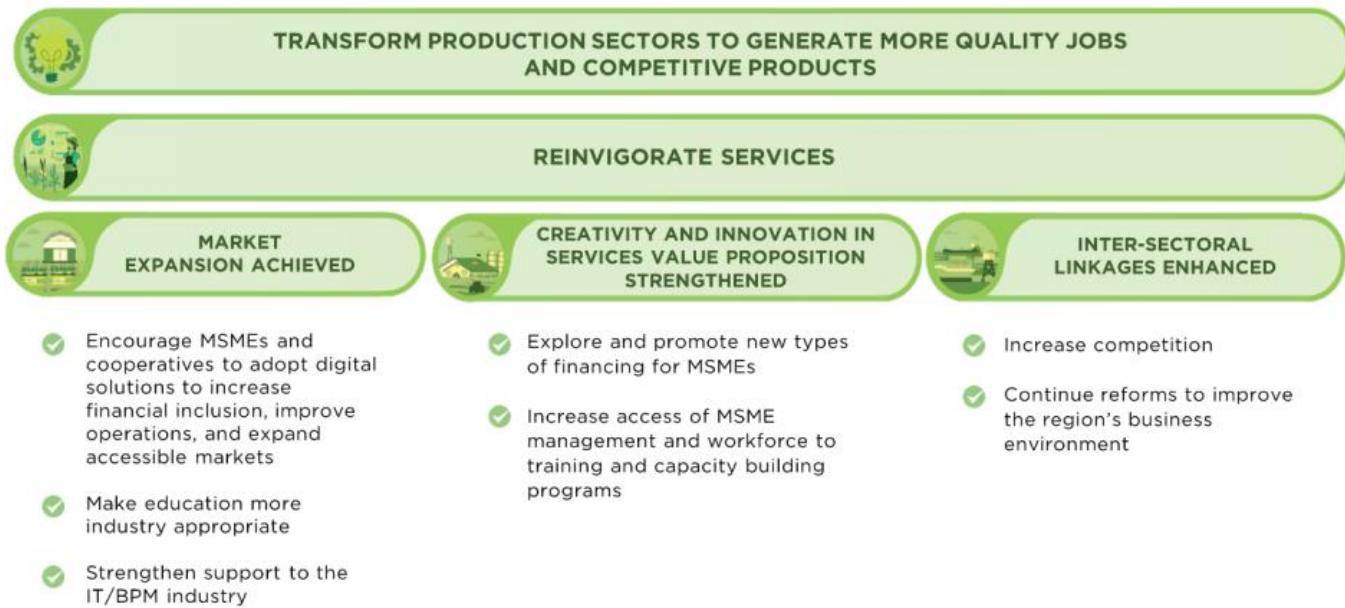
The impact of the fourth industrial revolution provides benefits to the efficiency of operation of the services sector. However, it also poses threat of job displacement. This is exemplified by the utilization of companies like IT/BPM of the Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI). It is imperative that workers in the sector need to up-skill and/or re-skill to adapt to these changes.

Strategy Framework

Being the largest contributor to the region's GRDP, it is essential to formulate programs and projects aimed at reinvigorating the services sector. This includes, among other initiatives, enhancing support for the IT/BPM industry, promoting the adoption of digital solutions by MSMEs and cooperatives to enhance financial inclusion, operational efficiency, and market expansion. Additionally, exploring innovative financing options for MSMEs, providing increased access to training and capacity-building programs for MSME management and workforce, and continuing the reform agenda to enhance the region's business climate are vital components.

The implementation of these identified strategies will not only reinvigorate the services sector but also lead to a transformation of the production sectors, resulting in the creation of higher-quality jobs and more competitive products.

Figure 2.3.3.1 Strategy Framework for Reinvigorating Services



Major PAPs

Initiatives were put in place to foster a conducive economic and business landscape in the region. These initiatives were spearheaded by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as outlined in their Industry Development Program and MSMEs Development Program (*See Annex E*).

The program outlines a comprehensive framework known as the MSME Development Program, comprising various initiatives designed to empower and strengthen micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). This strategic program addresses different dimensions crucial for the holistic development of MSMEs, reflecting a concerted effort to foster innovation, enhance institutional capacities, and promote market access.

Further, the program focuses on fostering an environment conducive to innovation and startups. Components such as FieStartUp, Startupisland.PH (SIPH), and Fabrication Laboratory (FabLab) highlight a commitment to nurturing entrepreneurship by providing essential resources, support networks, and innovation hubs.

Recognizing the significant contribution of the creative industries to economic growth, the MSME development program promotes ecosystem development for the creative industry. Events like AYO 2024, Cebu Design Week, and Philippine Creative Industries Month (PCIM) signify a proactive approach to harnessing the potential of creative enterprises, showcasing a commitment to their growth and recognition. In addition, the importance of strengthening the MSME Council ensures a more effective and coordinated approach to policymaking, advocacy, and support for MSMEs.

To enhance market access for MSMEs, the MSME development program incorporates initiatives such as the One Town One Product Program (OTOP), Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) Program, and MSME Digitalization Program. These initiatives aim to broaden market reach, promote digital transformation, and empower MSMEs with the tools needed to thrive in a competitive marketplace.

The inclusion of the Shared Service Facilities (SSF) project underscores the commitment to providing shared resources and facilities for MSMEs, reducing operational costs and enhancing overall productivity. The inclusion of CARP indicates a commitment to address the needs of MSMEs in the agricultural sector, aligning with broader agrarian reform goals and rural development.

The MSME Development Program represents a holistic approach to empower small and medium enterprises by integrating innovation support, creative industry development, institutional strengthening, market access initiatives, shared resources, and sector-specific interventions. The MSME development program seeks to create an enabling environment for MSMEs to thrive, contribute to economic growth, and foster a more inclusive and resilient economy.

Results Matrix

Number of Negosyo Centers Established. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 7 aimed to establish 77 Negosyo Centers in the region. However, with the robust support from the Provincial Government of Negros Oriental and the Municipal Government of Ayungon, a new Negosyo Center was established in the Municipality of Ayungon, surpassing the target by one. This collaboration brings DTI assistance closer to the local community, thereby fostering local economic development.

Percentage of SSF in Operation Increased. Despite notable progress, challenges persist in achieving the full operational status of Shared-Service Facilities (SSF). The failure to reach the targeted 95% operational status of Shared-Service Facilities (SSF) can be attributed to various factors. These include the disposal of SSF facilities damaged by Typhoon Odette, ongoing renovation of SSF facilities affected by the typhoon, dissolution of SSF cooperatives, transfer of SSF to other qualified organizations, waiting for the local government unit (LGU) counterpart (such as electricity supply, etc.), continuous power outages, and the completion of LGU and agency partnerships (e.g., TESDA and Siquijor for NC2 trainings).

Percentage of Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) Certificate Applications Processed within one day. The DTI 7 has achieved a zero backlog in issuing Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) Certificates, surpassing the target by 5 percentage points. The actual accomplishment for 2023 reached 100%, exceeding the 95% target. The BMBE certificate provides advantages for micro businesses, exempting them from income tax charges and minimum wage implementation. Furthermore, it opens a favorable credit window for obtaining loans. The BMBE certificate is accessible online.

Table 2.3.3.1 Results Matrix for Reinvigorating Services

INDICATOR	BASELINE	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	
Number of Negosyo Centers established	77	77	78	78
% of Barangay Micro Business Enterprise certificate applications processed within prescribed time (1 day)	95%	95%	95%	100%
% of Shared Service Facilities (SSF) in operation	95%	95%	95%	91%

Source: Department of Trade and Industry 7

Ways Forward

The RDC Economic Development Committee (EDC), during its Strategic Action Planning Workshop in 2023, collaboratively highlighted priorities to revitalize industry in the region, to wit:

Priority Strategies

Trade Subsector

Passage of LGU ordinance as a support to “Buy Lokal, Go Lokal” initiative of DTI 7. In line with the RDC resolution enjoining LGUs to pass an ordinance with provisions allocating at least 10 percent of the total value of procured goods and services to be supplied from MSMEs, and setting up of an MSMEs registry, the EDC thru DTI 7 will monitor support from LGUs to be reported during EDC meeting.

LGU ordinance incentivizing the use of QR Ph digital payment. This aims to push for the support from LGUs to issue policies and ordinances to incentivize or mandate the use of QR Ph digital payment by market vendors, tricycles and other merchants. Technical assistance shall be provided by an appropriate agency.

IT/BPM Subsector

Support studies that focus on shaping the policy environment for online work. This looks into studies that focus on the welfare of online workers and the challenges faced. A review of the relevant existing and proposed laws shall be conducted, and propose for enhancement, as necessary, to create an enabling conducive environment for online work.

Legislative Agenda

The table below shows the proposed legislative measures to the services sector.

Table 2.3.3.2 Legislative Agenda for Reinvigorating Services

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Tax incentives for adopting digital technologies (e.g., e-commerce)	This proposal aims to encourage more MSMEs to adopt e-commerce by granting tax incentives for the adoption of relevant digital technologies.
Institutionalization of the Local Economic Development Investment and Promotions Office (LEDIPO) and usage of the eBPLS in the LGUs to cater to the needs of MSMEs	The LEDIP office shall facilitate the preparation and implementation of the LGUs Investment Priority Plan. This unit shall, among others, advocate and promote policies that will encourage local investments.



Source: DOST

Section 2.3.4

ADVANCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION

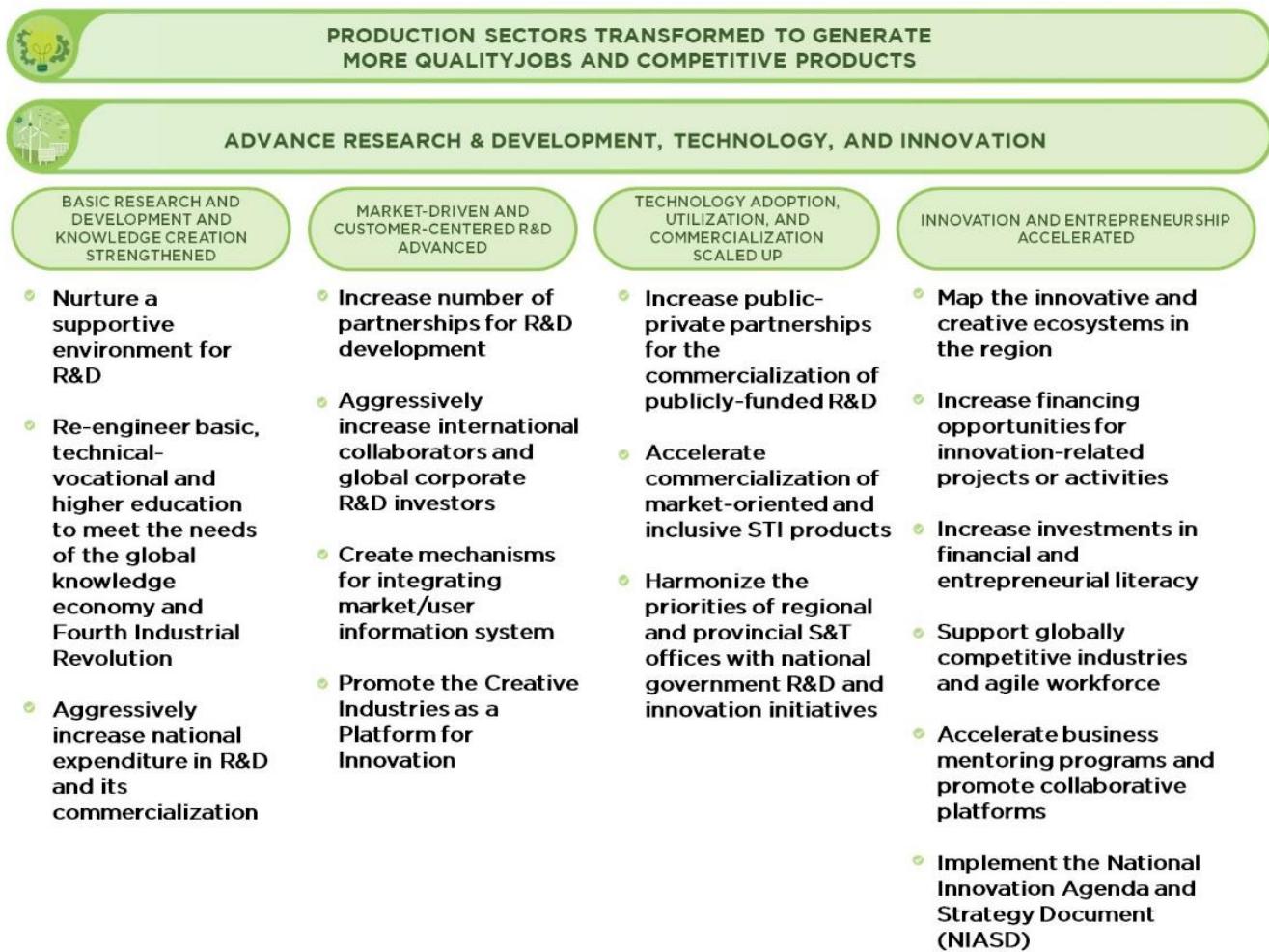
Introduction

The goal of the CV-RDP is to transform the production sectors to generate more quality jobs and competitive products. One of the strategies to achieve this goal is to advance research and development (R&D), technology, and innovation. Enterprises of all sizes need to innovate to transform their production capability and provide higher-order goods and services, generating higher-paying jobs in the process. In Central Visayas, the key R&D, technology, and innovation agencies have been supporting researchers through funding, and assisting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to scale up and grow.

Strategy Framework

As shown in the framework to advance R&D, technology, and innovation, a variety of sub-strategies are laid out in the Plan to achieve four outcomes: basic R&D and knowledge creation strengthened, market-driven and customer-centered R&D advanced, technology adoption, utilization, and commercialization scaled up, and innovation and entrepreneurship accelerated. Most PAPs implemented in 2023 were geared towards achieving two or three of the outcomes at the same time.

Figure 2.3.4.1 Strategy Framework for Advancing R&D, Technology, and Innovation



Major PAPs

The major programs, activities, and projects (PAPs) of the innovation sector are geared towards transforming the production sectors to generate more quality jobs and competitive products through R&D, technology, and innovation (*See Annex F*). The PAPs of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) 7 that help achieve this goal are the Local Grants-in-Aid (LGIA) Program, the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP), and the Community Empowerment through Science and Technology (CEST) Program. Also supportive of this goal are the various activities under the Industry and MSME Development Programs of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 7. The details of these programs are elaborated in the annex.

Shepherding R&D products into utilization and commercialization had been challenging. In particular, the technology transfer process was lengthy due to rigorous evaluation requirements, including the mandatory fairness evaluation stipulated by Republic Act (RA) 10055, also known as the Technology Transfer Law. These necessary assessments

contribute to a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation process, ensuring the equitable and thorough transfer of technology. The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) 7 has been assisting researchers in this process.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 7 initiated programs to assist MSMEs in the creative industries. The Plan recognizes creative industries as a platform for innovation. In 2023, DTI 7 organized the first Philippine Creative Industries Development Month, gathering the agents of the region's creative ecosystem to discuss challenges and strategies. This is in line with the Creative Industries Development Act that lapsed into law in 2022.

Results Matrix

Most 2023 targets have either been exceeded or slightly below target. Agencies will implement their 2024 PAPs in order to catch-up and meet the 2024 targets. The 16 academe-industry-government R&D linkages made in 2023 were slightly above the 2023 target of 15 linkages. In addition, there were 27 publicly developed or funded Knowledge and Technologies transferred by commercialization, extension or public good in 2023. This was below the target of 30 due to the rigorous evaluation requirements of the technology transfer process.

In 2023, 47 MSMEs were provided with innovation-enabling funds under the SETUP, slightly below the target of 50 firms. The region will target to provide SETUP funds to 53 MSMEs in 2024. A total of 65 Science and Technology (S&T) consultancy services under SETUP were provided in 2023, in line with the target. DOST 7 hopes to provide the same number of S&T consultancy services in 2024.

Relatedly, DTI 7 coached and mentored seven (7) creative startups through various activities under the MSME Development Program, such as FABLABS, FieStartUp, StartUp Island PH, AYO Roadshow, Philippine Creatives Industries Development Month, Cebu Design Week, and other creative industry development activities. DTI 7 targets to 10 creative startups coached in 2024.

Table 2.3.4.1 Results Matrix for Advancing R&D, Technology, and Innovation

INDICATORS	BASELINE	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Gross expenditure on Research & Development (R&D)	0.20 (2018)	0.20	0.20	Survey on-going
Academe-industry-government R&D linkages increased	10 (2022)	15	18	16
Number of publicly developed/funded knowledge and technologies transferred by commercialization, extension, or public good	25 (2022)			
Number of adopters of publicly developed/funded technologies	30 (2022)	33	35	27
Number of qualified startups coached and mentored				
• Technology Startups	1 (2022)	1	2	1
• Creative Startups*	None available	7	10	7
Number of MSMEs provided with SETUP innovation-enabling funds	50 (2022)	50	53	47
Number of S&T consultancy services provided under SETUP	62 (2022)	65	65	65

Source: Department of Science and Technology 7 and *Department of Trade and Industry 7

Ways Forward

The Central Visayas region aims to keep gross expenditure on research & development at 20 percent of the gross regional domestic product for 2024. Targeting a base level of R&D funding and advocating for more funding support will help ensure that PAPs will continue to be implemented and expanded to spur innovation and increase the region's production capacity.

Priority Strategies

The region will continue to pursue a stronger coordination between academe, industry and government to develop human resources for higher value services in order for the region to diversify exports. This shall be supported by enabling infrastructure through common service facilities such as cold storage, fabrication laboratories (FabLabs), Advanced Manufacturing Centers utilizing additive 3D printing technology, and Shared Service Facilities.

Nurture a Supportive Environment for R&D

The Local Grants-in-Aid (LGIA) Program of the Department of Science and Technology 7 (DOST 7) funds diverse scientific and technological initiatives, including research and development, technology transfer, and human resources development. By increasing partnerships through Science for Change Programs (S4CP), such as Niche Centers in the Regions for R&D (NICER), Collaborative R&D to Leverage PH Economy (CRADLE), Business Innovation through Science and Technology (BIST), and R&D Leadership (RDLead), the LGIA Program intends to strengthen basic R&D and knowledge creation.

The NEDA 7 and Cebu Technological University (CTU) are collaborating on a joint undertaking to develop the Project AGILE (Academe-Government-Industry Linkage Endeavour), an online research portal for the Central Visayas Regional Development Research Council (RDRC) to ensure that research resources in the region are fully utilized. The Project AGILE would also facilitate access to development research outputs; determine the extent of implementation, dissemination, and utilization of these studies; provide information on funding opportunities; generate research-related reports; and serve as a monitoring tool in the implementation of the RDRA.

Accelerate Commercialization of Market-Oriented and Inclusive STI Products

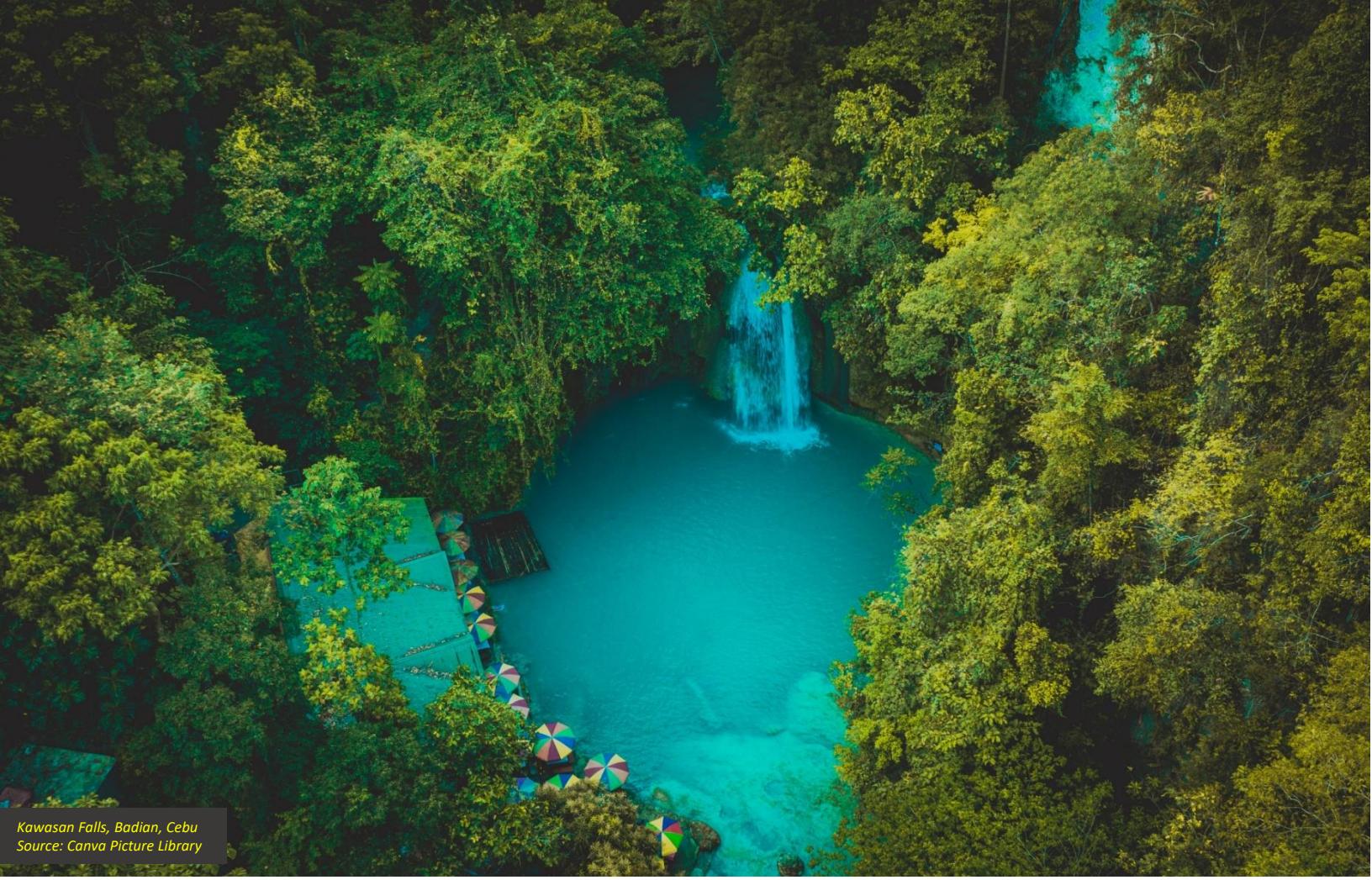
The SETUP program helps MSMEs adopt technology innovations, while the CEST program provides livelihood and alleviates poverty in remote communities. Starting 2024, the Smart and Sustainable Cities and Communities (SMART) Program will deliver transformative science and technology products and services, enhance capabilities to support smart and sustainable development, promote the adoption of these technologies within local government units, and actively engage in policy advocacy and formulation to ensure impactful and sustainable outcomes.

Legislative Agenda

The DOST 7 advocates for two legislative measures. The DOST OneLab Act aims to boost the testing and calibration capacity of the agency, providing MSMEs the much-needed standardized testing to help commercialize new products. The DOST Regional Office Act aims to boost the Science and Technology services in the regions by augmenting the human resources of the regional offices.

Table 2.3.4.2 Legislative Agenda for Advancing R&D, Technology, and Innovation

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
1. DOST OneLab Act	Recognizing its substantial impact in providing testing and calibration services to over 500,000 customers, the Act aims to secure sustained funding to expand its capabilities and ensure its long-term viability.
2. DOST Regional Office Act	This act aims to elevate the impact of S&T programs and services at the regional level by placing a significant focus on augmenting human resources.



Kawasan Falls, Badian, Cebu
Source: Canva Picture Library

Section 2.3.5

REINVIGORATE TOURISM

Introduction

Central Visayas remains bullish in its efforts to continue being a key player in the Philippine tourism industry, implementing initiatives that stakeholders hope would create a vibrant and innovative tourism landscape in the region. Wanting to maintain the region's position as a destination of choice, the Department of Tourism (DOT) 7 pursued programs, activities, and projects aimed at restoring travel confidence; supporting tourism-related businesses to adapt and survive; promoting domestic tourism; and providing clear information to travelers and businesses to limit uncertainty.

Strategy Framework

The DOT is employing a whole-of-society approach to maximize the gains brought about by the faster-than-expected recovery of the tourism industry. It is counting on the unwavering support of both the government and the private sector in attaining its goal of enhancing tourism experience, improving connectivity, and promoting equality in tourism development. In 2023, the DOT implemented all the programs, activities, and projects it had identified to lead to the realization of all seven outcomes.

Figure 2.3.5.1 Strategy Framework for Reinvigorating Tourism



Major PAPs

The major programs, activities, and projects (PAPs) of the tourism sector aim to transform the production sectors to generate more quality jobs and competitive products by reinvigorating the tourism industry. The Department of Tourism's PAPs that help achieve this goal are presented in [Annex G](#).



Results Matrix

Half of the targets set by DOT 7 for 2023 have been exceeded while the remaining half either nearly hit the target or on target.

Tourist arrivals to the region in 2023 exceeded the target by 125%. Partial data from DOT showed that more than 6.13 million tourist arrivals—foreign, domestic, and overseas Filipinos (Philippine passport holders who are permanently residing abroad)—in Central Visayas were recorded in 2023, surpassing its visitor arrival target of 4.91 million or a growth rate of 70.45%. For 2024, DOT 7 is targeting to bring 6,397,152 tourist into the region.

Also exceeding targets were the number of accredited enterprises as part of Standards Development and Enforcement Program at 228%, and the number of trainings conducted (213%) and number of persons trained (295%) under the Tourist Industry Skills Program. DOT 7 accredited the increase to its partnerships with provincial tourism offices, which have contributed to the increased number of persons trained under the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence training.

The only target that was nearly hit was the number of product development activities conducted for Market and Product Development Program, at 93%. DOT 7 reported that this is a continuing program that is now more focused on market development.



Table 2.3.5.1 Results Matrix for Reinvigorating Tourism

INDICATOR	BASELINE	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
Number of visitor arrivals	3,594,307 (2022)	4,911,966	6,397,152	6,126,274*
Number of established tourist rest areas	5 (2022)			3
Number of tourism strategies, policies, and action plans developed		6		6
Number of technical assistance provided to tourism stakeholders				
Local Government Units (LGUs)		121		121
Non-LGUs		19		19
Percentage of entities assisted who rated the technical assistance as satisfactory		100%		100%
Percentage of target industry trained that rated the services as satisfactory		100%		100%
Percentage of attendees/trainees that completed the training		100%		100%
Number of persons trained				
LGUs		800		934
Industry personnel		2000		7326

INDICATOR	BASELINE	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Number of trainings conducted		60		128
Percentage of accredited tourism enterprises that maintained the tourism standards and regulations		90%		91%
Percentage of accreditation applications acted upon within the prescribed period		90%		100%
Number of accredited enterprises		918		2089
Percentage increase in number of products developed and/or enhanced		5%		5%
Number of travel trade development/support activities conducted		29		43
Number of consumer activations conducted/support activities conducted		14		18
Number of product development activities conducted		67		62

Source: Partial report from the Department of Tourism 7

Ways Forward

For 2024, the DOT will push harder to bring about the continual transformation needed to make the Philippines a tourism powerhouse, as envisioned by the current administration. It has added more initiatives to its existing lineup to attract more tourists into the region.

Priority Strategies

The region's tourism sector will continue to implement PAPs that will anchor on its seven-point agenda to attain the following outcomes, namely (1) tourism experience enhanced, (2) connectivity of tourism destinations improved, and (3) equality in tourism development promoted. Below are the strategies that DOT 7 will employ to develop the region's tourism industry further.

Foremost of these strategies are diversifying the portfolio of tourism products and services, and promoting domestic tourism through tourism circuits and in coordination with the DPWH using its Tourism Road Infrastructure Project Prioritization Criteria.

For 2024, the DOT has appropriated P27.18 for the implementation of initiatives to promote multidimensional tourism with the end goal of maximizing domestic tourism. Its PAPs for 2024-2025 include assisting stakeholders in developing and marketing various tourism products, participating in travel fairs and sales missions, and supporting activities in support of the various tourism product offerings.



Photo Source: Department of Tourism 7

Legislative Agenda

DOT 7 is pushing for the passage of legislation mandating the appointment of a tourism officer in local government units in provinces, cities, and municipalities where tourism is a significant industry.

Table 2.3.5.1 Legislative Agenda for Reinvigorating Tourism

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Enable the mandatory appointment of tourism officers in the provincial, city, and municipal LGUs where tourism is a significant industry	Tourism Act of 2009 states that “Every province, city, or municipality in which tourism is a significant industry shall have a permanent position for a tourism officer.” However, most LGUs have not complied with this provision since the Local Government Code of 1991 has no expressed provision to appoint tourism officers.



CV-RDP Launching, 8 August 2023
Source: RDC 7 Secretariat

CHAPTER 3

Promoting Social Development and Transformation

Social development and transformation is an essential component of economic development. It is what makes economic growth inclusive.

This chapter discusses the initiatives and accomplishments of Central Visayas in 2023 along the following social development sub-sectors: (a) advancing universal healthcare and nutrition; (b) improving access to quality education towards learning recovery; (c) building sustainable settlements and well-planned communities; (d) increasing income-earning ability towards quality employment and livelihood; and (e) sustaining the provision of social safety nets. Various social development indicators suggest that the region made some headways in some social development outcomes but failed to make significant progress in others. For instance, Central Visayas was able to reduce unemployment rate to 4.7 in 2023 from 5.9 in 2022 but failed to create significant accomplishment in addressing the housing backlog.

Based on the progress of the region in attaining the plan targets, priority strategies that need to be pursued in the next two years are also identified.



DOH Medical Services

Source: DOH CV- CHD Official Facebook, Posted on 4 May 2023

Section 3.1

ADVANCING UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE AND NUTRITION

This section presents an assessment of the implementation of the Central Visayas strategies for advancing universal healthcare and nutrition. It shows the status of attainment of the targets for the following outcomes: (a) healthy environment, behaviors, and choices promoted; and (b) healthcare system strengthened. It further presents the status of the major programs, activities and projects (PAPs) implemented by government to pursue these outcomes as well as the priority strategies to be adopted in the next two years to achieve the overall goal of accessible and quality universal healthcare and nutrition.

While gains have been noted in some health outcomes, the challenges observed in the past years in advancing preventive healthcare, developing a healthy environment, and delivering quality, timely, and affordable healthcare persist.



Source: Cebu Daily News

Section 3.1.1

BOOST HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Introduction

This section presents an assessment of the implementation of the Central Visayas strategies for advancing universal healthcare and nutrition. It shows the status of attainment of the targets for the following outcomes: (a) healthy environment, behaviors, and choices promoted; and (b) healthcare system strengthened. It further presents the status of the major programs, activities and projects (PAPs) implemented by government to pursue these outcomes as well as the priority strategies to be adopted in the next two years to achieve the overall goal of accessible and quality universal healthcare and nutrition.

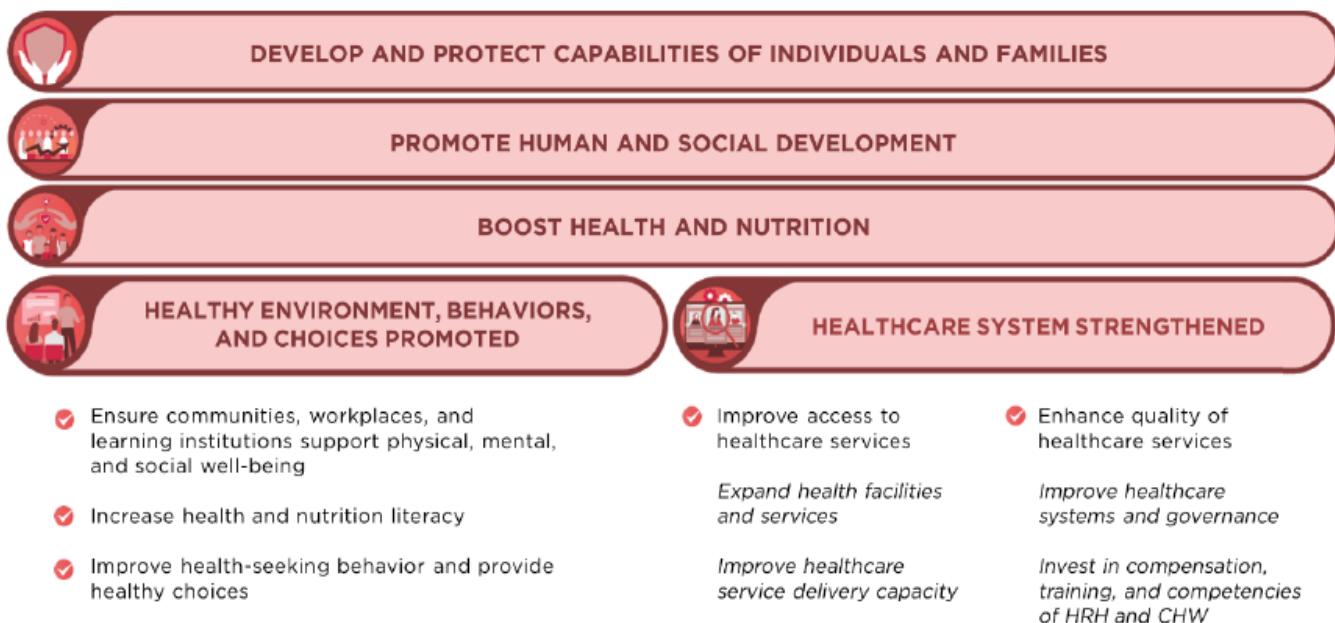
While gains have been noted in some health outcomes, the challenges observed in the past years in advancing preventive healthcare, developing a healthy environment, and delivering quality, timely, and affordable healthcare persist.

Strategy Framework

Central Visayas aims to boost health and nutrition as means for promoting human and social development. The strategies for boosting health and nutrition involve a holistic approach in improving healthcare service delivery and promoting healthier lifestyle.

The following strategies were identified to achieve the two health outcomes: (a) healthy environment, behaviors, and choices promoted by ensuring that communities, workplaces, and learning institutions support physical, mental and social wellbeing, increasing health and nutrition literacy and improving health-seeking behavior and providing healthy choices; and (b) healthcare system strengthened by improving access to healthcare services and enhancing the quality of healthcare services. The figure below shows the strategy framework for advancing universal healthcare and

Figure 3.1.1.1 Strategy Framework for Boosting Health and Nutrition



Major PAPs

The Department of Health - Central Visayas Center for Health Development (CV-CHD) continued to implement various programs that address concerns on infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, mental health, and substance abuse through the Public Health Management Program. This includes sub-programs such as: (a) Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases Program; (b) National AIDS/STI Prevention and Control Program; (c) National Tuberculosis Control Program; (d) Lifestyle Related Disease Control and Prevention Program; (e) Mental Health Program; and (f) National Immunization Program, to name a few (*See Annex H*).

In 2023, the DOH CV-CHD launched the “*Chikiting Ligtas 2023: Join the Big Catch Up, Magpabakuna para sa Healthy Pilipinas!*” This was an additional immunization initiative aimed at vaccinating children against measles-rubella, along with the oral polio vaccine (MR-OPV) to increase the overall immunization coverage of children in the region. A series of HIV/AIDS and STI Awareness Caravans for the young adolescents in selected higher education institutions (HEIs) were also conducted in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education 7 (CHED 7). School-to-school HIV awareness seminars and school-based HIV screening activities were conducted within Metro Cebu to curb the increasing number of newly diagnosed HIV cases in the 15-24 age group.

Another important program of the DOH is the Environmental Health and Safe Setting Program. This aims to deliver efficient, effective and relevant programs that would lead to the reduction of environmental and occupational related diseases, disabilities and deaths through mitigation of hazards and risks in the environment and workplaces. The Healthy Communities Campaign was implemented in the LGUs with the Community Health Promotion Handbook as guide.

The DOH CV-CHD also implemented the Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP), which aims to improve public health facilities by constructing new, upgrading, and rehabilitating existing public health facilities such as barangay health stations, rural health units and LGU hospitals. In addition, 24 Super Health Centers were funded under the GAA 2023 in an effort to bring primary care facilities closer to the communities. Super Health Centers offer a wide range of healthcare services including outpatient, birthing, isolation, diagnostic, and ambulatory surgical unit, among others.

To ensure that DOH projects funded through the HFEP were implemented in a timely manner, the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPCMC) closely monitored the projects. Projects that were delayed were subjected to site visits. Upon the recommendation of the RPCMC, the Central Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC) proposed policy recommendations for adoption by the DOH for the enhancement of the implementation of HFEP-funded projects.

To complement efforts to upgrade and expand health facilities in the region, the DOH CV-CHD also continued the implementation of the National Health Workforce Support System Program. This program aims to address the inadequacy of health workers in priority areas.

The Commission on Population and Development 7 (CPD 7) conducted the following activities to increase responsible parenthood and family planning (RPPF) and adolescent health development (AHD) in the region: (a) RPPF for special groups; (b) Training of trainers for *Kalalakin-ang Tinud-anay sa Responsibilidad ug Obligasyon sa Pamilya* (KATROPA); (c) Regional Population Management Conference; (d) Orientation-Workshop on the Development and Operationalization of Local Population and Development Program for highly-urbanized cities, component cities, municipal population officers, and *Sagguniang Kabataan*; (e) Regional Peer Educator's Conference; and (d) Training Workshop for AHD.

In addressing nutrition concerns in the region, the National Nutrition Council 7 (NNC 7) implemented the Dietary Supplementation Program or *Tutok Kainan Dietary Supplementation Program (TKDSP)*, which aims to prevent stunting for children 0-23 months old by improving the quality and quantity of food and nutrient intakes and utilization of related early child care and development – first 1,000 days (ECCD-F1KD) services among nutritionally at-risk pregnant women and children 6-23 months old in target *Tutok Kainan* program areas. Phase 3 and 4 of the program were launched in the first quarter of 2023. The implementation of the program would continue in 2024 with the launching of Phase 5 to be done in February 2024.

The National Shepherding Project, a technical assistance package developed by NNC as part of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) LGU Mobilization Strategy, was launched to enhance local nutrition governance. A peer-to-peer platform involves guiding and mentoring low-performing LGUs on nutrition by a team at the regional level to enhance their knowledge and skills on nutrition program and management.

The RDC also demonstrated its support for advancing healthcare and nutrition in the region through the approval of the following resolutions: (a) RDC Resolution No. 37 (s. 2023), requesting the DOH to identify cancer assistance fund access sites in the provinces of Bohol, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor; (b) RDC Resolution No. 38 (s. 2023), requesting the DOH to include the establishment of senior citizen's ward as an additional indicator in the assessment for licensure and accreditation of health facilities, particularly for government hospitals; and (c) RDC Resolution No. 39 (s. 2023), requesting the LGUs in Central Visayas to strongly support the Nutrition Shepherding Project.

Strengthening the healthcare system involves improving the region's access and quality of healthcare. One strategy identified to achieve this is to expand the *PhilHealth Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama (PhilHealth Konsulta) Package*. As of 2023, the region has 207 accredited *PhilHealth Konsulta Package Providers (KPP)* that offer outpatient health services. To increase awareness of the program and encourage more health facilities to be an accredited KPP, PhilHealth has strengthened its advocacy activities by conducting various orientation seminars and information drives.

Another important milestone in the expansion of mental health services was the development of the PhilHealth Outpatient Benefits Package for Mental Health through the issuance of PhilHealth Circular No. 2023-0018 signed on 10 October 2023. This package provides a more comprehensive outpatient and inpatient benefits package for people with mental health conditions as mandated by the RA 11223 (also called as the Universal Health Care Act) and the RA 11036 (also known as the Mental Health Act). With this package, more people with mental health conditions would now have the opportunity to seek medical help.

Results Matrix

Indicators for 2023 show mixed performance of Central Visayas in terms of health outcomes. For instance, except for maternal health care which improved significantly, child health care continued to worsen. This signifies that nutrition, sanitation, healthcare access, and child health services may not be adequately addressing the needs of vulnerable groups in the region.

Table 3.1.1.1 Results Matrix for Boosting Health and Nutrition

INDICATOR	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023		
		2023	2024			
Chapter Outcome 1: Human and social development promoted						
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1: Health and nutrition boosted						
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 livebirths	50.62 (2022)	53.0	52.0	37.64 ^{a 1}		
Under-5 mortality rate per 1,000 livebirths	8.81 (2022)	16.0	15.0	14.77 ^{a 1}		
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 livebirths	7.08 (2022)	14.0	13.0	11.49 ^{a 1}		
Neonatal mortality rate per 1,000 livebirths	3.23 (2022)	12.0	12.0	6.41 ^{a 1}		
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1.1: Healthy environment, behaviors, and choices promoted						
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1.1.1: Communities, workplaces, and learning institutions support physical, mental, and social well-being ensured						
Proportion of households with access to safe water supply	65.01% (2022)	87.0%	90.0%	70.27% ^{a 1}		
Proportion of households with basic sanitation facility	80.52 (2022)	70.0%	75.0%	32.29% ^{a 1}		
Community playbook people-focused activities implemented in target LGUs	100% (2023)	100%	TBD	100% ^a		
Percentage of planned major health events implemented or conducted	100% (2023)	100%	TBD	75.00% ^a		
LGUs capacitated on Healthy Learning Institutions	100% (2023)	100%	100%	100% ^{a 1}		
LGUs capacitated on Healthy Communities	100% (2023)	100%	TBD	100% ^{a 1}		
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1.1.2: Health and nutrition literacy increased						
Prevalence rate of stunted children ages 0-59 months	8.5%	8.0%	7.4%	7.2% ^b		

INDICATOR	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
(2022)				
Prevalence rate of wasted children ages 0-59 months	2.2% (2022)	2.1%	2.1%	1.4% ^b
Prevalence rate of overweight children ages 0-59 months	2.8% (2022)	2.7%	2.70%	2.10% ^b
Number of functional adolescent / teen health facility (cumulative)	10 (2022)	15	20	15 ^c
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1.1.3: Health-seeking behavior improved, and healthy choices provided				
Percentage of fully immunized children	57.33% (2022)	95.0%	95.0%	31.92% ^{a 1}
Tuberculosis treatment success rate	90.0% (2022)	90.0%	90.0%	87.0% ^{a 1}
Proportion of postpartum women together with their newborn who completed at least 2 postpartum check-ups	76.67% (2022)	90.0%	90.0%	104.42% ^{a 1}
Poverty incidence decreased (% of population)	27.6 (2021)	23.5	-	31.0 ^d
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1.2: Healthcare system strengthened				
Sub-Chapter Outcome 1.1.2.1: Access to healthcare services improved				
Percentage of demand satisfied with modern family planning methods	62.08% (2022)	55.0%	58.0%	52.38% ^{a 1}
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	96.21% (2022)	90.0%	90.0%	95.28% ^{a 1}

Note: DOH 7 targets are the same as the national targets. Preliminary data as of 30 September 2023 ¹

Source: Department of Health Central Visayas Center for Health Development ^a, National Nutrition Council 7 ^b, Commission on Population and Development 7 ^c, Philippine Statistics Authority ^d

Preliminary data from the DOH show that the maternal mortality ratio in the region went down to 37.64 per 100,000 livebirths from 50.62 per 100,000 livebirths in 2022. Mothers in Central Visayas also showed improved health-seeking behavior, as more mothers, around 104.42 percent, completed at least two postpartum check-ups. This indicator is important, as this is an avenue to address the concerns of new mothers on infant feeding and health, physical recovery, and emotional well-being. However, child healthcare indicators show concerning trends as under-5, infant and neonatal mortality rates per 1,000 livebirths in 2023 rose to 14.77, 11.49 and 6.41 from the previous year's 8.81, 7.08, and 3.23 per 1,000 livebirths, respectively. This suggests that the existing weaknesses in the healthcare system such as inadequate health infrastructure and health personnel, inadequate access to health services including essential medicines and vaccines, and unsanitary conditions remain unresolved.

The abovementioned situation is supported by the fact that only 32.29 percent of households in the region have their own toilet facilities in 2023, which was even lower compared to 2022. In addition, though slightly better than the baseline, only 70.3 percent of households have access to safe water. The inadequate access to safe water and sanitary toilets exposed the population to a higher risk of contracting infections as well as food and water-borne diseases.

The region also struggled to achieve the ideal child vaccination rate. Despite the intensified vaccination drives conducted through the *Chikiting Ligtas* 2023, only 31.92 percent of children were fully immunized, which was significantly lower than the figure of 57.33 percent in 2022. The delays in the procurement of vaccines resulted in the delayed roll-out of vaccination drives. The low vaccination rate leaves a significant portion of the child population

susceptible to preventable diseases, increasing the risk of outbreaks and health complications. The rampant online misinformation and lingering concerns from the previous vaccine controversies may have contributed to the overall hesitancy of parents to proactively have their children vaccinated. This increases the risk of resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, polio, whopping cough, and rubella among others.

Another worrying indicator is the slight decrease in the success rate for tuberculosis (TB) treatment. This is public health concern as new cases of TB was on the rise since the pandemic due to the disruption in healthcare services, reduced access to healthcare, and reduced public health initiatives. The decline in the treatment success rate for drug-susceptible TB case was likely the result of lack of monitoring and incomplete reporting of treatment outcomes from private physicians in healthcare facilities.

Nutrition care services showed improvements in addressing all forms of malnutrition vis-à-vis their targets. Data from the NNC 7 *Operation Timbang (OPT) Plus 2023* reveal that the prevalence of stunting, wasting, and overweight decreased to 7.2 percent, 1.4 percent and 2.1 percent from 8.5 percent, 2.2 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively. The LGU Mobilization Program of the NNC contributed to the decline in the prevalence rates of malnutrition. The Regional Nutrition Shepherding Team of the Regional Nutrition Council 7 provided technical assistance in local nutrition action plan formulation, advocacy, and capacity development activities. However, there are still areas in the region where the prevalence of malnutrition was so high that they were considered as nutritionally at-risk. The top 5 nutritionally at-risk LGUs for stunting are the following: (1) Samboan, Cebu – 24.3%; (2) Lila, Bohol – 23.7%; (3) Jimalalud, Negros Oriental - 21.9%; (4) Badian, Cebu – 20.1% results; and (5) Alcantara, Cebu – 19.9%. It should be noted, however, that these data may be due to low coverage rate of OPT Plus.

In terms of providing safe spaces for adolescents and young adults that can accommodate unstructured social interaction among different age groups, the region was able to establish five more functional adolescent/teen health facilities in Bais City and Dumaguete City in Negros Oriental and in the municipalities of Sierra Bullones and Catigbian in Bohol. These are in addition to the 10 functional centers established in the previous years. The establishment of teen Population Development (POPDEV) Office and Teen Center is an SGLG Indicator in 2023. The provision of draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for teen centers to the LGUs, and the active Peer Educators' Network contributed to the establishment and functionality of these teen centers.

Indicators in support of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 showed a decline compared to the baselines. For 2023, only 52.38 percent of demand for family planning services was met with modern family planning methods, 9.7 percentage points lower than in 2022. Similarly, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel was lower than the figure posted in 2022. Skilled attendants who provided necessary supervision and care supported around 95.28 percent of births.

Ways Forward

For 2024-2025, Central Visayas needs to focus on areas where it fell short in attaining its desired health outcomes towards achieving universal healthcare for all. The region needs to strengthen the implementation of its public health and nutrition campaigns, immunization programs, responsible parenthood and reproductive health, child health care and basic sanitation. To improve the access and quality of healthcare services, the implementation of HFEP projects must be fast-tracked and provincial/local health systems must be established and strengthened to ensure that basic health services are provided at the community level.

The region must also invest in improving data collection and management of health indicators. This is imperative for fostering informed decision-making, enabling more effective health planning, and ensuring accurate resource allocation to address the diverse healthcare needs of the population. The lack of timely and responsive health data has been identified as a significant impediment, hampering the government's ability to make informed decisions and implement programs effectively.

Priority Strategies

In the next two years, Central Visayas shall focus on enhancing the environmental conditions for health and nutrition, improving access to health facilities and services and strengthening health systems governance. Therefore, the region shall prioritize the implementation of the following strategies:

Promoting healthy environment, behaviors and choices

Health outcomes do not solely rely on the medical care but also on environmental factors. It is therefore imperative for the region to create an environment where the communities, workplaces, and learning institutions promote physical, mental and social well-being. Under this strategy, the RDC shall push for the issuance of guidelines on Healthy Settings Framework in workplaces, both in the private and public sector and in the communities. The DOH's Healthy Pilipinas Campaign shall be strengthened to encourage Filipinos to adopt healthier lifestyles, make informed health choices, and engage in preventive measures to improve overall health and well-being. The NNC shall also intensify the dissemination of 2024 Social Behavior Change Communication to raise community awareness on the problem of stunting and other forms of malnutrition and promote proper nutrition to influence positive nutrition behavior in Central Visayas.

Improve access to safe water and basic sanitation facilities

The LGUs shall collaborate with the DOH and water districts to ensure that communities and vulnerable groups have access to safe water and basic sanitation. Safely managed rainwater harvesting in households, communities, and schools shall be promoted to provide additional and sustainable source of clean water and ensure that existing water supply and water distribution systems are safe from pollution and contamination. The establishment of gender inclusive toilets, alongside male and female toilets, in public establishments. Moreover, the LGUs shall also strive to eliminate open defecation by intensifying the implementation of the Zero Open Defecation Program and investing in the provision of sanitary toilets for the poorest and most vulnerable households in the region.

In terms of increasing health literacy and improving health-seeking behaviors, the first 1,000 days of a child's life will also be at the forefront of LGUs, DOH and NNC's health and nutrition advocacy and intervention programs for children, pregnant and lactating women. DOH and the LGUs, through the BHS, shall also intensify gender-sensitive and culture-appropriate health promotion activities and programs to increase awareness of health entitlements and procedures for accessing health care.

Enhance access to healthcare services

The DOH and LGUs shall prioritize the provision of primary care health facilities to unserved/ underserved areas in the highly urbanized cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu, the Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs) in the provinces of Negros Oriental, Cebu and Bohol and in the IP communities in the region. The RDC, in collaboration with the DOH and PhilHealth, shall promote the *PhilHealth Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama (PhilHealth Konsulta)* Package to LGUs, health care providers and patients in the provision of outpatient health care services. To complement initiatives to provide and upgrade health facilities, the DOH shall continue the implementation of the National Health Workforce Support System to augment the much-needed human resources for health (HRH) in the GIDAs and in the 5th and 6th class municipalities of the region.

The Central Visayas RDC through the RPMC shall also monitor the implementation of HFEP and actively prioritize the resolution of project implementation issues. The project monitoring committees of LGUs shall also prioritize the conduct of regular monitoring of health infrastructure projects implemented within their jurisdictions.

Strengthen health systems governance

Strategies for strengthening the healthcare system shall focus on improving access to healthcare services and enhancing the quality of services. The region shall prioritize the provision of primary care health facilities to unserved/ underserved areas in the highly urbanized cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu, the Geographically Isolated and

Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs). Implementation of the HFEP programs shall be fast-tracked and closely monitored to ensure that these projects can contribute to the overall improvement of healthcare services in the region. To complement initiatives to provide and upgrade health facilities, the region shall continue the implementation of the National Health Workforce Support System to augment the much-needed human resources for health (HRH) in the GIDAs and in the 5th and 6th class municipalities of the region.

The region shall pursue the full functionality of local health systems, local health boards, and local nutrition councils in all the LGUs in the region. The DOH CV-CHD, NNC 7, and DILG 7 shall assist the LGUs attain full functionality by providing technical assistance, capability building, and clear policy guidelines. They shall also closely monitor and regularly assess the functionality of these systems and councils.

The region shall also advocate for improvements in data collection and management of health indicators by the health sector agencies. For effective health planning, it is essential that regional targets and accomplishments must be supported with high quality and reliable data.

Lastly, the region will also intensify the conduct of capability building activities to improve competencies in: (i) managing of health facilities for LGUs and HRH; (ii) multi-disciplinary public health practices for HRH; (iii) health and nutrition education, family planning, sexual, reproductive and mental health promotion for CHWs (i.e., BHWs, BNS, and volunteers); (iv) disease and epidemiology surveillance; and (v) gender sensitivity and gender and development training for all HRH and CHWs. Aside from the free online TESDA training course on Barangay Health Services NC II, HRH may also avail of the new online courses available in the DOH Academy Platform on basic course on continuous quality improvement on health facilities, data management and analytics, overview of public health surveillance and health promotion framework strategy playbooks.

Table 3.1.1.2 Legislative Agenda for Boosting Health and Nutrition

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Promoting healthy environment, behaviors, and choices	
Local Ordinance on Creation of WASH Councils	The enactment of a local ordinance on the creation of a water, sanitation and hygiene council would establish harmonized local governance structures and mechanisms for integrated safe water, sanitation and hygiene. The WASH Council would serve as the local oversight and policy-making body to formulate and pass local policies to support the promotion, advocacy, implementation and sustainability of WASH plans, projects, and programs in the locality and identify areas for development and recommendations to enhance access to and provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene services to target communities.
Local Ordinance on Zero Open Defecation Program	The passage of a local ordinance on zero open defecation would safeguard public health and well-being of all constituents in the city/municipality through optimal health and sanitation practices. It will ensure that the LGUs would prioritize the implementation of the Zero Open Defecation Program as one of the important strategies of improving health outcomes in the locality.
Enactment of Local Ordinance Institutionalizing the Healthy Settings Program in Schools, Workplaces and Communities	The enactment of local ordinance institutionalizing the healthy settings program in schools, workplaces and communities would provide the necessary mechanism for the creation of supportive environment for optimal health. This would also provide an opportunity for comprehensive but tailored

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
	interventions, which can be directed at health behavior change and environmental change to achieve improved health outcomes.
Strengthening the healthcare system	
Passage of a POPDEV Bill	The passage of this law would strengthen and update the mandate and functions of the Commission on Population and Development.
Amendment of relevant laws (i.e., Republic Act No. 7305 or The Magna Carta of Public Health Workers, Republic Act No. 7883 or The Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995, Presidential Decree No. 1569 or the Strengthening Barangay Nutrition Program, etc.) that serve as basis for compensation of health and nutrition workers	The amendments will facilitate the increase in compensation and incentives of all health, nutrition, and population officers in the public and private sector including the community health workers to improve their welfare and in turn attract, retain and motivate health workers to continue serving in Central Visayas. This shall also cover the increase of incentives and benefits of the local population officers.



Rice Awareness Program
Source: DA 7

Section 3.1.2.

ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

Introduction

Ensuring the availability, affordability, and accessibility of food is a foundation in mitigating the vulnerability of the region to malnutrition and hunger caused by food supply instability impacts of disasters, adverse geopolitical events, economic downturns, and pandemics. The region aims to expand the stability and sufficiency of food commodities that are accessible, affordable, safe, and nutritious to consumers in the region. The local governments and government agencies in the region have rolled out initiatives, expanding networks of farm to market across the region, and utilizing technologies in the digital age to improve monitoring and distribution of food. Threats from diseases such as avian influenza and foot and mouth disease, overfishing, high cost of agricultural inputs, and rising oil prices were some immediate issues that continued to affect agriculture's performance. Lack of proper storage facilities and refrigerated transportation hindered the distribution of perishable goods like fruits, vegetables, and fish. Many rural areas in Central Visayas still have limited access to paved roads and reliable transportation. This made it difficult and expensive to transport agricultural products from farms to markets, increasing food prices and impacting accessibility for consumers. The presence of numerous middlemen and fragmented market systems often led to unfair pricing for farmers and higher costs for consumers. Limited communication and collaboration between different stakeholders in the food system, including farmers, distributors, retailers, and consumers, hampered effective planning and response to food security challenges.

Strategy Framework

To achieve food security in Central Visayas, strategies on gaining sufficient and stable food supply focus on boosting production and resilience through farmer cooperation, crop diversification, technology adoption, and climate adaptation. Food mapping and local initiatives on emergency preparedness measures shall be coordinated to ensure a stable food supply. Social protection and insurance guarantee support for farmers will be pursued. Strategies on enhancing consumer access to have affordable, safe, and nutritious food will also be implemented by increasing market transparency, building infrastructure, ensuring emergency delivery, and enhancing food safety. Strategies on digitalization and communication will be pushed to strengthen connection farmers to markets, while empowering the public on food production and support programs. Overall, a multi-pronged approach combines production and accessibility to guarantee a future of affordable, safe, and nutritious food for Central Visayas.

Table 3.1.2.1 Results Matrix for Ensuring Food Security

	DEVELOP AND PROTECT CAPABILITIES OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES
	REDUCE VULNERABILITIES AND PROTECT PURCHASING POWER
	ENSURE FOOD SECURITY
	SUFFICIENT AND STABLE SUPPLY OF FOOD COMMODITIES ATTAINED
	ACCESS OF CONSUMERS TO AFFORDABLE, SAFE, AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD EXPANDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Boost productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector ✓ Diversify food supply sources by augmenting local supply through regional trade ✓ Promote sustainable consumption of food ✓ Strengthen buffer stocking of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters ✓ Provide safety nets for the vulnerable sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strengthen price and supply monitoring of food commodities, manufactured basic necessities, and prime commodities ✓ Promote private investment in facilities, transport, and logistics systems to bring safe and nutritious food closer to consumers ✓ Improve food transportation and distribution processes to hasten and ensure unhampered movement of food products ✓ Ensure safety and affordability of food and agricultural products supplied in the market ✓ Ramp up the promotion and use of digital platforms for marketing, delivery, and payment transactions ✓ Formulate communication plan/ strategy to properly disseminate information to the public

Major PAPs

The agricultural sector of Central Visayas experienced a tumultuous year in 2023. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continued to cripple economic activities, while Typhoon Odette inflicted significant infrastructural and agricultural losses. The major initiatives proposed to re-secure and ensure food security in the region will focus on 1) boosting productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector and 2) strengthening buffer stocks of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters (*See Annex I*). At the core of this response lies the continued implementation of established programs.

On boosting productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector, the Rice, Corn, High Value Crops, and Organic Agriculture initiatives of the Department of Agriculture (DA) 7 provide crucial support to farmers (while the Fisheries Development Program is provided by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources) amidst economic and infrastructural disruptions. These programs ensure that the region is constantly steered towards stability and fosters continued food production – despite the natural and man-made shocks encountered in the course of implementation – safeguarding regional food security and economic activity. These development programs are recurring and ongoing implementation and proposed for funding for the national budget in 2025.

Moreover, the Tamlang Valley Sustainable Agriculture for Growth and Resiliency (TVSAGR) project of Negros Oriental, approved by the RDC in 2023, stands as a testament to this focus on recovery. By aiming to significantly boost crop, livestock, and aquaculture production in Negros Oriental, TVSAGR empowers local communities and acts as a catalyst for regional agricultural revitalization. The TVSAGR project, may also attract younger generations in Negros Oriental to agriculture through capacity building and community engagement, tackling the issue of an aging farmer population. The project is in its early phases of implementation.

The Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture program of the DA 7 promotes local food production and decrease dependence on vulnerable national supply chains. This localized production mitigates the impact of external disruptions, fostering greater self-sufficiency and adaptability within the region. The continued Livestock Program, with cautious adjustments in light of the Asian Swine Flu, ensures the availability of livestock sources while simultaneously prioritizing animal health and biosecurity measures. Furthermore, Organic Agriculture fosters long-term resilience against climate change and while also adding value to crops. These ongoing programs are going to be continued in 2025.

On strengthening the buffer stocking of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters (and recognizing the inherent vulnerability of Central Visayas to natural disasters), the National Food Authority (NFA) 7's Rice Production Support program serves as a critical safety net, maintaining buffer stocks of rice for times of potential food shortages and typhoon seasons. Cebu province is a critical depot for warehousing of buffer rice stocks considering it is a food deficit province (focused on food trade and processing) unlike food rich provinces of Bohol, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor. The ongoing and continuing program of NFA includes Palay Procurement, Rice Distribution, Rice Dispersal, and Pest Control Management.

Results Matrix

Partial performance of food sufficiency in Central Visayas shows underperformance mainly due to the high cost of production inputs and logistics costs experienced in 2023. Food inflation was high (0.9 over the target maximum of 5.5 for FY 2023) due to rising fuel prices globally and increased cost of agricultural inputs.

Rice sufficiency in the region decreased in 2023 due to increasing cost of inputs, labor, etc. On the other hand, there was an increase of production of white corn for food, based on the production from January to September 2023. However, partial reports of other crops for the same period have yet to reach their targets, pending the availability of the full year data.

On livestock, carabeef increased inventory in the provinces of Cebu and Negros Oriental while beef saw a decrease attributed to outflow going to Luzon as the major market. Poultry inventory increased in the provinces of Bohol and Cebu. Egg experienced a decrease of production due to high cost of production and difficulty of sourcing replacement stocks in 2023. The region's food security, particularly in the agricultural sector is still recovering from the effects of typhoon Odette in 2021 and reeling from the increase in the cost of fuel and fertilizers due to global events in 2023 including the war in Ukraine.

Table 3.1.2.1 Results Matrix for Ensuring Food Security

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
Food inflation rate (%) kept within target	1.8	3.5-5.5	2.5-4.5	6.4
Food sufficiency rate (%) of major food commodities increased				
Rice	20.60	34.75	35.94	29.4
Corn	17.60	19.94	20.54	24.05 (Jan-Sep 2023)
High valued Crops				
Lowland				
Ampalaya	28.53	29.23	29.58	22.04 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Eggplant	25.35	25.96	26.28	20.08 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Squash	19.46	19.93	20.17	11.45 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Stringbeans	21.82	22.35	22.62	16.72

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL
		2023	2024	2023
				(as of 3rd quarter only)
Tomato	37.99	38.92	39.39	34.36 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Highland/Upland				
Cabbage	98.41	100.81	102.03	61.18 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Chinese Cabbage	55.01	56.35	57.0	33.97 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Carrots	69.15	70.84	71.69	46.35 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Chayote	39.00	39.95	40.43	28.93 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Snap beans	50.12	51.34	51.96	36.39 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Onion	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.03 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Cacao	15.06	15.43	15.62	12.43 (as of 3rd quarter only)
Livestock and Poultry				
Carabeef	218.63	223.91	227.09	225.04
Beef	107.58	133.75	150.66	124.87
Pork	156.6	158.93	162.88	151.14
Chicken	87.89	102.78	112.52	127.95
Eggs	199.19	220.23	240.63	168.55

Source: DA 7, Food Inflation – computed by NEDA 7 based on PSA data

Ways Forward

Ensuring food security and sustainability in Central Visayas demands a three-pronged approach: curbing food waste, enhancing accessibility, and diversifying supply sources.

Priority Strategies

The priority strategies have to overcome the uncertainty of the world food commodity prices and the changing climate affecting food production. Aside from supply, the demand side of food has to be addressed for an end-to-end solution towards easing food demand in the region. Effective implementation of these strategies requires active government intervention through implementing regulations enforcing food waste reduction standards and best practices. Providing grants, loans, and capacity-building programs for farmers and agribusinesses adopting sustainable practices, diversifying production, and accessing new markets is crucial. Priority strategies for 2024-2025 should be given to strategies that receive less attention in implementation in 2023.

Promote private investment in facilities, transport, and logistics systems to bring safe and nutritious food closer to consumers

Ensuring consistent access to safe and nutritious food requires robust infrastructure and efficient logistics systems. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can be strategically leveraged to upgrade and expand the usage of farm-to-market roads, modernize cold storage facilities, and develop multi-modal transportation for connecting remote areas. Climate-resilient construction techniques should be prioritized to ensure year-round accessibility even during natural disasters. Programs supporting the establishment of farmer cooperatives and community-owned markets can shorten distribution chains, reduce logistical costs, and create direct market linkages for farmers. Additionally, increasing investment in

mobile market initiatives targeting underserved communities can further improve access to fresh produce. Digital platforms connecting farmers directly to consumers should be encouraged and supported. This can be achieved through e-commerce platforms, mobile apps, and digital literacy training programs for both farmers and consumers.

Diversify food supply sources by augmenting local supply through regional trade

Collaborating with neighboring provinces or regions to develop complementary production and trade agreements can ensure a wider range of available food sources and contribute to regional food security. Establishing regional food hubs or distribution centers can further facilitate efficient distribution within Central Visayas. Programs to encourage farmers to adopt diversified crop production systems, focusing on drought-resistant and nutrient-rich crops, can enhance food security and dietary diversity. Additionally, supporting agroforestry practices, integrating trees and shrubs into agricultural landscapes, can improve soil health and resilience against climate change. Continuous research and development efforts into local, drought-resistant, and nutrient-rich food crops are essential for long-term food security. This will involve partnerships with research institutions and universities through the Regional Development Research Council to develop locally adapted cultivars and sustainable agricultural practices.

Promote sustainable consumption of food

Central Visayas' food security can be significantly enhanced by tackling the issue of food waste, particularly within commercial establishments like restaurants and markets. To address this, a multi-faceted approach are recommended.: Implementation of mandatory measurement and reporting of food waste by restaurants and markets, potentially leveraging technology for accurate data collection, is crucial for establishing a baseline and monitoring progress. Incentives, such as tax breaks or subsidies, can be provided to encourage commercial establishments to adopt effective waste reduction practices like optimizing portion sizes, and implementing composting or food donation programs. Public awareness campaigns, highlighting the environmental and economic consequences of food waste, are essential for promoting responsible consumer behavior.

Legislative Agenda

The region will pursue policies that promote curbing of food waste and maximization of production in urban areas.

Table 3.1.2.2 Legislative Agenda for Ensuring Food Security

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Food Waste Management Policy	<p>This proposed law seeks to address the country's growing food waste problem by adopting and institutionalizing mechanisms that will promote, facilitate, and ensure food waste reduction across different sectors of society (e.g., households, food establishments, food distributors, supermarkets)</p> <p>This will be supported with local ordinance on Zero Food Waste and Establishing food banks in the respective LGU jurisdictions</p> <p>Implementers: DILG, LGUs, DOH, NNC, DA, RDC</p>
Ordinance Promoting Urban Agriculture in Metropolitan Areas	<p>This ordinance seeks to promote urban agriculture in metropolitan areas to address food security concerns.</p> <p>The RDC can support this by passing a resolution urging LGUs to pass a local ordinance for the same purpose. Ordinance of LGUs with existing ordinance can be made as reference.</p> <p>Implementers: DA 7, DILG 7, LGUs, DepEd 7, SUCs, DAR 7</p>



Source: Canva Picture Library

Section 3.2

IMPROVING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION TOWARDS LEARNING RECOVERY

Introduction

Central Visayas is committed in enhancing basic education as a means to promote human development. The primary focus of the Central Visayas Regional Development Plan (RDP) for 2023-20208 is the improvement of learning outcomes and the recovery of learning losses caused by class disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

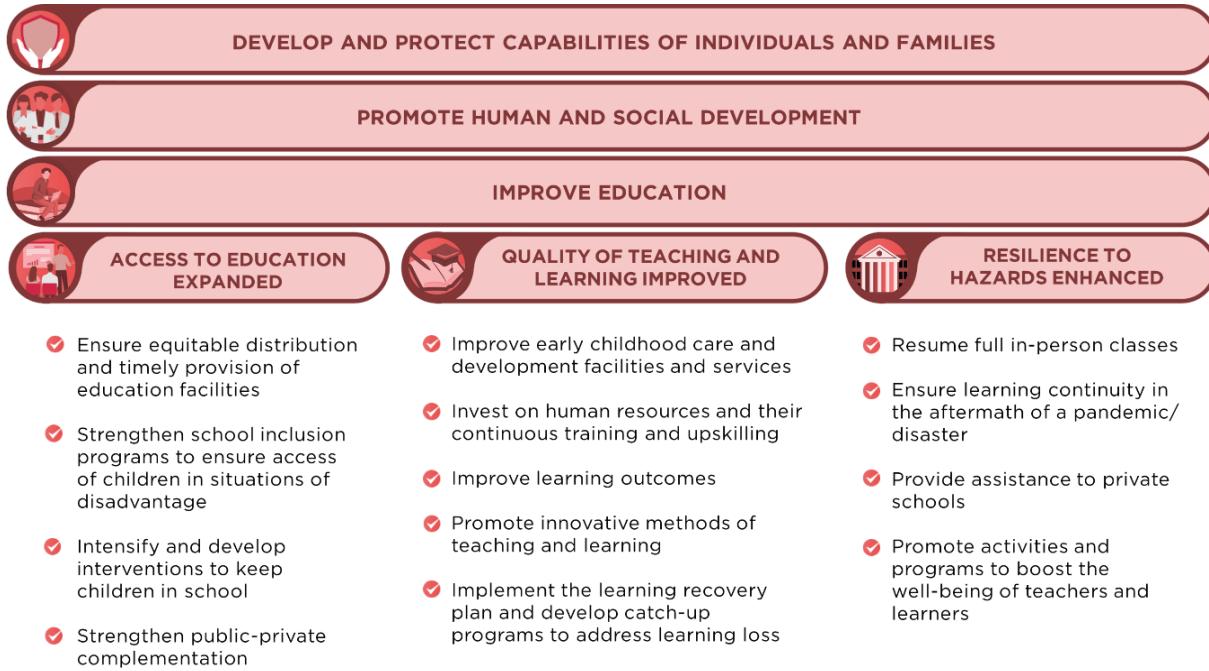
This section provides an update on the implementation of the strategies outlined in the RDP in order to realize the following outcomes: a) access to education expanded; b) quality of teaching and learning improved; and c) resilience to hazards enhanced. It also provides strategic interventions to address the gaps and remaining challenges in basic education.

In 2023, the Department of Education launched the MATATAG curriculum, which aims to address the deficiencies in the basic education curriculum. Central Visayas was among the 7 regions chosen to pilot test the revised K-10 curriculum before it is implemented in SY 2024-2025. The updating of the basic education curriculum is part of government's attempt to improve the quality of basic education in the country. The 2022 result of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that Filipino students are still among the world's weakest in math, reading and science.

Strategy Framework

Improving education is key to promoting human capital and social development. Towards this end, government will work hand-in-hand with the private sector and other stakeholders to achieve the outcomes of wider access to quality education, improved quality of teaching and learning, and enhanced resilience of the sector to disasters.

Figure 3.2.1 Strategy Framework for Improving Access to Quality Education towards Learning Recovery



Major PAPs

In 2023, the Department of Education (DepEd) initiated a major innovation in basic education with the launching of the MATATAG curriculum. The MATATAG curriculum, which was pilot tested in Central Visayas, will be implemented in phases starting SY 2024-2025. It aims to address the issues in the K to 12 curriculum such as the congested content, lack of focus on foundational skills, and imbalance in cognitive demands. The MATATAG curriculum also aims to intensify values education and peace education.

To address the adverse effects of the pandemic, such as learning gaps among students, the Department of Education (DepEd) devised a program-support framework strategy called SMILE (Strengthening Management, Instructions, and Leadership for Excellence). This program aims to drive education reforms, encouraging positive changes at the grassroots level. The objective of SMILE is to ensure that learners are happy, smart, resilient, and well-rounded. The success of this innovation requires fostering a conducive and supportive learning environment, implementing the curriculum and resources effectively and efficiently, and continually improving and increasing support from stakeholders. SMILE initiative capitalizes on the following four pillars: a) Caring, Affectionate and Respectful Employees (CAREs); b) Fast, Efficient, Effective, and Transparent Governance (FEETGov); c) Nurture Innovation Culture for Excellence (NICE); and d) Information and Technology-Based Operations (IT-Ops).

In order to expand access to education, the government also continued to undertake school building projects region-wide. Among the school building projects completed in 2023 are the 4-storey, 20-classroom school building at Dr. Cecilio Putong National High School in Bohol; 4-storey, 12 classroom school building at Felix E. Bompat High School in Bohol; and 2 units of 3-storey, 9 classroom at Pamplona Central Elementary School in Negros Oriental. These projects were among the school building projects monitored by the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC).

The details of these priority PAPs are presented in *Annex J*.

Meanwhile, the Regional Development Council passed a number of resolutions to advocate policies that support the enhancement of the quality of basic education. These include the following:

- a. Enactment of Senate Bill No. 155, otherwise known as 'An Act Furthering Local Leadership and Accountability in Basic Education Governance and Achieving Quality Inclusive Education Through the 21st Century School Boards and School Governing Councils;'
- b. Enjoining the Local Government Units in Central Visayas to ensure that their Local School Boards are fully functional and equipped to perform their advisory function, particularly in addressing learning poverty; and
- c. Requesting the Department of Education to institute reforms in the implementation of the student subsidy program to address the following issues: (i) the need to simplify and streamline the student subsidy program, which adopts separate systems in implementation for junior high school and senior high school levels; (ii) deficiencies of the scheme for providing subsidy to junior high school in terms of equity and administrative simplicity; (iii) the need to rationalize grant distribution across regions; and (iv) the need to strengthen DepEd mechanism for administering the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (GASTPE) program.

Results Matrix

Quality of Teaching and Learning. The results of the 2022 cycle of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that improving the quality of teaching and learning in the Philippines remains a serious challenge. In the said international assessment administered to 15-year old students who are nearing completion of basic education, the Philippines in the bottom 10 out of 81 countries in reading comprehension, mathematics, and science. This suggest that the country, including Central Visayas, has a lot of work to do to keep up with the quality of education in other countries.

Learning Spaces Expanded. In 2023, 74 Temporary Learning Spaces were developed, with 20 ongoing and 54 in the procurement stage. Additionally, 84 classrooms were repaired using the Quick Response Fund from 2022, and 8 new classrooms were constructed. These are all part of DEPED Region VII's efforts to nurture learners by providing facilities that are conducive to learning.

Ways Forward

Ensuring high-quality education is essential and should not be compromised. In the next two years, Central Visayas shall prioritize the implementation of the following strategies and legislative agenda for improving education:

Priority Strategies

Improve learners' access to quality education

DepEd should focus on establishing libraries with full access to up-to-date books, the internet, and study materials, and school laboratories in all schools. This approach aims to increase learners' interest, attention, and focus, providing meaningful learning experiences that motivate them to practice higher-level critical learning skills.

Additionally, DepEd should consider collaborating with government agencies or private institutions for technology donation drives. These initiatives involve collecting and distributing donated computers, tablets, or smartphones, providing learners with access to digital learning resources.

Intensify and develop interventions to keep children in school

One of the most important steps toward universal education coverage is ensuring that learners continue to stay in school and actively participate in the learning process.

The school-based feeding program not only provides nutritious meals to students but also addresses hunger, motivating learners to attend school. Thus, the SBFP should be expanded to cover grades 7-12 to ensure proper government interventions are in place for youth during their formative years, in addition to the beneficiaries in the incoming kindergarten and grades 1-6, belonging to the wasted and severely wasted categories.

Additionally, it is crucial for DepEd to prioritize the provision of basic amenities such as electricity, clean water, and safe buildings in all schools. This commitment to infrastructure development can also motivate learners to actively engage in their education.

Invest on human resources and their continuous training and upskilling

Under this strategy, DepEd should provide continuous training on the effective integration of technology in teaching to enhance teachers' digital literacy skills and adaptability. This training could encompass basic digital literacy, covering essential computer skills and basic software applications, ensuring that our teachers are comfortable using digital tools. It is essential to include training on digital content creation, including the creation of presentations, videos, and interactive materials, to enhance the students' learning experience.

Legislative Agenda

The following are the priority policies that shall be advanced to enhance access to quality education.

Table 3.2.1 Legislative Agenda for Improving Access to Quality Education towards Learning Recovery

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Access to Education Expanded	
Expansion of the National Feeding Program to secondary levels	This will expand the coverage of the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP), as mandated by RA 11037, to include learners from Grades 7-12 to ensure that proper government interventions are in place for youth in their formative and adolescent years.
Quality of Teaching and Learning Improved	
Review of the country's Basic Education System towards improving the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013	This seeks to revisit the K-12 curriculum to make graduates more readily employable, better equipped with critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and other skills and capacities needed to be productive and active citizens of the country.
Enactment of Magna Carta of Day Care Workers	This seeks to improve the social and economic welfare of day care workers in recognition of their vital role in providing pre-school education and social development services to children. It mandates the creation of plantilla positions in all day care centers nationwide, thereby ensuring security of tenure to day care workers and other rights and benefits provided under civil services rules and regulations.
Expansion of the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (GASTPE) to elementary level	In recognition of the complementary role of the private schools in providing basic education to Filipino learners, this measure aims to expand the existing government assistance for high school students and private schools in the kindergarten up to Grade 6 level. The Teacher Salary Subsidy (TSS) is also proposed to be expanded to cover teachers employed in private elementary schools.



Aerial Shot of Dumaguete
Source: Canva Picture Library

Section 3.3

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE SETTLEMENTS AND WELL-PLANNED COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Central Visayas is the 3rd most urbanized region in the country after CALABARZON (Region 4-A) and Central Luzon (Region 3). The highly urbanized cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapulapu are among the country's most urbanized cities. The urban population of Central Visayas increased to 4.2 million in 2020 from 3.7 million in 2015 with an urbanization level of 51.9 percent. The region's high level of urbanization and its increasing population necessitate the establishment of human settlements that are sustainable, inclusive, safe, and resilient.

Given the above premise, the CV- RDP 2023-2028 pursues the establishment of livable communities and sustainable settlements in line with the national urban policy provided in the Philippine New Urban Agenda (PNUA) and the National Urban Development Framework. The region localizes and contextualizes the national urban policies in order to respond to the needs of Central Visayas' rural and urban communities and their needs towards economic transformation.

Strategy Framework

This chapter focuses on establishing livable communities anchored on the following outcomes: (a) built environment upgraded; and (b) green governance advanced. These two outcomes are supported by sustained efforts to strengthen planning and green financing.

Figure 3.3.1 Strategy Framework for Building Sustainable Settlements and Well-Planned Communities



Major PAPs

Built environment upgraded

Upgrading the built environment through the provision of adequate, livable, affordable and inclusive housing in sustainable and well-planned communities is a priority to address the growing informal settlements and resulting urban decay especially in the key cities of the region. The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) 7, together with its Key Shelter Agencies (KSAs), intensity efforts to close the housing gap in Central Visayas by 2028. The major housing programs being implemented by DHSUD and its KSAs, particularly the National Housing Authority (NHA), Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF), and National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), are detailed in [Annex K](#).

Implementation of the Country's Flagship Housing Program: Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino Program (4PH)

The 4PH Program is the flagship housing program of DHSUD that aims to service the massive housing needs of the country, estimated to have accumulated to 6.8 million by 2022. To support the implementation of the program, DHSUD and its key shelter agencies have aligned their policies, programs, and priorities to meet the housing production targets under the present administration. The program targets the development of 1 Million vertical housing units every year for the next six (6) years to address the housing needs, comprising of the number of informal settler families (ISFs) and projected needs due to population growth. It also aims to prioritize the lowest 30 percent income decile of the population and low wage earners as primary beneficiaries.

On 17 July 2023, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. issued Executive Order (EO) No. 34 declaring the 4PH Program as a flagship program of the government. On the heels of the issuance of EO No. 34, the DHSUD and NEDA issued Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2023-003, adjusting the price ceiling for socialized subdivision and condominium projects. This move was aimed to entice the private sector to participate more actively in the 4PH Program.

The first 4PH project in Central Visayas is the construction of the Tenement Housing 1 in Barangay Dampas, Tagbilaran City that started in July 2023. The said project is a 4-storey building with 32 units. In 2023, DHSUD 7 also secured the commitment of the following twelve (12) LGUs to implement the 4PH by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department: city governments of Mandaue, Cebu, Toledo and Talisay in Cebu Province; city governments of Bais, Tanjay, Canlaon and Guihuligan and the Municipal Government of San Jose in Negros Oriental; and the Provincial Government of Bohol as well as the municipal governments of Panglao and Ubay in the same province.

Various Programs of Key Shelter Agencies. In support of the government's goal of addressing the housing backlog and affordability issues, the following projects are being implemented by DHSUD's attached key shelter agencies in Central Visayas:

National Housing Authority

Housing Assistance Program for Calamity Victims (HAPCV). This program of the NHA aims to respond to the housing needs of those affected by calamities such as typhoons, landslides, earthquake, and fires for relocation to safe areas. The HAPCV projects in Central Visayas are the following:

- Yolanda Permanent Housing Program - Implemented to respond to the housing needs of low and marginal-income and/or informal settler families affected by Super Typhoon Yolanda on 8 November 2013; and
- Naga Permanent Housing Project - Implemented to respond to the housing needs of low and marginal –income and/ or informal settler families affected by the landslide in Brgy. Tinaan, Naga, Cebu on 20 September 2018.

In 2023, the NEDA Board-Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) referred to the RDC 7 the NHA Proposed Permanent Housing Projects under the RMB 100 million grant from the Government of People's Republic of China for Typhoon Odette Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Efforts, for RDC endorsement. It involves the construction of 1,778 housing units across 15 housing projects in the affected areas of Regions VII, VIII, X, and XIII. Of these, five subprojects will be implemented in Region VII, as follows: (a) Argao Permanent Housing Project in Cebu; (b) Sierra Bullones Eskaya Resettlement Project in Bohol; (c) Pilar Eskaya Resettlement Project in Bohol; (d) Bais City Resettlement Project PH-2 in Negros Oriental; and (e) Canlaon City Resettlement Project in Negros Oriental. The total funding requirement that will accrue to the sub-projects on Central Visayas is PhP 242.10 million. These sub-projects have been endorsed by the RDC 7 during its third and fourth quarter meetings in 2023 as these essentially support the attainment of the objectives under the Housing and Settlement chapter of the Central Visayas Typhoon Odette Rehabilitation and Recovery Program (RRP) 2022-2024.

Resettlement Assistance Program to LGUs (RAP-LGU). This program provides financial and technical assistance to LGUs in addressing the resettlement requirements of informal settler families in their localities in the implementation of resettlement projects that shall be implemented as a joint undertaking of NHA and the LGU where the LGU's primary contribution shall be the land to be developed as a resettlement site. This NHA program has been affected in

2023 due to the implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling or the Full Devolution of Certain Functions under Executive Order No. 138, series of 2021.

Housing Assistance Program for Indigenous Peoples (HAPIP). Pursued under the framework of the RAP-LGU, the program provides financial and technical assistance for the housing of Indigenous Peoples in coordination with the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples. The NHA provides funding as grant to LGUs for the implementation of their local housing projects either in a land within the identified Ancestral Domain and/or Ancestral Lands as certified by NCIP or land owned by the LGU and acceptable to the concerned IPs as location of their housing sites.

The other NHA programs are Resettlement Assistance for Former Rebels and Government Employees Housing Program (GEHP). The NHA also provides quick response assistance either in the form of cash or housing construction materials to qualified low and marginal income families affected by natural and man-made calamities, for the purpose of augmenting their funds for the repair of their house-structure through the Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP). The program covers qualified families whose houses were either partially damaged or totally destroyed by a natural or man-made calamity such as typhoon, floods, earthquake, volcanic eruption, fire, chemical disasters, terrorism and other forms of catastrophe or disaster as may be defined by future actual experience.

Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC)

The SHFC implements the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) that assists legally organized associations of low-income groups to acquire and develop a tract of land under the concept of community ownership. Meanwhile, the Abot Kaya Pabahay Fund–Development Loan Program (AKPF-DLP) also extends financing for the site development or improvements and house/building construction in CMP and other socialized housing projects for the low-income families.

Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF)

As the housing financing arm of the government, the HDMF extends loans to its members for purchase of residential lot, purchase of residential house and lot, townhouse or condominium unit, construction of house, improvement of house and refinancing of an existing housing loan.

National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC)

Responsible for sustaining housing market liquidity and affordability through secondary mortgage market operations, the NHMFC implements the Housing Loan Receivables Purchase Program 1 (HLRPP-1), Socialized Loan Take-Out of Receivables (SHeLTTeR), and the Balai Berde. In the thrust towards sustainable urban development, Balai Berde is designed to increase capital allocations exclusively for green-certified projects that contribute to environmental sustainability and resiliency.

RDC Initiatives. Cognizant of the importance of strengthened participatory governance for housing at the local level, the Central Visayas RDC continued to advocate for the creation of a Local Housing Board (LHB) in the region's cities and municipalities, in accordance with the DILG Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 2008-143. The LHB is tasked to formulate, develop and recommend to the *Sanggunian* policies, directives, rules and regulations consistent with laws on the provision of decent and affordable housing and resettlement areas and on the observance of the right of the underprivileged and homeless to just and humane evictions and demolitions.

Taking its advocacy further, the RDC 7 has requested the DILG to amend said MC to extend its coverage to the provinces, expand the composition of the LHB to include the DHSUD, and strengthen the LHB governance structure by emphasizing its involvement and function in the decision-making process for province-wide and city-wide shelter and land use planning.

Moreover, the RDC recommended to the NHA to adopt certain measures to enhance its procedures and policies in the planning and implementation of its projects. These recommendations were based on the findings and observations of the RPMC Regional Project Monitoring Team (RPMT) during their site visits to YPHP projects.

Green governance advanced

Enforcement of environmental laws. In the implementation of Republic Act No. 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000), the region through the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) provided technical assistance to the LGUs on the implementation of the Environmental Solid Waste Management (ESWM), specifically in the review and development of the 10-year SWM plans. The region also provided technical assistance to the LGUs in establishing and operationalizing the barangay Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) or junkshop converted to MRFs.

With respect to the closure and rehabilitation of dumpsites, the region conducted regular monitoring of the rehabilitation of dumpsites, especially the 37 dumpsites that were closed as of 2023. All open pit dumpsites in the region have been closed, and the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) 7 provided assistance to LGUs in their rehabilitation operations.

Air and Water Quality. The region continued to implement measures to improve air quality by closely monitoring the operations of firms that could contribute to air pollution. In 2023, the region through the EMB – 7 operated and maintained five (5) ambient air quality monitoring stations. These stations were strategically located in order to gather representative data on the current ambient air quality in the region. Parameters being monitored were Total Suspended Particulates (TSP), Particulate Matter 10 (PM10), and Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5).

Generally, majority of 24-hr concentrations for the year 2023 were within the 24-hr guideline value set for specific parameter being monitored as reflected in Section 12 of RA 8749 (The Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999). The air quality monitoring also revealed that the daily average of TSP and PM10 concentrations within the year is in “good” to “fair” condition based on Annex A of DAO 2000-81.

The region through EMB 7 also monitored and managed the stationary, mobile and area sources of air pollution. In 2023, a total of 848 establishments were issued with Permit to Operate (PO) in the region. These establishments are stationary sources composed of industries such as power plants, cement plants, metal fabrication and steel processing plants, processing and manufacturing industries (food and beverages), electronics manufacturing, agricultural plants (sugar/rice/corn/feed mills), hospitals, hotels, resort, construction industries, furniture industries, and other commercial and industrial establishments.

To effectively manage and preserve the quality of water resources, the region implemented the Clean Water Program, which consisted of two sub-programs: the Industrial Wastewater Management Program (IWMP); and the Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Program (AWQMP). Under the IWMP, a total of 500 discharge permits (DP) were issued to firms and establishments in the region within 2023. The issuance of DPs ensured that wastewater discharges from firms and commercial establishments were properly regulated. An inventory of these discharges was also undertaken to determine the potential contribution to water pollution, and allow for the implementation of proper mitigating measures to protect water quality.

Under the AWQMP, the region through the EMB 7 regularly monitored the four (4) priority river bodies of Argao, Guadalupe, Luyang and Sapangdaku to check the levels of Dissolved Oxygen (DO), Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD), and Total Suspended Solids (TSS), and determine their overall health and most beneficial use. These priority rivers were selected to preserve and improve their water quality. In addition, thirteen (13) other water bodies in the region were monitored to their pollution levels that could adversely affect the communities that are dependent on them.

The region also monitored six (6) priority recreational waterbodies, which are considered for eco-tourism activities. For 2023, the priority recreational waterbodies monitored included the East Coast Mactan, Moalboal Coastal Waters, and Panglao Island Coastal Waters.

A major component of the AWQMP was the operationalization of the Water Quality Management Area (WQMA). As of 2023, the governing boards of the Butuanon River WQMA and the Panglao Island Coastal Waters WQMA pursued activities to manage their respective areas of jurisdiction. The WQMA Governing Boards are tasked to formulate policies to properly manage the water system.

Planning and investment programming strengthened

Updated DRR/CCA-enhanced CLUPs. There is a significant increase in the number of LGUs with updated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (DRR-CCA)-enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs). For 2023, 10 LGU CLUPs were approved by their respective approving authorities, bringing the total number of approved CLUPs in the region to 31.

Approved local shelter plans (LSPs). As embodied in the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act 7160) and the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992, local government units have the primary responsibility for shelter planning and addressing the housing needs of its constituents. In view of this, the DHSUD 7 reported that 18 Local Government Units have approved LSPs out of the targeted 17 LGUs in 2023.

Results Matrix

Table 3.3.1 Results Matrix for Building Sustainable Settlements and Well-Planned Communities

INDICATOR	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 1: Built environment upgraded				
Number of LGUs with approved local shelter plans (LSPs)	15 (2022)	17	21	18
Number of socialized housing units constructed	102 (2022)			1,622
Number of LGUs with Local Housing Boards (LHBs)	19 (2022)	30	No target	20
Outcome 3: Planning and investment programming strengthened				
Number of LGUs with updated DRR/CCA-enhanced CLUPs	21 (2022)	10	35	31

Source: Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development 7

Data from the DHSUD 7 indicate that the region still has a long way to go in addressing the long-standing problem of housing backlog and in creating participatory governance structures that will tackle housing and urban development concerns.

The DHSUD 7 reported that there were 1,622 socialized housing units constructed in 2023 in the region (based on projects that applied for license to sell and approved by the department). While this figure is significantly higher than the 2022 baseline, it only represents a fraction of the nationwide target of 1,000,000 housing units developed in 2023 under the 4PH Program.

The region is a beneficiary of 37 projects under the YPHP, all located in Northern Cebu, with a combined total number of 20,418 housing units, implemented either by the NHA or downloaded to the concerned LGUs. As of end of 2023,

ten years after Typhoon Yolanda struck, 11 of these projects are yet to be completed. Three of these were ahead of schedule while the rest were suspended or for termination. Moreover, some of the projects had to be descaled due to the significant reduction in the budget of the NHA in 2023.

Despite vigorous efforts for the LGUs to establish and operationalize their LHBs, only 20 (15 %) out of the 132 LGUs in the region have an active LHB as of 2023. This figure, while higher than the 2022 baseline of 19, represents only 67 percent of the Plan target of 30 for 2023.

Of the 132 cities and municipalities in the region, only 18 (13.6 %) have an approved Local Shelter Plan (LSP) as of 2023. This figure, however, is slightly higher than the Plan target of 17 for 2023. Of the 16 component and highly-urbanized cities, only six have an approved LSP (Carcar, Danao, Bais, Bayawan, Tagbilaran and Mandaue). The formulation of an LSP has become imperative with the passage of the Local Government Code of 1991 and the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 which gave the LGUs the primary responsibility of shelter planning and addressing the housing needs of their constituents. A shelter plan provides the LGUs with an understanding of the overall shelter situation in their respective localities including the resources that can be used to address their housing and urban development concerns.

Moreover, of the 132 cities and municipalities, 31 (23.5 %) have an approved Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) as of end of 2023.

Ways Forward

Central Visayas will ensure that the CV-RDP strategies to establish livable communities, which are anchored on the upgrading of the built environment and the advancement of green governance, will be implemented.

Priority Strategies

To update the CLUPs and ensure their consistency with protected area and resource management plans

The region will ensure that the LGUs comply with their mandate to prepare their respective CLUPs as enhanced by DRR/ CCA measures. The CLUPs will ensure the proper siting of human settlements and the spaces for earning a living.

Increase affordability and financing options to avail of housing and respond to local housing demand

In the next two years, Central Visayas will pursue the RDC-approved priority strategies related to resettlement and housing. These are (a) development of compact socialized, economic, and low-cost housing in strategic locations that are accessible to social services and livelihood sources, and (b) relocation of informal settlements from riversides, coastlines and buffer zones, most of which are identified in the Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment and Regional State of Brown Environment (RSOBE) reports.

The 4PH Program will continue to be aggressively promoted by DHSUD 7 targeting to formalize implementation of the program by progressing into the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing in 2024 with four (4) LGUs that have signed the initial MOUs in 2023. Preliminary discussions with eight (8) more LGUs are being done for MOU Signing in 2024.

Meanwhile, the NHA 7 will ensure that the projects under the Housing Assistance Program for Calamity Victims, particularly the resettlement projects in Northern Cebu under the Yolanda Permanent Housing Program and the Naga Permanent Housing Project, will finally be completed. The approval of the proposed Permanent Housing for Typhoon

Odette Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Efforts through a grant from the People's Republic of China shall continue to be supported and shall be monitored once approved and implemented.

Advocate the establishment of LHB in all LGUs

The region shall continue to advocate the establishment of LSBs in all cities and municipalities. The LSB is an important resource in the implementation of the National Resettlement Policy Framework and serves as venue for the LGUs and their stakeholders to discuss sustainable and resilient housing programs.

Legislative Agenda

The RDC 7, in coordination with the regional line agencies and the LGUs, will continue to advance policy recommendations that would strengthen participatory governance institutions in housing such as the institutionalization and expansion of the composition and functions of the LHB. It will also continue to lobby for the passage of the National Land Use Act to serve as the overarching policy framework for building sustainable settlements and well-planned communities. Table 3.2.1 summarizes the key policy agenda that will be advocated through the RDC in the succeeding years.

Table 3.3.2 Legislative Agenda for Building Sustainable Settlements and Well-Planned Communities

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Passage of the National Land Use act	The Bill aims to establish a national land use framework that will define the indicative priorities for land utilization and allocation, land use monitoring and land use policies. This will guide the harmonization of PDPFPs and CLUPs between and among the LGUs, and will support the region's efforts in ensuring that all resource management plans are consistent with the national, regional and local physical framework and land use plans.
Amendment of DILG MC No. 2008-143 and Enactment of Local Housing Board Act	The passage of the Bill on the Local Housing Board Act shall be advanced and supported to institutionalize the creation of LHBs not only in cities and municipalities, but also in provinces, and to strengthen the LHB as a participatory governance institution for housing with wider functions and participation of the people's organizations and CSOs. While this law is not yet enacted, DILG MC No. 2008-143 can meantime be amended to include the following provisions: (a) Expansion of its coverage to include the provinces as they also implement local housing projects especially with the Full Devolution initiative; (b) Amendment of the mandatory composition of the LHB to include DHSUD and its KSAs; and (c) Strengthening of the LHB participatory governance structure by emphasizing its involvement and function in the decision-making process for LGU-wide (provincial, city, municipality) shelter provision.
Mandate the preparation/updating of CLUPs and Local Shelter Plans (LSPs) before LGUs and DHSUD can approve housing subdivision and condominium projects Integration / Mainstreaming of the LSP in the CLUP	This policy proposal aims to compel LGUs to prepare/update their CLUPs and LSPs. This will be further enhanced with the issuance of Guidelines from the DHSUD on the integration of the LSP in the CLUP formulation process.



TESDA Training
Source: TESDA 7

Section 3.4

INCREASE INCOME-EARNING ABILITY THROUGH QUALITY EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOOD

Central to social development and transformation is the development of the capacity of the Central Visayas human resource to actively participate in the region's economic transformation and growth. This is done by equipping the region's human resource with the necessary skills that will enable them to engage in livelihood or take advantage of job opportunities in industries that provide full employment and decent pay. Equally important in developing the capacity of the workforce to participate in the region's economic growth is the intensification of employment facilitation. Employment facilitation services consist of the programs made available to the workers to assist them in their search for employment opportunities.

This section of the report provides an assessment of the performance of the region in attaining the desired outcomes on expanding training and skills development and intensifying employment facilitation. It outlines the various programs, activities, and projects (PAPs) that were implemented in the first year of plan implementation in support of the following strategies: (a) institutionalization of Area-Based Demand-Driven TVET; (b) development of relevant entrepreneurial skills for the changing global economy; (c) institutionalization of Technical Education and Skills Development programs at the local level; (d) strengthening alternative training modalities; (e) expanding scholarship programs; (f) intensifying the conduct of job fairs and livelihood assistance; (g) conduct of skills mapping and establishment of database of skills at the local level; and (h) institutionalization of the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) in all LGUs.



Ribbon-cutting of DTI-TESDA FabLab in TESDA Regional Office 7
Source: NEDA 7

Section 3.4.1

EXPANDING TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

This section presents an assessment of the implementation of the Central Visayas strategies for expanding training and skills development. It looks at the extent of the region's progress in attaining its targets for the following outcomes in the first year of plan implementation: (a) relevance and responsiveness of senior high school, higher education, and TVET courses to market demand enhanced, (b) access to formal/informal education and training programs improved, and (c) lifelong learning promoted.

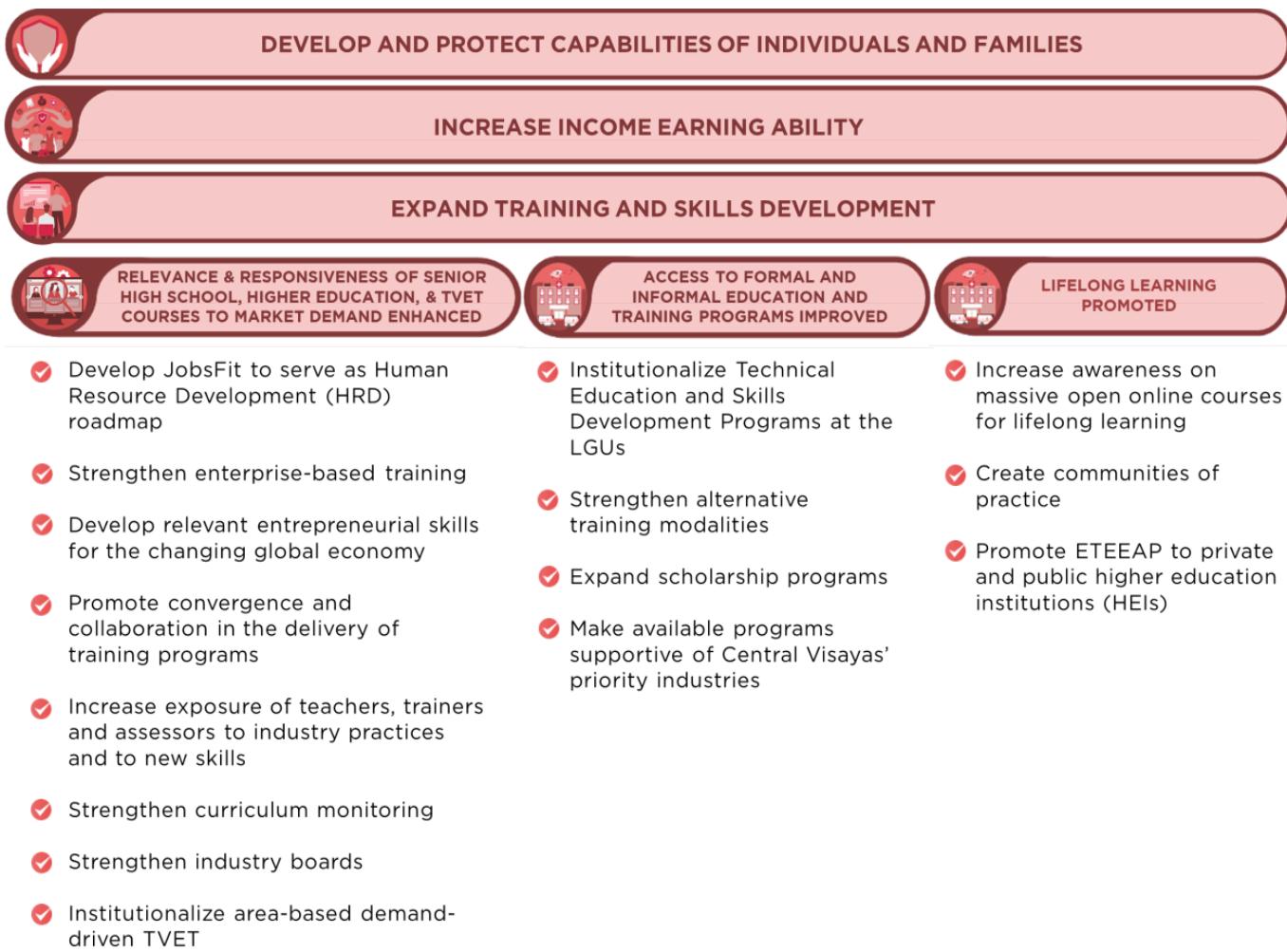
The Central Visayas Regional Development Plan 2023-2028 aims to increase the income-earning ability of the region's labor force by developing their knowledge and skills. Individuals and their families will be assisted to have access to training opportunities in order to keep their skills up-to-date and ensure that they stay productive. This would allow them to take advantage of employment opportunities that could provide them better life.

Data for the first year of plan implementation suggests that as the region made some progress in expanding the knowledge and skills of jobseekers and workers, employment situation in Central Visayas also improved. Underemployment declined to 9.9 percent in 2023 from 14.2 percent in 2022. Unemployment rate also eased to 4.7 percent in 2023 from 5.9 percent in 2022.

Strategy Framework

One of the region's core strategies to enhance the income earning ability of the Central Visayas human resource is expanding training and skills development. In support of this strategy the region pursued programs/ activities/ and projects that facilitate the realization of the following outcomes: (a) relevance and responsiveness of education and training courses to market demand enhanced; (b) accessibility to formal / informal education and training programs improved; and (c) lifelong learning promoted. The figure below shows the strategy framework for expanding training and skills development of Central Visayas' human resources.

Figure 3.4.1.1 Strategy Framework for Expanding Training and Skills Development



Major PAPs

Area-Based Demand-Driven (ABDD) TVET approach is the central strategy adopted by the Technical Education Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) to make TVET programs in the country responsive to the skills demand of industries and employers. In 2023, the TESDA 7 formulated the Technical Education and Skills Development Plan (TESDP) for 2023-2028 using the ABDD approach as framework. The plan will be cascaded to the LGUs starting 2024 for implementation.

Among the Technical Education and Skills Development Programs that were implemented at the local level are the Special Training for Employment Program (STEP) and the Barangay TVET Trainers Development as detailed in *Annex L*. The STEP is a community-based specialty training program that aims to uplift the economic status of the beneficiaries by providing them access to skills training and livelihood undertakings. The Barangay TVET Trainers Development seeks to capacitate potential TVET trainers to facilitate training programs in the barangays.

Meanwhile, in support of the strategy to improve access to formal and informal education and training, various scholarship programs were also implemented by the government in 2023. Among them are the following:

- a) Full Private Education Student Financial Assistance (FPESFA), which is a scholarship program for incoming college freshmen students with a general weighted average (GWA) of at least 85% or its equivalent and who are enrolling in recognized priority programs in private higher education institution (HEI) or State Universities and Colleges (SUC) or accredited Local University and College (LUCs).
- b) Full Scholarship (FS 101), which is a scholarship program for high schools graduates with a GWA of 90% or its equivalent in the third year and at least 90% in the first three grading period of the fourth year who will enroll in identified priority courses in duly authorized public or private HEIs.
- c) Scholarship Grant Program for Children and Dependents of Sugarcane Industry Workers and Small Sugarcane Farmers (SIDA-SGP), which is a scholarship program for qualified and deserving children of workers in the sugarcane industry including sugarcane farmers enrolled in undergraduate or graduate programs related to agriculture, agricultural engineering and mechanics, chemical engineering/ sugar technology in any identified SUC.
- d) ISTATISKOLAR, which is a CHED scholarship program for graduating BS Statistics Program.
- e) Scholarship Program for Coconut Farmers and their Families, which opens educational opportunities for children of coconut farmers.

Results Matrix

Data on Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) for 2023 showed marked improvement in the quality and accessibility of TVET courses. In the first year of plan implementation, the certification rate for TVET graduates in Central Visayas rose to 97.18 percent, surpassing the plan target of 92.0 percent. The region's TVET certification rate of 97.18 percent in 2023 was higher compared to the previous year, suggesting that the quality and delivery of TVET programs has improved. This was made possible by capacitating the TVET trainers through the conduct professional development programs including immersion programs. The implementation of area-based and demand-driven TVET also facilitated the alignment of TVET courses with industry needs and demand.

Even certification rates for middle-skilled workers increased to 95.0 percent in 2023 from only 92.0 percent in 2022. TESDA certification is issued to graduates or workers who meet competency standards for certain occupation. It ensures the productivity, quality and global competitiveness of the middle-skilled workers.

Table 3.4.1.1 Results Matrix for Expanding Training and Skills Development

INDICATOR]	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 1: Relevance and Responsiveness of senior high school, higher education, and TVET courses to market demand enhanced				
Certification Rate of TVET Graduates (%)	92.0 (2022)	92.0	92.5	97.18
TESDA Certification Rate (%)	92.0 (2022)	92.0	92.5	95.00
Outcome 2: Access to formal/informal education and training programs improved				
Number of TVET enrollees	33,391 (2022)	36,730	40,403	40,264
Number of TVET graduates	30,720 (2022)	33,792	37,171	30,376

Source: Technical Education and Skills Development Authority 7

In terms of accessibility, data from TESDA show that the number of TVET enrollees increased by 20.5 percent in 2023. The increase in the scholarship grants was partly responsible for this accomplishment as it provided opportunity for more deserving students to enroll in TVET training courses. Another factor that contributed to the increase in the number of TVET enrollees is the conduct of regular training programs by TESDA Technology Institutions (TTIs)/ Technical Vocational Institutions (TVIs) to facilitate the upskilling/ retooling of workforce and to provide opportunities for lifelong learning.

Ways Forward

Priority Strategies

In the next two years, Central Visayas shall focus on further improving the quality and accessibility of TVET programs and courses. Therefore, the region shall prioritize the implementation of the following strategies:

Institutionalize Area-Based Demand-Driven TVET

Under this strategy, TESDA shall encourage the provincial industry boards and technical vocational institutions (TVIs) to register more programs under the area-based demand-driven TVET. Priority shall be given to programs that support the development of the skills requirements of the region's provinces, viz.: construction and ICT in Cebu; agri-fishery, construction, and tourism in Bohol.

Strengthen TVET Programs for the Disadvantaged

DepEd 7 shall collaborate with TESDA 7 on strengthening applicable TVET programs for Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates, out-of-school youth, Indigenous Peoples (IP), Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) beneficiaries, and other children in situations of disadvantage.

At the same time, the Central Visayas RDC shall advocate for the expansion of the Mobile Training Program (MTP) to facilitate the access of residents in far-flung barangays to training programs.

Expand Scholarship Programs

To facilitate the qualification of IPs in scholarship programs, including that of the TVET, the RDC shall advocate for the issuance of a joint memorandum between the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and TESDA, providing special guidelines in the grant of scholarship to IPs. It shall also persuade the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) and CHED 7 to conduct an aggressive information campaign among IP communities to avail of scholarship programs of the government.

Legislative Agenda

In the next two years, the RDC shall also advocate the passage of relevant laws and ordinances that will support the expansion of training and skills development for the Central Visayas constituency and the Filipino workforce in general.

Table 3.4.1.2 Legislative Agenda for Expanding Training and Skills Development

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Relevance and Responsiveness of senior high school, higher education, and TVET courses to market demand enhanced	
Enhancement of enterprise-based education and training	This will standardize the enterprise-based training systems, ensure the development of competencies of trainers / learners, and provide protection of the rights and safety of trainers and learners.
Access to formal/informal education and training programs improved	
Establishment of LGU-run training centers	The LGU-run training center will provide basic training to address the skills requirements of their constituents.
Creation of plantilla position for Community Training and Employment Coordinators (CTECs)	The CTECs shall serve as facilitators of Community-Based Training for Enterprise Development (CBTED) programs and projects.



Local and OFW Job Fair, Cebu
Source: DOLE 7 Facebook Page

Section 3.4.2

INTENSIFY EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION

Introduction

Efforts to enhance the quality of the region's labor force were complemented with efforts to improve employment facilitation services. This was to ensure that qualified workers will be absorbed by the region's target industries.

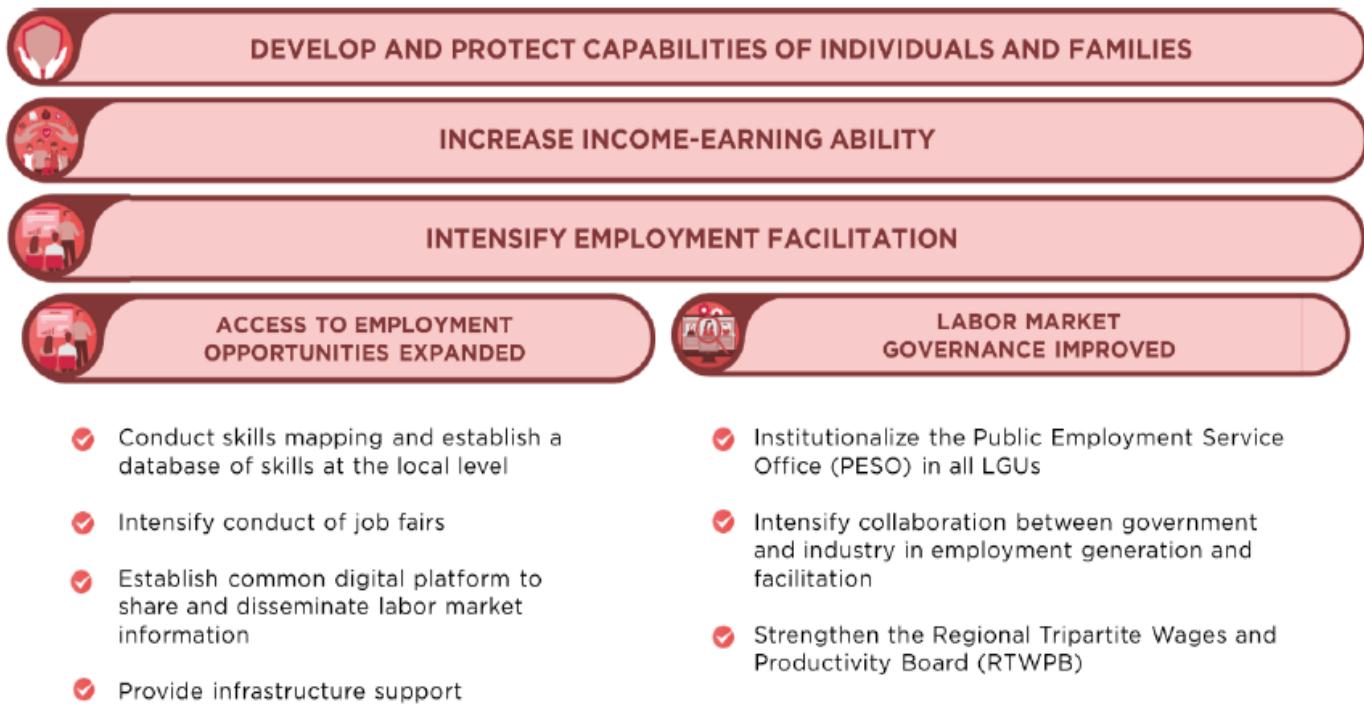
This section examines how Central Visayas fared in terms of addressing the various barriers to employment. It provides a snapshot of the region's accomplishments along the following outcomes: (a) access to employment opportunities expanded; and (b) labor market governance improved.

Employment facilitation services play a vital role in the post-pandemic labor market recovery. It has proved its value in matching jobseekers with employers, supporting workers undergo career shifts, and assisting employers locate and recruit workers who have the necessary skills required by their companies and businesses. Through intensified employment facilitation, the region was able to bring workers who were displaced during the pandemic back to the labor market as competitive workers contributing to the region's economic recovery. This is evident by the sustained decline in the region's unemployment rate two years after the re-opening of the regional economy.

Strategy Framework

As a complementary strategy to human capital development, the intensification of employment facilitation will also be given utmost attention to achieve the desired outcome of increasing the income-earning ability of the region's workers. Intensification of employment facilitation would require expanding access to employment opportunities and improving labor market governance. The figure below summarizes the strategies of the region for intensifying employment facilitation.

Figure 3.4.2.1 Strategy Framework for Intensifying Employment Facilitation



Major PAPs

In 2023, the PAPs that were implemented to support the intensification of employment facilitation consist of the following, among others: (a) livelihood programs; (b) labor market information; and (b) job fairs (*See Annex M*). Under the Integrated Livelihood Program of DOLE (DLIP), some 14,721 beneficiaries region-wide were assisted in the implementation of their livelihood projects which range from sari-sari store, tailoring services, guitar production, motor parts and vulcanizing shop hog raising, cattle fattening, and many more.

Job fairs were also regularly conducted by DOLE in cooperation with the PESOs of local government units. The conduct of job fairs has been proven effective in providing jobseekers opportunity to explore a wide array of job opportunities and to have access on various employment services including career counselling. At the same time, job fairs provide a venue for employers to promote their companies to prospective workers.

Another program which was implemented by DOLE that facilitated temporary employment for the younger segment of the workforce was the Special Program for Employment of Students (SPES). This program aims to provide temporary employment during school breaks or any time of the year to underprivileged but deserving students. Through SPES, the students are given opportunity to acquire skills and work experience, which will give them advantage when they apply for jobs after graduation.

With job search through digital platform becoming a popular mode for seeking job opportunities, DOLE has established the PhilJobNet to serve as the government's portal for all matters related to labor market information. Aside from job vacancies, the PhilJobNet also features career information guides to help job seekers find the most suitable jobs for them. Profiles of jobseekers are made available in PhilJobNet through the Skills Registry System of DOLE which was established under the National Skills Registration Program.

On the part of the Central Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC), efforts were undertaken to advocate the institutionalization of the PESO in all LGUs in Central Visayas. The RDC Social Development Committee (SDC) monitored the number of LGUs that have institutionalized the PESO in their respective areas in accordance with Republic Act 8759, as amended by Republic Act 10691, and in accordance with DOLE Department Order No. 157-16. A report on the status of the PESOs in Central Visayas was presented to the RDC-SDC in May 2023.

Results Matrix

Labor market recovery persisted in 2023 and the region's success in enhancing access to employment opportunities is shown by the sustained decline in unemployment rate. The unemployment rate in Central Visayas further went down to 4.7 in percent 2023 from 5.9 percent in 2022. This level is even lower than the pre-pandemic unemployment rate level of 5.2 percent.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), however, point to a slight contraction in the percentage of workers who were actively seeking for jobs. Labor force participation rate (LFPR) in Central Visayas went down to 64.7 percent in 2023 from 65.0 percent in 2022, indicating that more workers opted not to be economically active. Among the possible reasons why workers stay out of the labor force are the following: housekeeping, schooling and permanent disability.

Table 3.4.2.1 Results Matrix for Intensifying Employment Facilitation

INDICATOR]	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 2: Access to employment opportunities increased				
Female Labor Force Participation Rate (%)	51.7 (2022)	51.0-53.0	51.5- 53.5	No data
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.8 (2021)	5.6-6.2	5.3-5.8	4.7
Placement rate of Public Employment Service Offices	81 (2020)	90.0	92.0	No data
Percentage of educated unemployed to total unemployed	38 (2022)	35-37	35-37	No data

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Employment facilitation services provided were not limited to the conduct of job fairs. Many were also provided gainful employment through the various livelihood assistance programs of the government. In 2023, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) was able to provide assistance to many displaced and self-employed workers through its Integrated Livelihood Program. Some of them have become entrepreneurs who have the capacity to help in job creation.

In terms of the institutionalization of Public Employment Service Office (PESO) in the localities, a report rendered by the Department of Labor and Employment show that as of 30 March 2023, only 45 LGUs in Central Visayas have activated their PESOs. Of this number only 10 have PESO plantilla positons, which is mandated by DOLE Department Order No. 157-16.

Ways Forward

Priority Strategies

In the next two years, Central Visayas shall prioritize the implementation of the following strategies:

Institutionalize the Public Employment Service Office in all LGUs

The Central Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC) shall continue to advocate to the LGUs the institutionalization of the PESO in their area. This would require the passage of relevant local ordinance. Through the RDC-Social Development Committee (SDC), the RDC shall monitor the status of the PESOs in the Central Visayas LGUs.

Develop regulatory framework for Digital Labor Market Intermediaries

The Central Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC) shall advocate the development of a regulatory framework for digital labor market intermediaries (DLMI), which are fast becoming popular as mode for employer-employee matching. A regulatory framework for DLMI is necessary inasmuch as unlike the private employment agencies, which are regulated by the Labor Code of the Philippines, the private DLMIs are not yet regulated.

Legislative Agenda

Table 3.4.2.2 Legislative Agenda for Intensifying Employment Facilitation

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Labor market governance improved	
Institutionalization of Public Employment Service Office	This will ensure that the operation of the PESO in the LGUs is sustained and that it is able to provide the full-range of services expected of the office.



DSWD Saulog Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program Ceremonial Graduation
Source: Cebu Daily News Inquirer

Section 3.5

SUSTAINING THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL SAFETY NETS

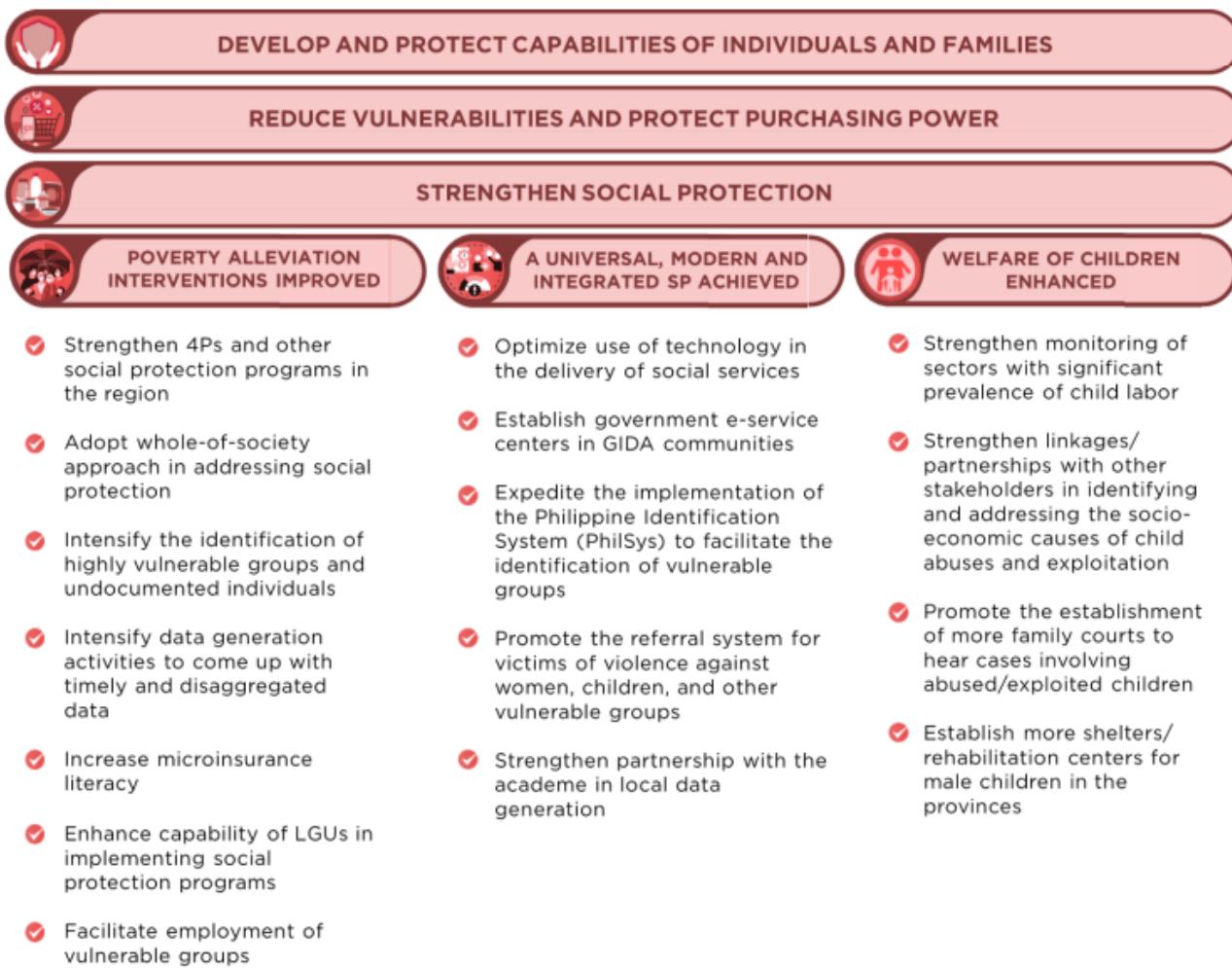
Introduction

Fundamental to the social transformation agenda of Central Visayas is the strengthening of social safety nets for the poor, vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized segments of the population. This section presents an assessment of the social protection interventions in the first year of implementation of the Regional Development Plan 2023-2028. The data reported by the social sector agencies suggest that the region has made significant gains towards the attainment of the intended outcomes in strengthening social protection. It also outlines the priority strategies to be implemented and the legislative measures to be supported to sustain these gains in the next two years.

Strategy Framework

Building a resilient population entails implementing a rationalized and integrated social protection system. In support of the strategy to strengthen social protection, the region implemented programs, activities and projects intended to achieve the following outcomes: (a) poverty alleviation interventions improved; (b) universal, modern and integrated social protection achieved; and (c) welfare of children enhanced. The figure below shows the strategy framework to sustain the provision of social safety nets in the region.

Figure 3.5.1 Strategy Framework to Sustain the Provision of Social Safety Nets



Major PAPs

The Department of Social Welfare and Development 7 (DSWD 7), the lead agency of the social welfare and development sector in the region, continues to implement flagship programs that aim to improve the level of well-being of low-income and disadvantaged households and sectors. This includes the core social protection programs such as the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), Kapit-bisig Laban sa Kahirapan–Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS), and Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP). The other social protection programs of the DSWD 7 are the Social Pension for Indigent Citizens (SocPen), Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS), and Disaster Relief and Early Recovery. The details and status of implementation are summarized in *Annex N*.

The 4Ps, SLP, and other programs of DSWD 7 will continue to respond to the needs of at-risk Filipinos in the coming years. Meanwhile, the KALAHI-CIDSS National Community-Driven Development Program-Additional Financing (NCDDP-AF), which completed 2,488 community sub-projects and has served 1.4 million households, will end by June 2024.

The Department of Labor and Employment 7 (DOLE 7) also implemented programs to facilitate the employment of vulnerable groups. Thousands of beneficiaries were served and provided with livelihood assistance through the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program and Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers Program (TUPAD). To

sustain job growth, DOLE 7 is also closely working with the Public Employment Service Offices (PESOs) in the LGUs.

To attain universal, modern and integrated social protection, programs and activities such as the PhilHealth's Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama (Konsulta) and the PSA 7's Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) were strengthened. PhilHealth Konsulta has accredited 207 Konsulta package providers in 2023 covering all provinces in Central Visayas. For its part, the PSA 7 has intensified its statistical operations in preparation of the anticipated nationwide rollout of CBMS in 2024.

Major programs and services to address the underlying causes of child labor, abuses, and exploitation are likewise being implemented vigorously in the region. DSWD7 leads the advocacy to support the welfare of children through the implementation of the Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons (RRPTP) and the operation of Center and Residential Care Facilities (CRCFs).

Parallel to the above efforts, the Central Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC) has approved various resolutions directed at the poor and vulnerable groups. The resolution enjoining the LGUs in the region to utilize the Enhanced Social Protection Operational Framework (SPOF) has already been adopted by some LGUs. The SPOF highlights social protection as a basic human right and notes the critical role of local government units in implementing the 4Ps.

The other resolutions approved by the RDC were the following: (a) Requesting the National Advisory Council to recommend to the 4Ps Oversight Committee to study the need for executive measures providing penalties for individuals and corporate entities who accept 4Ps cash cards as loan collateral; (b) Requesting the Department of Health (DOH) to include the establishment of senior citizens' ward as an additional indicator in the assessment tool for licensure and accreditation of health facilities, particularly for government hospitals; and (c) Urging the LGUs in Central Visayas to formulate their respective Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans (LPRAPs) using the CBMS as basis and the concerned government agencies to provide the required inputs in the formulation of the National Poverty Reduction Plan.

Results Matrix

Enhanced poverty alleviation interventions

In 2023, the social protection programs aimed to alleviate poverty and revitalize job growth have demonstrated significant gains. The 4Ps program has reported 441,949 household beneficiaries served in Central Visayas in 2023, with 144,520 beneficiaries added since 2022. The large increase can be attributed to the inclusion of the Set 12 beneficiaries who were registered to replace those members who have exited the program including those who have reached the self-sufficient level of well-being. Intensive case management aided the agency in providing the needed interventions for families to attain the self-sufficient level. The Social Welfare Development Indicators (SWDI) was used as the assessment tool to determine the level of well-being of the beneficiaries. Similarly, DSWD 7 revealed that 100 percent of the target indigent senior citizens were able to receive social pension.

DOLE's Integrated Livelihood Program has provided livelihood assistance to 14,721 individuals in 2023, which is more than double the Plan target. In addition, the department has also served 242,833 beneficiaries of the Tulong Panghanapbuhay for Disadvantaged Workers Program (TUPAD).

An increase was also noted in the number of families with registered members and beneficiaries of PhilHealth, from 84 percent in 2020 to 91 percent in 2023. The non-attainment of 100 percent coverage is due to the expired validity of members in the Sponsored Program (SP) and Point-of-Service Financially-Incapable (POS-FI). There were also previous members of PhilHealth that are now tagged as separated. These members opted not to continue as self-earning members.

Intensified programs and strengthened collaboration to serve 100 percent of abuse cases

In the latest report of DSWD 7, all child abuse cases lodged with the agency were served. The close coordination with the Local Social Welfare Offices (LSWOs) has played an important role in accommodating referrals from various LGUs. The intensified advocacy programs in partnership with stakeholders and strengthened collaboration with Inter-Agency Council (IAC) partners on Violence against Women and Children have also efficiently addressed and responded to these cases.

Table 3.5.1 Results Matrix on Sustaining the Provision of Social Safety Nets

INDICATOR	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Percentage of families with registered members and beneficiaries of PhilHealth	84% (2020)	100%	100%	91%
Percentage of indigent senior citizens who receive pension	99.98% (2022)	100%	100%	100%
Number of indigent senior citizens who receive pension	299,737 (2022)	299,737	299,737	299,737
Percentage of 4Ps households with improved well-being				
Survival	(2019)	2%	1.8%	0.06%
Subsistence		70%	68.2%	79.88%
Self-sufficient		28%	30%	20.06%
Number of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) beneficiaries covered	297,429 (2022)	300,239	302,519	441,949
Number of beneficiaries provided with livelihood assistance (DOLE)	5,629 (2022)	5,228	4,190	14,721
Number of beneficiaries served by emergency employment/cash-for-work program: Tulong Panghanapbuhay for Disadvantaged Workers Program	315,591 (2022)	actual	actual	242,833
Percentage of functioning agency websites to deliver online social protection services	100% (2021)	100%	100%	100%
Number of VAWC cases	60 (2022)	50	45	61
Proportion of child abuse cases reported in DSWD served	(2022)	100%	100%	100%
Proportion of Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances (WEDC) reported in DSWD served	(2022)	100%	100%	100%
Proportion of violence against women cases reported in DSWD served	(2022)	100%	100%	100%

Source: Department of Social Welfare and Development 7

Ways Forward

To sustain the gains and address the gaps and challenges in achieving the social transformation thrust of Central Visayas, the region shall focus on implementing the strategies below in the next two years.

Priority Strategies

Facilitate employment of vulnerable groups

The LGUs, in collaboration with DOLE 7, DTI 7, TESDA 7, DSWD 7, employer organizations, and NGOs shall implement programs that will encourage the employment of vulnerable groups such as the PWDs, elderly, indigenous people, and solo parents. Establishments and organizations implementing skills development programs for beneficiaries of social protection programs and services to make them more employable will be highly supported.

Increase micro insurance literacy and expand financial access

LGUs, especially the provinces, will be assisted in holding micro insurance fairs for their constituents in coordination with DSWD 7, the Insurance Commission, and accredited private insurance/micro-insurance providers to promote adoption. The conduct of micro insurance caravans is also suggested in rural barangays. LGUs can also help strengthen the advocacy for individuals to voluntarily enroll in the Social Security System and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, and fisher folk and farmers to enroll in the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation. The Land Bank of the Philippines as well may expand its LANDBANKASAMA Program to more areas identified as Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) in Central Visayas. This strategy will ensure financial access even in the most remote and underserved areas in the region.

Strengthen monitoring of sectors with significant prevalence of child labor

Under this strategy, sectors with significantly higher incidences of child labor will be identified and monitored for compliance with child labor laws. DOLE 7 and LGUs shall collaborate with the academe, especially the state universities, to help in the research work. Existing child protection programs of the LGU, DOLE 7 and DSWD 7 will also be strengthened in light of new information from studies to ensure that the rights and welfare of children are protected.

The RDC 7 shall support and advocate the passage of the relevant laws and ordinances to strengthen the social protection of the people in Central Visayas.

Table 3.5.2 Legislative Agenda for Sustaining the Provision of Social Safety Nets

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Poverty alleviation interventions improved	
Passage of a Bill on the Maternity Benefit for women in the Informal Economy	Enhance the existing RA 11210 or Expanded Maternity Leave Law, requiring the government to give out direct maternity cash aid to all pregnant workers in the informal sector especially the urban poor in Central Visayas.
Enhancement of the welfare of children	
Localization of Child Protection Policy	Institute measures to strengthen the protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation in tourism establishments especially in LGUs identified as tourism development centers.
Child Support Responsibility Bill	Ensure child support and penalizing parental refusal or neglect thereof.



RDC 7 Full Council Third Quarter Meeting, Negros Oriental, 15 September 2023

Source: RDC 7 Secretariat

CHAPTER 4

Paving the Way towards Sustainable Progress through Institutional Transformation and Climate Action

To empower and strengthen institutions as well as enhance their systems and procedures so that these institutions are made more effective and efficient in the delivery of goods and services to the public, this Chapter talks about: a) ensuring a more responsive and accessible government; b) promoting a sustainable natural resources management to accelerate climate change responsiveness and disaster resilience.



Section 4.1

ENSURING A MORE RESPONSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE GOVERNMENT

Introduction

A more responsive and accessible government is essential in attaining sustainable development for Central Visayas. The region's pursuit of good governance shall be anchored on policies that seek to strengthen institutions and local autonomy, and promote meritocracy in government service.

Strategy Framework

Central Visayas intends to foster an enabling environment that will help bring back the Philippines to a high-growth path and jumpstart the country's social and economic transformation towards a prosperous, inclusive and resilient society by making sure that the government is more responsive and accessible to its people. Towards this end, the government shall aim to: (a) improve the quality of local governance; (b) improve and sustain the competitiveness of Central Visayas local government units (LGUs); and (c) promote bureaucratic and regulatory efficiency.

Ways Forward

The region shall address the challenges pertaining to good governance as follows: (a) sustaining good local governance in line with the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) Law of 2019; (b) declining competitiveness of LGUs; and, (c) non-maximization of platforms and mechanisms for citizens' meaningful participation in development direction-setting and decision making.

Priority Strategies for the Improvement of the Quality of Local Governance

Ensure LGU compliance with the SGLG Law of 2019

The Performance Challenge Fund has been used to incentivize the compliance of the LGUs with the SGLG program. With the upgrading the SGLG criteria, poorer LGUs may have more difficulties in qualifying for the award. The incentives for good local governance (SGLG Fund) can be designed to offer different eligibility criteria or incentives to different LGUs by income class.

For the Central Visayas provinces to qualify for the SGLG Award, the law requires that 10 percent of their respective component cities and municipalities must also be passers. In view of this, the region shall enjoin the provinces of Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor to establish the provincial incentive program to encourage their LGUs to pass the SGLG assessment areas.

The regional line agencies of Central Visayas shall provide technical assistance to LGUs in order to improve their performance in the promotion of general welfare of their constituents. The 10 governance areas for assessment as provided in the SGLG Law of 2019 shall serve as entry points for the regional line agencies in the provision of technical assistance and capacity build-up of LGUs. Technical assistance shall also include the provision of support to the capacity development of LGUs and citizen's groups to institute and follow-through on governance reforms.

Accordingly, the concerned regional line agencies can provide the required technical assistance depending on which among the 10 SGLG criteria the LGUs may have difficulty complying.

Recognizing the varied existing capacities of LGUs in different income classes, the DILG 7 shall devise an incentive program that is adaptive to the prevailing circumstances in the region. Some LGUs may have more constraints than others in pursuing good local governance. As provided under the SGLG Law, LGUs that did not qualify for the SGLG shall receive a Certificate of Recognition in meeting minimum requirements of local governance assessment area(s), if any; and a performance scorecard citing its opportunities for development. Special recognition across the governance areas, as may be deemed appropriate, shall also be accorded to identified local governments.

The region, through DILG 7, shall design an incentive program that will give due recognition to LGUs that may be able to comply with the minimum set of SGLG criteria (e.g., Seal of Good Housekeeping; 3+1 for 5th-6th class municipalities; 4+1 for 3rd-4th class municipalities; 7 criteria for 1st-2nd class municipalities).

Create the Regional Council for Good Local Governance (RCGLG)

The region will replicate the Council for Good Local Governance in the region to be composed of the DILG Regional Director as chair and the regional directors of the nine agencies as members. The regional council shall ensure that majority of the LGUs, preferably all LGUs, will qualify for the SGLG award by the end of the plan period.

The region, through the Regional Council for Good Local Governance (RCGLG), shall institutionalize the Performance Governance Metrics as a tool to measure meaningful participation of citizens in mandated spaces for developmental collaboration.

The region will also adopt the PGM for local special bodies as a complementary tool for assessing the substantive participation of citizens groups in local development decision making processes and platforms.

Priority Strategies for the Improvement of LGU Competitiveness

Provide technical assistance to LGUs in areas that require interventions to improve competitiveness

The region, through the government agencies whose mandates are aligned with the 5 pillars of the Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI), shall provide technical assistance to LGUs in areas where they are found to be deficient.

Moving beyond the rankings of LGUs in terms of their competitiveness, the region through the Regional Competitiveness Council (RCC) shall institute and implement concrete programs to improve competitiveness especially of LGUs that have low or declining ranking in the CMCI.

The Regional Council for Good Local Governance (RCGLG) and the RCC shall harmonize the assessment processes as well as the provision of technical assistance to LGUs on the governance area on business friendliness and competitiveness.

Promote the adoption by LGUs of Quality Management Systems (QMS) or the Philippine Quality Award (PQA)

The region shall enjoin the LGUs, specifically the provinces, highly urbanized cities (HUCs), and component cities to adopt and implement the QMS. While Executive Order No. 607 (s. 2007), “institutionalizing the Structure, Mechanism and Standards to Implement the Government Quality Management Program (GQMP)” covered only the Executive Branch, a number of LGUs throughout the country have implemented their respective QMS. The region’s LGUs can benefit from an improved processes and procedures in the delivery of public services with their adoption of the QMS.

The higher level of productivity improvement measure is the Philippine Quality Award Program, which was institutionalized through Republic Act 9013, also known as the Philippine Quality Award Act. The program serves as a global competitiveness template to encourage and engage public and private organizations and other stakeholders to strive for and attain performance excellence. It is a national award program that recognizes achievements of public and private sector organizations in their journey towards performance excellence.

As a way to promote the adoption of PQA, the region shall encourage the LGUs and regional line agencies to join the Philippine Quality Challenge Program. It is a self-assessment, consultancy, and recognition program with an objective to assist private organizations in the country including LGUs in starting off their journey to performance excellence and become competitive following the framework of the Philippine Quality Award (PQA) Program.

Priority Strategies for the Promotion of Bureaucratic and Regulatory Efficiency

Pursue the implementation of PRIME-HRM

The region, through the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Regional Office 7, shall endeavor to expand the coverage of the PRIME-HRM to all government agencies and LGUs in Central Visayas. Technical assistance shall be provided to ensure that many agencies and LGUs will qualify and progress into the four levels of human resource maturity in government service.

Pursue technology-enabled governance in the region

The region shall vigorously pursue technology-enabled governance by advocating for the adoption of the online delivery of government services, where feasible, and lobby for the digitalization of government processes and procedures.

The region shall also lobby for a centralized, coordinated, and updated data management system. It shall maximize the use of ICT for data analytics to support effective government decision-making, public funds tracking, and reliable public information sharing. In line with this, the region shall promote the establishment of a central data hub to include regular updates and reliable community household data with disaggregated information and gender-differentiated poverty indicators.

Building on the gains attained during the Covid-19 pandemic when government offices and LGUs utilized the technology-enabled platform to implement flexible-working arrangements, the region will sustain the implementation of the flexible work arrangement as provided for under the Civil Service Commission Resolution No. 22200209. The region shall leverage the use of information and communications technology (ICT) for remote work, and provide reasonable work arrangements for vulnerable employees such as senior citizens, pregnant women, those recovering from sickness/injuries, and issues of mobility.

Implement the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Law

The pursuit of bureaucratic and regulatory efficiency shall be anchored on Republic Act No. 11032, also known as the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018. In implementing the law, the region through the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) Eastern Visayas shall continue to streamline the current systems and procedures of government services. It shall ensure prompt actions or resolution of all government transactions with efficiency.

One measure for reducing regulatory burden is the effectiveness of the Citizens Charter as required by RA No. 11032. The effectiveness of the Citizens Charter is measured through the conduct of the Report Card Survey (RCS) 2.0. In line with this, the region through the ARTA Eastern Visayas office shall regularly conduct the RCS as the mandated tool to obtain feedback on the compliance of government agencies with the provisions of RA No. 11032, and to guide the government agencies and instrumentalities in reengineering their processes to improve their internal and external services.

The region shall also lobby with the ARTA for the institutionalization and establishment of the Regulatory Management System (RMS) to improve and upgrade the quality of regulations in the country, including those promulgated by the LGUs of Central Visayas, as provided in the IRR of RA No. 1132. The RMS shall be comprised of, but not limited to, a regulatory management framework, institutional arrangements, a regulatory policy cycle, and enforcement and compliance strategies. The institutionalization of the RMS shall require that existing or proposed regulations, including those at the LGU level, be subjected to regulatory impact analysis. Further, the RMS would provide the necessary periodic maintenance of the national regulatory systems to ensure the assessment of outcomes, the weeding out of unnecessary or inefficient rules, and the adoption of the needed rules to address new economic and social conditions.

In the context of the RMS, the Central Visayas LGUs and the regional line agencies shall be capacitated to conduct the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) that will enable them to critically measure the expected positive and negative effects of proposed and existing regulations through a rigorous, well-defined, and evidence-based analysis. The LGUs shall also be enjoined to formally adopt the RIA in the formulation of their ordinances as well as the review of their existing ordinances and regulations.

Legislative Agenda

The table below presents the legislative measures that Central Visayas will support and advocate in the immediate term to ensure a government that is within reach by the citizenry and is also mindful of the people's needs and aspirations.

Table 4.1.1 Legislative Agenda to Ensure a More Responsive and Accessible Government

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE/DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES
E-Governance Act	The measure will promote the use of ICT in improving government service delivery and providing access to reliable data and information.	DILG 7, LGUs, CSC 7
Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP)	<p>The POGB law will ensure that the PH-OGP is institutionalized to serve as the governing body in ensuring the realization of its governance commitments under the Open Government national action plan.</p> <p>The Philippines is a founding member of the Open Government (OGP), a broad international partnership of governments and civil society that promotes transparency, accountability, and citizen participation, leveraging technology and innovation. Through the decade and after five (5) national action plans (NAP), the PH-OGP has since evolved into a vital platform for introducing reforms in governance by harnessing technology and creating synergy with organized citizens and mainstreaming these innovations at various levels of government.</p>	DBM 7
Telework in Government Service	To serve as the counterpart to the Telecommuting Act of the private sector, the Telework Work in Government law will provide the legal basis for telecommuting arrangements in the civil service. It shall build on CSC Resolution No. 2200209, and provide a more permanent legal basis for flexible work arrangements in government.	RDC 7
Provincial ordinance on SGLG incentives for component cities and municipalities	For a province to qualify for the SGLG award, at least 10 percent of its component cities and municipalities must also pass all the SGLG assessment areas. The four provinces in Central Visayas can incentivize the compliance of their respective component cities and municipalities with the requirements of the SGLG Act in order for the provinces to also qualify for the award.	DILG 7 and the four provinces of Central Visayas
Provincial and city ordinances on the adoption of the Regulatory Impact Assessment	The adoption of the Regulatory Impact Assessment as mandated in the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act will improve the formulation and implementation of the LGU ordinances and regulations.	Central Visayas Provinces and Cities



Section 4.2

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND ACCELERATING CLIMATE-SMART AND DISASTER-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

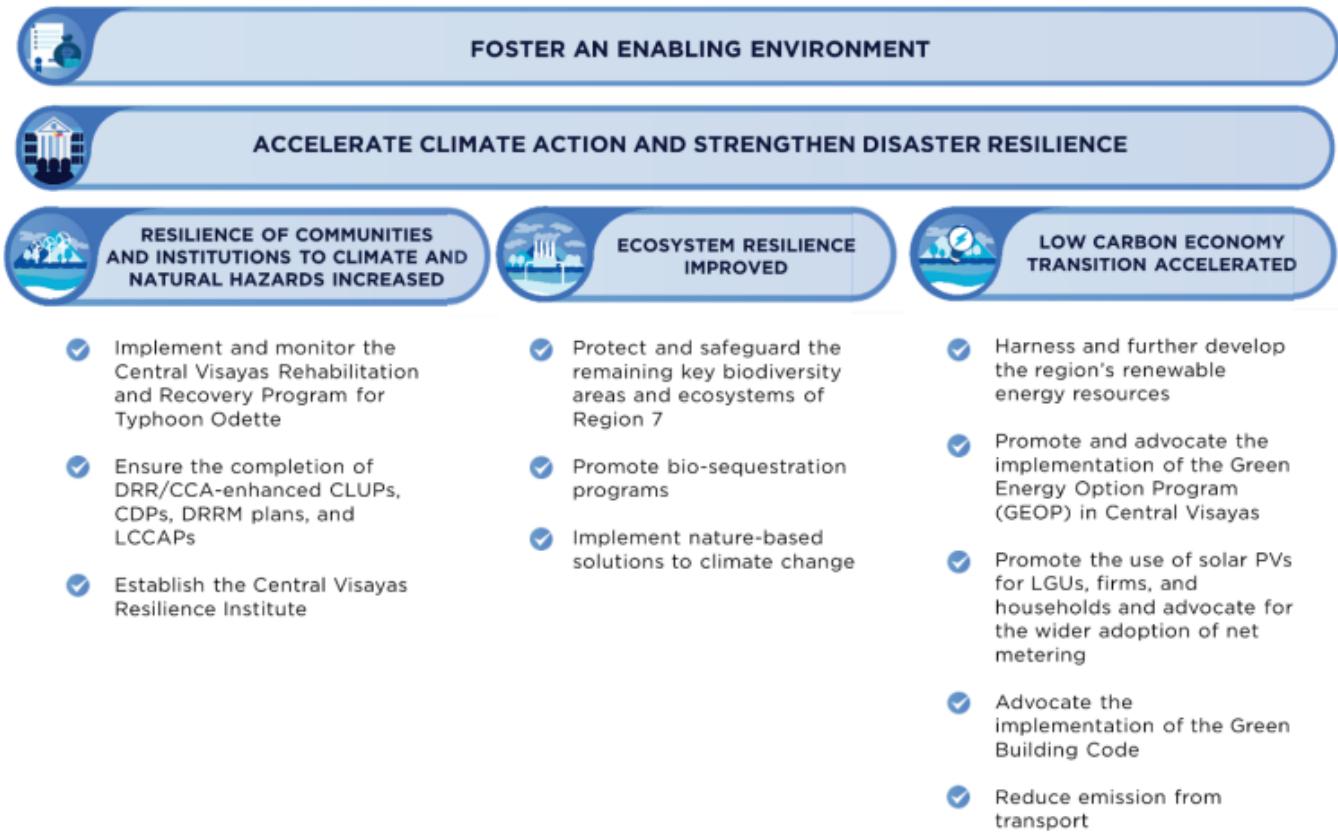
The attainment of sustainable development and inclusive growth depends on the region's environmental quality, which forms the basis for its sustenance and progress. As a result, Central Visayas gives top priority to safeguarding the environment as it strives for socio-economic development. Embracing the principle of shared responsibility, the region encourages the active involvement of all stakeholders in joint initiatives to preserve ecological integrity and promote a clean and thriving environment.

Promoting sustainable natural resources is closely intertwined with the region's efforts to address the adverse effects of climate change and other natural hazards, thereby ensuring the resilience of the region's communities. It is in this context that the Central Visayas Regional Development Plan for 2023 – 2028 pursues development measures and ecosystems-based interventions to reduce and manage the risks of disaster due to climate change and natural hazards.

Strategy Framework

The region's core strategy to accelerate climate action and strengthen disaster resilience includes increasing the resilience of communities and institutions to climate and natural hazards, improving the resilience of the ecosystem, and accelerating the transition to low carbon economy.

Figure 4.2.1 Strategy Framework for Promoting Sustainable Natural Resources Management and Accelerating Climate-smart and Disaster Resilient Development



Major PAPs

The priority programs and projects are categorized according to three major thrusts: a) increasing the resilience of communities, b) improving ecosystem resilience, and c) accelerating low carbon economy transition as summarized in *Annex O*.

Increasing the Resilience of Communities

Monitoring of the Central Visayas Rehabilitation and Recovery Program for Typhoon Odette

The Central Visayas Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC 7) through RDRRMC Resolution No. 08 (s. 2023) has directed the concerned agencies in Central Visayas to provide updates on the status of the proposed projects in the Central Visayas RRP, 2022-2024 and the plans of the agencies on projects that have not been implemented. It was deemed necessary to monitor and assess the status of the proposed PAPs in the Central Visayas RRP to determine which of these PAPs remained unimplemented and will be pursued in 2025 and beyond. As chair of the RDRRMC 7 Rehabilitation and Recovery Committee, NEDA 7 will be monitoring the status of projects in 2024.

Preparation of the DRR/CCA-enhanced Development and Spatial Plans

Central Visayas through the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) 7 continued to supervise and provide technical assistance to the LGUs of Central Visayas in the preparation of their respective Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs). For 2023, 10 LGU CLUPs were approved by their respective approving authorities, bringing the total number of approved CLUPs in the region to 31.

In promoting the general welfare clause of the Local Government Code of 1991, the LGUs of Central Visayas are guided by their respective Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs) that are required to be enhanced by DRR/CCA measures. As of the 2nd quarter of 2023, 90 out of the 132 LGUs have updated and approved CDPs. The region through the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) 7 has been providing technical assistance to the remaining 42 LGUs either for the updating of their expired/ outdated CDPs or for the formulation of the CDPs. In the provision of technical assistance to the LGUs on development planning, the DILG 7 through its Local Governance Regional Resource Center institutionalized the Consortium for CDP Formulation and Updating, which is composed of the non-government organizations and the Local Resource Institutes such as the Holy Name University, University of San Carlos, Cebu Institute of Technology-University, Cebu Normal University, Silliman University, University of San Jose Recoletos, University of the Philippines – Cebu, and the Ramon Aboitiz Foundation, Inc.

Preparation of Local Climate Change Action Plans

As required by the Climate Change Act of 2009, Central Visayas LGUs prepared and implemented their respective Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAP). Covering both climate change adaptation and mitigation, the actions of the LGUs to address the effects of climate change are articulated in their respective LCCAPs. As of July 2023, almost 78 percent (106 out of 136) of the region's LGUs have formulated their LCCAPs, reflecting an additional of 4 LCCAPs approved reckoned from November 2022.

Updating and Financing of Local DRRM Plans

The LGUs of Central Visayas also prepared their Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans (LDRRMPs) as mandated under Republic Act No. 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act. As reported by the Office of Civil Defense 7, 49 LGUs have completed their LDRRMPs, including their annual investment programs for 2023, following the updated NDRRMC template. Most LGUs have yet to update their DRRM plans based on the new template.

The members of the Central Visayas Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council also reviewed the DRRM plans of the provinces and highly urbanized cities of Central Visayas to ensure their consistency with the National DRRM Plan, 2020-2030. The review is a requirement for the provinces and highly urbanized cities to be able to utilize their respective DRRM Funds.

In line with the region's efforts to promote disaster resilience, a total of 6 LGUs in the region were recognized for the Gawad Kalasag ‘Beyond Compliant’ Award, namely: Bohol Province, Bogo City, Mandaue City, Talisay City, Madridejos, and Sogod of Cebu; and Bayawan City, Canlaon City, and Bindoy of Negros Oriental.



Improving Ecosystem Resilience

Protection of Key Biodiversity Areas

The region spearheaded by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 7 implemented the Landscape and Wildlife Indicator (LAWIN) Forest and Biodiversity Protection System. Under DENR Administrative Order No. 2018-21, the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System was adopted as the National Strategy for Forest Biodiversity in the country that integrates forest, biodiversity and threats monitoring, implementation of interventions to address threats and monitoring of the response of the forest ecosystem to these management interventions.

For CY 2023, the LAWIN Patrol covered a total distance of 5,076 kilometers of conservation areas in the region. The system employed the services of 136 patrollers, who conducted a total of 1,049 patrols during the year. The LAWIN System effectively addressed the 136 threats to the biodiversity observed in the region, which included the following: garbage, cutting of trees, annual and perennial farming; fire incidents, illegal construction of houses and other infrastructure, landslide and mudslide, typhoon-related threats, hunting, charcoal making, mining and quarrying, slash and burn farming, livestock and poultry, and invasive species.

The region also implemented habitat protection through the Biodiversity Protection System (BMS), a tool that is used to monitor the flora and fauna in protected areas. The BMS was designed to improve the information available for

decision-makers in protected areas through regular data collection on natural biological resources and their utilization. BMS was conducted twice in 2023 during the dry season and the wet season, covering 21 protected areas.

The region also implemented the Urban Biodiversity Conservation Program in Cebu City, being among the five highly urbanized cities in the Philippines implementing the program. Urban biodiversity refers to the variety and richness of living organisms including genetic variation and habitat diversity found in and on the edge of human settlements. At the landscape and habitat level, it may include the following but not limited to urban parks, street trees, and green roofs/vertical gardens/green buildings. The implementation of the Cebu City Urban Biodiversity Management Plan is now in its third year with activities conducted regularly.

Enhanced National Greening Program (eNGP)

The program of the DENR 7 aims to provide environmental stability and sustainability and serves as climate change mitigation and adaptation through collaborative greening and maintenance with the public and private institutions. For CY 2023, the Region established a total of 437.64 hectares plantations. Likewise, a total of 6,387.55 hectares covering CY 2021-2023 that were maintained and protected. The implementation was made possible through the engagement and involvement of the People's Organization, various organizations, Local Government Units (LGUs), and other public/private partners. As part of the initiatives, Trees for Unity was created that allows the Provincial of Bohol to align its programs to the mandate of DENR. While, a multi-sectoral project "Bayanihan sa Kalikasan" is a groundbreaking initiative born in Cebu which aims for a greener and sustainable environment for the present and future generations of Filipinos.

Promotion of the Bio-sequestration Program

Central to the region's bio-sequestration program to combat climate change is the Enhanced National Greening Program (eNGP). The program aims to provide environmental stability and sustainability and serves as a collaborative measure for climate change mitigation and adaptation. For CY 2023, Central Visayas established 437.64 hectares of plantations. Likewise, the 6,387.55 hectares of plantation established in the previous years were also maintained and protected. The implementation of the eNGP was pursued through the whole-of-society approach that enabled collaboration and active engagements among people's organizations, the business sector, the LGUs, and the national government agencies. A total of 27 partners were engaged in the development of the 437-hectare plantation, including 12 People's Organizations (POs) and 15 LGUs. Other activities undertaken in the eNGP also included survey, mapping and planning (SMP); and seedling production. Notable programs that were pursued in 2023 included the Trees for Unity of the Province of Bohol and the "Bayanihan sa Kalikasan" of the Province of Cebu. These programs enabled the LGUs to align their initiatives with the eNGP.

To support the maintenance and protection of established plantations under the eNGP, infrastructure projects were also pursued in the region. For example, a small water impounding or a check dam, which is also a soil and water conservation measure, was constructed at Kauswagan, Trinidad, and Bohol. The check dam can hold a total estimated water volume of 1,300 cu.m.

Implementation of Nature-based Solutions to Climate Change

The management of marine and water resources as well as the preservation of biological diversity is among the nature-based solutions to climate change of Central Visayas. Specifically, the region has implemented the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP). This initiative, which is spearheaded by DENR 7, involves the regular monitoring of permanent stations within coastal and marine ecosystems, including coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests, specifically within the 8 NIPAS-Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the region. These areas include the Talibon Group of Islands Protected Landscape and Seascape, the Albuquerque-Loay-Loboc Protected Landscape and Seascape, the Panglao Island Protected Seascape, the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary, the Camotes Island Protected Landscape and Seascape, the Apo Island Protected Landscape and Seascape, and the Tanon Strait Protected Seascape for Cebu and Negros Oriental.

Inland wetland biodiversity also serves as an essential part of nature-based solutions to climate change that runs the natural hydrologic cycle. Inland wetland biodiversity provides the co-benefits of addressing climate change and at the same time provide a reliable supply of freshwaters of good quality and quantity. Aside from its hydrological cycle importance, inland wetland supports a diverse range of flora and fauna and provides refuge for migratory and threatened species. The region through the DENR 7's Inland Wetland Management Program ensured the management and protection of wetland ecosystems and its resources. For 2023, three wetlands in the province of Bohol were identified and mapped out, and five wetlands were profiled, namely: Jaclupan Weir Dam, Buhisan Dam, San Vicente Small Reservoir Irrigation System, Lake Danao, and Lake Balinsasayao.

Accelerating Low Carbon Economy Transition

Harness and Develop Renewable Energy Sources

Central Visayas has provided a favorable environment for the development of renewable energy sources through the various policies enacted by the provinces in support of the utilization of clean energy. Taking the cue from the government sector, several private entities have invested in harnessing renewable energy sources for their use and/or commercial purposes. As of 31 December 2023, the Energy Regulatory Commission has awarded twelve solar projects in Central Visayas, majority of which are in Cebu, including the following: Toledo Solar Power Project with 48.96 MW installed



capacity; the Medellin Solar Power Project with a potential capacity of 240 MW; and the Ubay Solar Power Project with a potential capacity of 137.48 MW. Twelve hydropower projects were also awarded by the ERC, including the Malubog Pump Storage Hydroelectric Power Project in Toledo City with potential capacity of 250 MW, the Illog Hydroelectric Power Project in Mabinay, Negros Oriental with potential capacity of 21.60 MW, and the Balamban Hydroelectric Power Project with potential capacity of 10 MW. Three biomass projects were also awarded in 2023 that included the 25 MW Biomass Cogeneration Plant in Bais City, the 6 MW Biomass Cogeneration Plant in Bayawan City, and the 300 MT/day Refused Derive Fuel Generation Facility in Naga City, Cebu.

Promotion of the Green Energy Option Program as a Climate Change Mitigation Measure

The region, through the Central Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC) Resolution No. 51 (s. 2023), enjoined the LGUs, national government entities, businesses, academic institutions, and the private sector in Central Visayas to support the Green Energy Option Program (GEOP) as a measure to accelerate climate action. An initiative of the

government spearheaded by the Department of Energy, the GEOP gives consumers options to source their power requirements for renewable energy sources. The advocacy for the GEOP gained support from the other RDCs, particularly regions 5, 12, and Caraga.

Reduce Emissions from Transport

The region through the Regional Development Council constantly monitored the implementation of the Cebu Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The project, which is partly funded by the Clean Technology Fund, is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions between 115,000 – 192,000 tons of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) equivalent per year upon its completion and operations.

The region also continued the modernization of jeepneys, which serve as the primary mass transit system in the region. As of August 2023, approximately 1,330 modern public utility jeepneys (MPUJs) were operating on the various routes in Central Visayas. Almost 95 percent of the total MPUJ units are stationed in Metro Cebu, while the rest are in Negros Oriental and Bohol.

In line with the objective of promoting the wide use of non-motorized transport, the Department of Transportation with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme developed the Bike Lane Master Plan that provides local government units (LGUs) in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Metro Davao with a guide towards a more comprehensive, inclusive, and equitable bike lanes network development. The plan includes technical, institutional, and information/education components among others that may be adopted by the LGUs.

Monitor Coastal Hazards and Climate Vulnerability

To promote community resilience, the region through the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) conducted vulnerability and risk assessment (VRA) in eight coastal municipalities to determine the risk exposure of the population and government infrastructures to identified hazards in the locality. The municipalities monitored for coastal accretion/erosion in 2023 were Enrique Villanueva, Lazi, Maria and San Juan of the province of Siquijor; Sta. Catalina and Siatón, Negros Oriental; and Malabuyoc and Ginatilan of the province of Cebu.

The region also assessed the groundwater resource potential and hydraulic characteristics of water-bearing units/rock formation within its jurisdiction. The assessment provided the bases for finding suitable sites for groundwater development; and to some extent, evaluated specific areas with potential groundwater-related problems that require remedial or mitigating measures. In 2023, the hydro/groundwater assessment was carried out in the municipalities of San Juan, Lazi, and Maria, all in the province of Siquijor.

Results Matrix

Table 4.2.1 Results Matrix for Accelerating Climate Action and Strengthening Disaster Resilience

INDICATOR]	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 1: Resilience to climate change and natural hazards improved				
Percentage of LGUs assessed at least fully compliant in the Gawad Kalasag Seal	23 (2022)	28	33	71
Percentage of LGUs with approved comprehensive local DRRM plan duly reviewed by the appropriate reviewing body	57 (2022)	90	92	100
Proportion of LGUs with DRR/CCA-enhanced CLUPs and updated zoning ordinances	7.35 (2022)	-	-	23.48

INDICATOR]	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 2: Ecosystem resilience improved				
NIPAS-Marine Protected Area maintained	8 (2022)	8	8	8
Number of functional watershed management Councils increased	3 (2022)	2	2	2
Distance patrolled per LAWIN team (km)	4,080 (2022)	4,080	4,080	5,076
Number of PAs with PAMB maintained	24 (2022)	24	24	24
Outcome 3: Low carbon economy transition accelerated				
Implementing the assessment and mapping of the coastal hazards vulnerability of Coastal Cities/ Municipalities	8 (2022)	8	8	8
Assessment of groundwater resources and vulnerability	3 (2022)	3	4	3

Source: Office of Civil Defense 7; Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development 7; Department of Environmental and Natural Resources 7

Ways Forward

For 2024 and beyond, Central Visayas will ensure that the CV RDP strategies to accelerate climate action and disaster resilience will be implemented. Attention will be given to the mainstreaming of DRR/CAA in the development plans of the LGUs, particularly the CLUPs. The region will also take stock of the progress in terms of its rehabilitation and recovery from the effects of typhoon Odette in December 2021.

Priority Strategies

Monitor the region's rehabilitation and recovery from disaster

The region through the RDERRMC 7 will assess the implementation of the Typhoon Odette Rehabilitation and Recovery Program (RRP) to determine which of the projects were implemented within the 2022-2024 time frame. The region will also determine whether the unimplemented projects are still necessary for rehabilitation and recovery; and whether these will be implemented by the concerned LGUs or the national government.

Complete the DRR/CCA-enhanced CLUPs

The region recognizes the importance of CLUPs in the management of the development of the LGUs and the promotion of their resilience, particularly from disasters. The region shall ensure that technical assistance will be provided to LGUs that will enable them to complete and/or update their CLUPs.

Ensure updating of the Local DRRM Plans

With the new guidelines on Local DRRM planning being issued by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, the region spearheaded by the Office of Civil Defense 7 will provide technical assistance to the

LGUs in the updating of their respective LDRRM plans. The intervention shall ensure that the local plans are consistent with the National DRRM Plan, 2020-2030.

Implement nature-based solutions to climate change

The region shall pursue nature-based climate change solutions that will enable the communities to realize the co-benefits of addressing climate change's effects and protecting the environment.

Legislative Agenda

Among the priority policies to accelerate climate action and strengthen disaster resilience are the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience, passage of the Integrated Coastal Management Law, and laws on the recognition of the Rights of Nature and Carbon Tax.

Table 4.2.2 Legislative Agenda for Accelerating Climate Action and Strengthening Disaster Resilience

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience	The creation of the Department, with full complement of highly skilled and technically equipped staff, is required given the Philippine's exposure to natural hazards and the adverse effects of climate change. The Department will ensure that the four DRRM thematic areas of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Response, and Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery are given appropriate and integrated attention
Integrated Coastal Management Law	A 2012 study by the Nature Conservancy suggests that a 100-meter-wide mangrove area can reduce by as much as 66% energy from wind waves and swell waves, including storm surges. The Integrated Coastal Management Bill shall include the establishment of coastal greenbelt zones composed of mangroves and beach forest areas to protect coastal communities in identified areas along the country's 36,300 km long coastlines from strong typhoons.
Recognition of the Rights of Nature	The Rights of Nature Act recognizes natural ecosystems and populations (plants and animal species) have legal rights to exist and maintain their vital cycles, functions, and processes that ensure their continued sustainability and well-being. Among others, it allows any Philippine resident to file action on behalf of nature, sets up a trust fund and the appointment of a conservation committee to administer said trust fund for the protection, preservation, restoration, or renewal of nature and its processes.
Carbon Tax	The law that provides for the imposition of Carbon Tax on GHG-emitting businesses and firms will support and facilitate low carbon economy transition. It will encourage businesses to shift from highly polluting and carbon intensive to sustainable business practices. It will also provide the government with the necessary funds to support those that will be adversely affected by the just transition to low carbon development.



Source: PNP 7 Facebook Page

CHAPTER 5

Advancing the National Interest towards Peace and Prosperity

Chapter 5 delves into the strategic initiatives implemented in Central Visayas to advance the national interest, with a primary focus on achieving peace and prosperity within the region. The chapter is divided into two sub-chapters, each exploring distinct yet interconnected aspects – Ensuring Peace and Security (5.1) and Enhancing the Administration of Justice (5.2). These sub-chapters collectively underscore the government's commitment to creating a conducive environment for sustainable development.



Region 7 receives recognition during NTF ELCAC @ 5 Ceremony
Source: PLEDS Cluster

Section 5.1

SECURING AND SAFEGUARDING THE NATION

Central Visayas demonstrates a steadfast commitment to securing and safeguarding the nation by addressing insurgency and reducing criminality through collaborative efforts among various government agencies and local government units. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of these challenges, the region is actively engaged in comprehensive initiatives aimed at tackling the root causes of insurgency, such as poverty, income inequality, and limited access to essential services.

Furthermore, the region is dedicated to enhancing the quality and efficiency of the criminal justice system, aligning with two key outcomes under Outcome 1. Emphasizing the importance of impartiality in resolving inquest and preliminary investigation processes, the Department of Justice - National Prosecution Service in Central Visayas is committed to acting fairly and promptly on cases referred for these procedures. Through the implementation of a robust case monitoring system, coordinated efforts in case buildup between law enforcement agencies and prosecution, and the promotion of Alternative Dispute Resolution, Central Visayas aims to streamline processes, eliminate technicalities, and contribute to the decongestion of jails. These concerted efforts underscore the region's commitment to upholding the rule of law, protecting human rights, and fostering a just and inclusive society for all residents of Central Visayas.



Various activities of the RTF 7 ELCAC
Source: DILG-led Clusters

Section 5.1.1.

ENSURE PEACE AND SECURITY

Introduction

Central Visayas is actively engaged in an ongoing initiative to address insurgency and reduce criminality through collaborative efforts among various government agencies and local government units. The region is committed to comprehensively addressing the root causes of insurgency, such as poverty, income inequality, and limited access to essential services, with a focus on implementing projects in insurgency-cleared barangays.

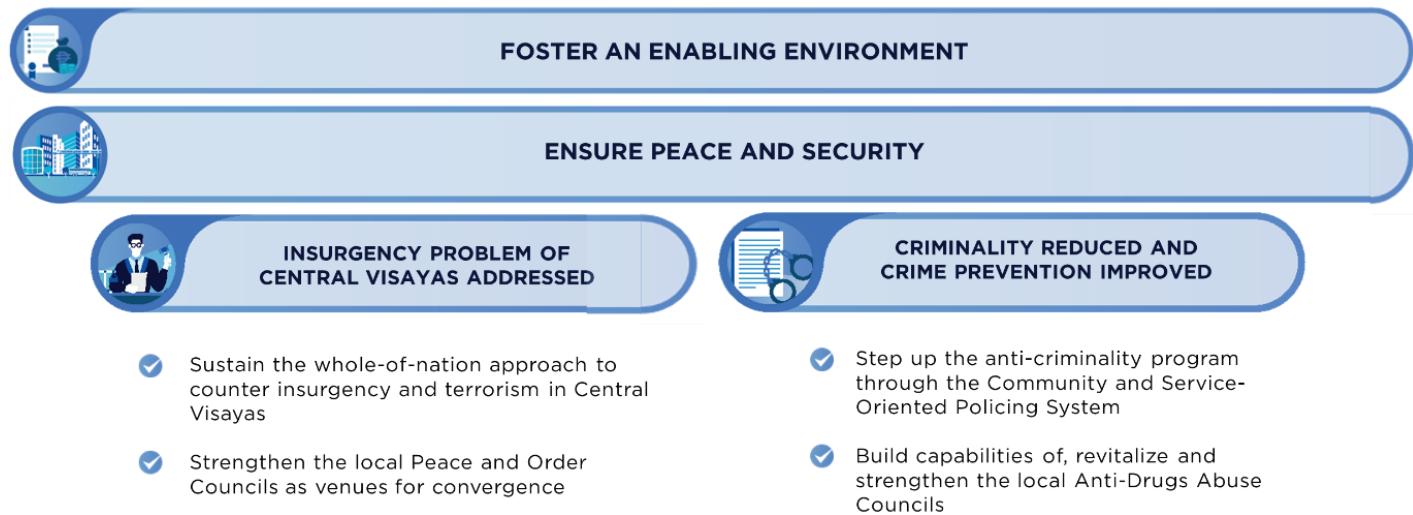
Simultaneously, the region is dedicated to facilitating the ongoing integration of former rebel combatants and their families into society, providing continuous support for peaceful community integration. The commitment extends to the continual strengthening of local Peace and Order Councils (POCs) as vital venues for convergence, actively coordinating strategies to enhance peace, order, and public safety within their respective areas.

Central Visayas' commitment to declaring all provinces insurgency-free by 2028 or earlier underscores the ongoing nature of coordinated and effective anti-insurgency programs, aligning with the broader goal of fostering lasting peace, security, and development in the region.

The Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (RTF 7 ELCAC) in Central Visayas is at the forefront in addressing security concerns and insurgency-related challenges in the region. Comprising various government agencies, local government units, and security forces, RTF 7 ELCAC engages in comprehensive activities, including ground operations conducted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, legal actions, and community awareness programs. Through its multifaceted efforts, the task force is committed to fostering sustainable peace, security, and development in Central Visayas. Among the challenges faced by this sector in 2023 were: a) the changes in the leadership in LGUs, and b) strengthening monitoring and evaluation of RTF 7 ELCAC Plans and Accomplishments of all its Clusters.

Strategy Framework

Figure 5.1.1.1 Strategy Framework for Ensuring Peace and Security



Central Visayas is dedicated to strengthening collaborative initiatives among government agencies and local government units to tackle insurgency's root causes, including poverty, income inequality, and limited access to government services and productive assets. The region is actively implementing projects in insurgency-cleared barangays, directly addressing the identified root causes. Additionally, the region is committed to facilitating the integration of former rebel combatants and their families into society, providing essential support and livelihood opportunities for their peaceful and productive community integration.

The region is committed to strengthening the structure and functionality of its local Peace and Order Councils (POCs), mandated by the Local Government Code of 1991, as vital venues for convergence. These councils will play a crucial role in identifying and implementing strategies to enhance peace, order, and public safety within their respective areas of responsibility. Serving as coordinative mechanisms across provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays, the POCs ensure the efficient implementation of measures to prevent criminality, insurgency, and illegal drugs, thereby fostering overall peace and public safety. Furthermore, the region aims to declare all provinces in Central Visayas insurgency-free by 2028 or earlier through the coordinated and effective implementation of an anti-insurgency program.

Major PAPs

The region's initiatives as presented in *Annex P* aimed at ensuring peace and security is anchored on a whole-of-nation approach, engaging stakeholders across various sectors to address the multifaceted challenges posed by insurgency and terrorism while promoting sustainable development. At the forefront of the implementation of this strategy is the RTF 7-ELCAC. Overall, the RTF ELCAC serves as a central coordinating body tasked with orchestrating a comprehensive and integrated approach to ending local communist armed conflict and fostering lasting peace and development within the region. Through strategic planning, coordination, and implementation oversight, the RTF ELCAC plays a vital role in achieving these objectives and creating a more stable and prosperous society.

A major program implemented under this Chapter is the Support to the Barangay Development Program (SBDP), a government priority initiative targeting conflict-affected barangays. Through the allocation of funds and resources, the SBDP facilitates the implementation of essential projects identified by local communities. Similarly, the Capacitating Urban Communities for Peace and Development (CUCPD) program empowers local governments to address gaps in

critical sectors such as youth empowerment, labor, and urban poverty, fostering resilience and social cohesion in urban areas.

Furthermore, the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-Clip) and Amnesty Program underscore the region's commitment to reintegrating former rebels into mainstream society by providing livelihood assistance and support. Throughout the chapter, emphasis is placed on the importance of coordination among government agencies, local governments, and stakeholders, as well as on information dissemination and social preparation activities to promote peace, security, and development across the region. Together, these initiatives represent a concerted effort to build a resilient and peaceful society, ensuring the well-being and prosperity of all citizens.

Results Matrix

Table 5.1.1.1 Results Matrix for Ensuring Peace and Security

INDICATOR	BASELINE (YEAR)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 1: Insurgency problem of Central Visayas addressed				
Percentage of provinces declared as insurgency-free	75 (2021)	100	100	75
Percentage of functional local peace and order councils	100 (2021)	100	100	100

Source: RTF-ELCAC 7 Report

Ways Forward

In the pursuit of sustainable development, Central Visayas is committed to addressing the root causes of insurgency through collaborative initiatives involving various government agencies and local government units. The region recognizes poverty, income inequality, limited access to basic government services, and the sluggish distribution of productive assets as key contributors to insurgency. Consequently, efforts will be intensified to implement projects identified for insurgency-cleared barangays, directly confronting these root causes and fostering holistic development. In addition to addressing the socio-economic factors, Central Visayas aims to facilitate the integration of former rebel combatants and their families into society. The government will provide them with livelihood opportunities and necessary support for a peaceful and productive reintegration into the community. Simultaneously, the region emphasizes the need to strengthen local Peace and Order Councils (POCs) as crucial venues for convergence. Mandated by the Local Government Code of 1991, these councils play a pivotal role in coordinating strategies to enhance peace, order, and public safety. The focus extends to effective measures against criminality, insurgency, and illegal drugs, with Barangay Peace and Order Committees being capacitated as the implementing arms of the local POCs. Through these coordinated efforts, the region aims to declare all provinces in Central Visayas insurgency-free by 2028 or earlier, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to lasting peace, security, and development.

Moreover, Central Visayas, through the Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (RTF-ELCAC) led by the Secretary of the Department of Tourism Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security or CORDS for Region 7, will capitalize on translating the accomplishments of the RTF-ELCAC in peacebuilding towards tourism-related development to provide more livelihood and employment opportunities in the region.

Priority Strategies

Continuous Capacity Building

Ensure the ongoing provision of capacity building and technical assistance for the effective implementation of projects under the Support to Barangay Development Program (SBDP) in Central Visayas. This involves empowering local stakeholders with the necessary skills and knowledge to contribute to the success of development initiatives.

LGU Engagement

Encourage Local Government Units (LGUs) to enact ordinances and resolutions supporting the institutionalization of peace and order, development, and the general welfare. Emphasize the importance of allocating budgets through approved local plans, reinforcing a commitment to sustained regional growth.

Enhanced Coordination

Strengthen regular convergence and coordination among the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and relevant National Government Agencies (NGAs) and LGUs. This collaboration is crucial for endorsing and providing assistance to former rebels (FRs) and former violent extremists (FVEs).

Commitment Monitoring

Establish a monitoring mechanism to track the delivery of commitments for peace by NGAs, LGUs, and other partner stakeholders. This ensures accountability and progress in fulfilling obligations related to peace-building initiatives.

Information Dissemination

Reinforce information drives on peace, security, and development, leveraging various social media platforms. Additionally, undertake targeted social preparation efforts, particularly in conflict-affected areas, to create awareness and garner community support for initiatives promoting peace and development in Central Visayas.

Table 5.1.1.2 Legislative Agenda for Ensuring Peace and Security

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Individual Lifecycle Risks	
Revitalization and Capability Enhancement of the Philippine National Police ("RACE Bill")	The Bill is aimed at enhancing the capabilities and efficiency of the Philippine National Police (PNP). It seeks to modernize the PNP's equipment, improve training programs, enhance welfare benefits for police personnel, and strengthen their internal organization to better address the country's law enforcement challenges. It's part of the broader efforts to reform and professionalize the PNP to effectively combat crime and maintain peace and order in the Philippines.
An "Act Establishing the National Police Clearance System."	This bill seeks to establish a National Police Clearance System, and install the Philippine National Police (PNP) as the primary government agency responsible for issuing a National Police Clearance which shall serve as the primary government certificate or document indicating the presence or absence of any criminal and/or derogatory records in the Philippines of any individual. The rationale behind the proposed bill is the need to create an institutionalized credible and reliable clearance system for individuals seeking to be declared devoid of any criminal or derogatory records for whatever legal purposes it may serve them.



Philippine Flag in front of the Department of Justice Building
Source: Canva Pictures Gallery

Section 5.1.2.

ENHANCE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

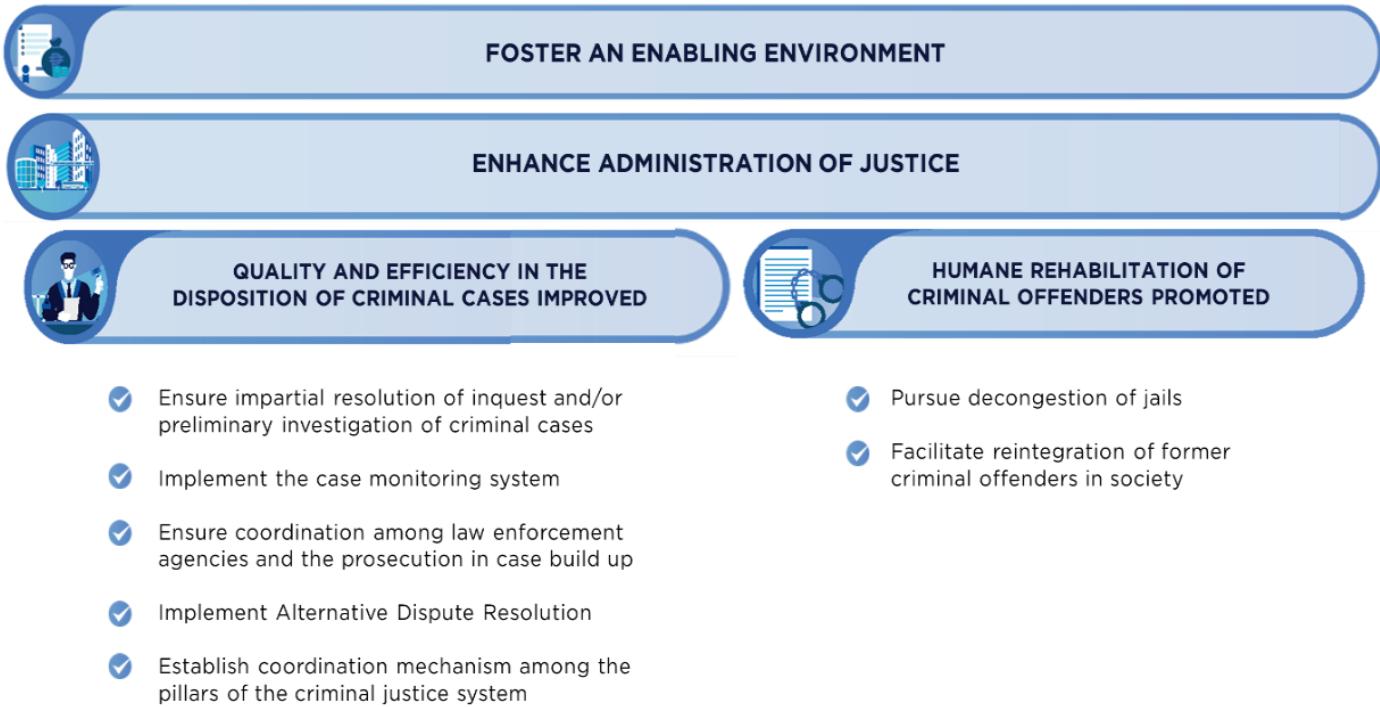
Introduction

The region is steadfast in its commitment to improving the quality and efficiency of the criminal justice system, ensuring that it aligns with two key outcomes. Under Outcome 1, the region focuses on enhancing the administration of justice by improving the impartial resolution of inquest and preliminary investigation processes. The Department of Justice - National Prosecution Service in Central Visayas aims to act fairly and promptly on cases referred for these procedures, preventing the unjust deprivation of liberty and facilitating a just determination of guilt for those where probable cause exists. By implementing a case monitoring system, ensuring coordination in case buildup between law enforcement agencies and the prosecution, and promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution, the region seeks to streamline processes, eliminate technicalities, and contribute to the decongestion of jails.

The region also prioritizes the humane rehabilitation of criminal offenders, recognizing that justice extends beyond prosecution to the reintegration of individuals into society. Central Visayas is dedicated to jail decongestion by increasing system capacity through constructing compliant facilities, involving local government units and incentivizing private sector support. The parole and probation system, rooted in restorative justice and therapeutic community approaches, will play a pivotal role in reducing the time deserving offenders spend in prison. Furthermore, the Parole and Probation Administration 7 will facilitate the reintegration of former criminal offenders into society by monitoring compliance, offering skill development programs, and establishing a referral system for gainful employment opportunities. This comprehensive approach underscores the region's commitment to fostering a justice system that is efficient, humane, and geared toward holistic rehabilitation.

Strategy Framework

Figure 5.1.2.1 Strategy Framework to Enhance Administration of Justice



On Outcome 1: Improving Quality and Efficiency in the Disposition of Criminal Cases

Central Visayas will focus on impartial resolution during inquest and preliminary investigation proceedings, preventing unnecessary deprivation of liberty for innocent individuals while providing those accused of crimes with probable cause their day in court. The region will place emphasis on the judicious determination of probable cause, contributing to jail decongestion by prioritizing cases with solid evidence.

To streamline processes, Central Visayas will implement the case monitoring system introduced by the Department of Justice in 2021. The system is designed to enhance the efficiency of the prosecution service in terms of case management and disposition. Additionally, the region will foster coordination between law enforcement agencies and the prosecution in case buildup, aiming to preclude indiscriminate filing of cases and dismissals on technicalities. Central Visayas will also promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as mandated by Republic Act No. 9285, expanding its use at the local level and coordinating with the DOJ-Office of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (OADR) for capacity-building in LGUs.

On Outcome 2: Promoting Humane Rehabilitation of Criminal Offenders

Moving beyond prosecution, Central Visayas is dedicated to the humane rehabilitation and reintegration of criminal offenders into society. The region will initiate a comprehensive jail decongestion program, focusing on increasing system capacity by constructing compliant jail facilities and improving detention facilities at police stations. Collaboration with LGUs and incentivizing private sector support will be pivotal in realizing these objectives.

To shorten the time deserving offenders spend in prison, the region will implement the parole and probation system, rooted in restorative justice principles. This rehabilitation program will leverage the therapeutic community as a modality and utilize volunteers as essential community resources.

Results Matrix

Table 5.1.2.1 Results Matrix to Enhance the Administration of Justice

INDICATOR	BASELINE (2022)	TARGETS		ACTUAL 2023
		2023	2024	
Outcome 1: Insurgency Problem of Central Visayas Addressed				
Disposition rate for cases referred for preliminary investigation	96.02	90	90	99.75
Disposition rate for cases referred for inquest	100	90	90	100
Percentage of successful prosecution (Convictions VS acquittal)	92.65	90	90	91.42

Source: DOJ-OPS

Major PAPs

Ensuring the functionality and safety of equipment within the DOJ-Cebu Building is paramount to the efficient operation of justice administration. The replacement of the damaged Automatic Rescue Device (ARD) and the installation of an Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) for the elevator are imperative steps towards achieving this goal.

The devastating fire on May 7, 2023, which razed the old DOJ Building in Siquijor, underscored the urgent need for the construction of the DOJ Building. The proposed construction of a new DOJ Building, equipped to accommodate the National Prosecution Service (NPS), Public Attorney's Office (PAO), Parole & Probation services, and two court salas, is vital for restoring judicial operations in the region. This initiative not only addresses the immediate infrastructure deficit but also lays the foundation for an improved and resilient justice system.

Acknowledging the importance of providing a conducive environment for clients awaiting legal proceedings, the construction of DOJ NPS 7 Clients Waiting Area within the DOJ National Prosecution Service (NPS) 7 is essential. This initiative aims to enhance the accessibility and comfort of individuals seeking justice, promoting efficiency and client satisfaction.

The DOJ Covered Pathwalk and Slab Concreting project will play a crucial role in facilitating seamless access to justice facilities. By investing in these upgrades, we prioritize the safety and convenience of court personnel, legal practitioners, and the general public. Moreover, these improvements contribute to the overall aesthetics and functionality of the justice infrastructure, reflecting our commitment to excellence in administration.

Ways Forward

The region will continue to support the following legislative agenda: a) Amendment of Republic Act No. 10389 or the law on Release and Recognizance, b) Modernization of the Parole and Probation Administration, and, c) Provincial/city ordinance regulating the use of drones near jail facilities.

Priority Strategies

Ensure Impartial Resolution of Inquest and Preliminary Investigation

The region is committed to upholding fair and just prosecution in criminal cases. Cases referred to the DOJ-National Prosecution Service in Central Visayas undergo thorough and timely scrutiny to ensure that individuals are not unjustly deprived of liberty. Those accused of crimes are given their rightful opportunity to present their case in court, fostering a legal environment where only cases with substantial evidence proceed to trial. This commitment not only promotes justice but also contributes to alleviating jail overcrowding by focusing resources on cases with a higher likelihood of conviction.

Implement the Case Monitoring System

Recognizing the significance of efficient case management, the region's prosecution service is implementing a case monitoring system established by the Department of Justice. This system aims to enhance the prosecution service's effectiveness in managing and resolving cases promptly. By leveraging technology and streamlined processes, it ensures that cases progress smoothly through the justice system, expediting justice delivery.

Ensure Coordination among Law Enforcement Agencies and Prosecution in Case Build-up

Fair and effective prosecution requires a robust case build-up process to prevent arbitrary filings and dismissals on technical grounds. The region is committed to fostering coordination between the National Prosecution Service 7 and local law enforcement agencies to ensure proper handling, gathering, and preservation of evidence. By promoting collaboration, the region strengthens the foundation of criminal cases, enhancing the prospects of successful prosecution.

Implement Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

In line with national mandates, the region is dedicated to promoting and expanding the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms. Through partnerships with local governments and the Department of Justice's Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution, the region aims to capacitate LGUs in handling disputes effectively within their jurisdictions. By facilitating ADR trainings and promoting accreditation, the region empowers communities to resolve conflicts peacefully, reducing the burden on the formal justice system.

Establish Coordination Mechanism among Pillars of the Criminal Justice System

Recognizing the importance of collaboration across all facets of the justice system, the region advocates for the establishment of additional justice zones. These zones will serve as platforms for principled cooperation and communication among key stakeholders, including police, prosecutors, public attorneys, judges, and prison staff. By fostering collaboration and institutional independence, the region aims to strengthen the overall administration of justice, promoting fairness and efficiency.

Step up the Anti-Criminality Program

Central Visayas is dedicated to reducing criminality and improving crime prevention through a robust anti-criminality program. Anchored on the Community and Service-Oriented Policing (CSOP) system mandated by the National Police Commission, this program fosters active collaboration among police authorities, local governments, and the community. The CSOP Triumvirate is comprised of the local chief executive, PNP head, and community leaders, the program aims to strengthen community and service-oriented activities to build trust and support for sustainable development at the local level.

Preparation of 3-year, term-based Peace and Order and Public Safety (POPS) plans

These will be integrated into the LGUs comprehensive development plans. LGUs may formalize their collaboration with the PNP through memoranda of agreement (MOA) to implement the CSOP system. Community involvement is key, with residents playing crucial roles in addressing policing deficiencies and supporting police efforts. Partnerships with NGOs and civic organizations are pursued, with accreditation guidelines established to formalize these alliances.

To engage the community

PNP units in Central Visayas undertake a CSOP information and education advocacy program using the Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action (AIDA) communication model. Through targeted communication strategies, they aim to generate attention, promote interest, cultivate desire, and encourage action in support of the CSOP.

Build capabilities of, revitalize and strengthen the local Anti-Drug Abuse Councils

As part of the whole-of-nation approach to combatting criminality, Central Visayas is committed to implementing the “Buhay Ingatan, Droga Ayawan” (BIDA) program led by the DILG Regional Office 7. This initiative engages LGUs, national government agencies, and key sectors in drug demand reduction and community-based rehabilitation efforts. The region will focus on building the capabilities of, revitalizing, and strengthening local Anti-Drug Abuse Councils to enhance their functionality and effectiveness in addressing drug-related issues.

Annexes

Annex A: Major Priority PAPs for Promoting Trade and Investments

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Diversifying the region's export products and expanding market reach	Export Development Program	This will still be pursued in 2024-2025.
Diversifying the region's export products and expanding market reach	MSME Development Program	This will still be pursued in 2024-2025.

Annex B: Major Priority PAPs for Expanding and Upgrading Infrastructure

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Seamless and inclusive connectivity achieved via local and international linkages	<p>Cebu Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its change in scope and increase in project scope and extension of loan validity and implementation period was approved by the NEDA Board in October 2023. Construction of Package 1 of the project is currently on-going. Partial operations is targeted in 2024. <p>New Mactan-Cebu (4th Bridge) and Mandaue Coastal Road Construction Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The detailed engineering design is currently under review by the DPWH. Civil works is targeted to start in 2024. <p>Metro Cebu Expressway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sections of Segment 3 of the Expressway implemented by the DPWH were already complete. Segment 1 and remaining sections of Segment 3 was packaged as a solicited PPP project. <p>Panglao-Tagbilaran Offshore Bridge Connector Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The approaches of the bridge were implemented by DPWH, and are already complete. However, the fund source for the main connector bridge is still unclear. The RDC requested the DPWH and NEDA Board-ICC in December 2023 to explore 	<p>The monitoring of ongoing funded infrastructure projects in the region shall be intensified through the RDC Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC).</p> <p>PPPs, as a financing and implementation scheme, shall be promoted to help address the infrastructure gap in the region.</p> <p>Project identification, investment programming, and budgeting shall be based on master plans and studies for proper sequencing of projects for implementation.</p>

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p>other ODA as additional fund source for the construction of the main bridge.</p>	
	<p>New Dumaguete Airport Development Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lot acquisition activities are still ongoing, and is scheduled to be completed by the first quarter of 2024. 	
	<p>Siquijor Airport Development Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The construction of the building is currently ongoing. On 13 December 2023, the Writ of Possession for the remaining lot in the project site was already issued. 	
	<p>Upgrade, Expansion, Operation, and Maintenance of the Bohol-Panglao International Airport Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project was approved by the NEDA Board in October 2023. Negotiation between the DOTr, CAAP, and the original private proponent is ongoing. 	
	<p>New Cebu International Container Port (NCICP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The request of the DOTr for the extension of loan validity and implementation period is still for the NEDA Board-ICC review. 	
Water security, ecological integrity of water systems and resiliency to water hazards attained	<p>Malinao Dam Improvement Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is for procurement. 	

Annex C: Major Priority PAPs for Modernizing Agriculture and Agribusiness

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs / Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Improve access of primary producers to production requirements, facilities, and credit for scale-up	Sustainable Coconut Planting/Replanting of Local Cultivars (PCA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Improve access of primary producers to production requirements, facilities, and credit for scale-up	Seed Farm Development (PCA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Diversify farm and non-farm income	Incentivized Coconut Planting and Replanting Project (PCA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Facilitate adoption of better and new technologies by farmers and fisherfolks	Coconut Intercropping Project (PCA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Facilitate adoption of better and new technologies by farmers and fisherfolks	Rejuvenation thru Coconut Fertilization Program (PCA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Intensify the implementation of farm and fisheries clustering and consolidation (F2C2)	Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (DA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Facilitate adoption of better and new technologies by farmers and fisherfolks	Special Area for Agricultural Development Program Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (DA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Improve access of primary producers to production requirements, facilities, and credit for scale-up	Fiber Development Program (PhilFIDA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Encourage more farmers and fisherfolks into agribusiness	Fisheries Development Program (BFAR)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Encourage more farmers and fisherfolks into agribusiness	Rice, Livestock, Corn, High Value Crops Development, Organic Agriculture Programs (DA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Protect local AFF against unfair competition and supply/price manipulation	Fisheries Regulatory and Law Enforcement Program (BFAR 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Protect local AFF against unfair competition and supply/price manipulation	Fiber Industry Regulatory Program (PhilFIDA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Promote agribusiness courses and training under collaborative schemes of the academe, government, and business sector	Fisheries Extension Program (BFAR 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Enhance physical and digital infrastructure to improve marketing support for the region's established enterprises	FMRDP - Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) Projects of the DA 7	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Create and adopt climate-change and disaster-resilient technologies	Proposed Retrofitting of the Philippine Rural Development Project Additional Funding (PRDP-AF 2) of the DA 7	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Promote farmers' and fisherfolks' welfare and social protection	"Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran ng Kababayang Katutubo	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs / Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Create and adopt climate-change and disaster-resilient technologies	Philippine Fisheries and Coastal Resiliency (FishCoRe) Project of the BFAR	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Provide comprehensive and innovative insurance protection for agricultural commodities produced in the region	Rice, Corn, High Value Crop, Livestock, Fisheries, Non-Crop (agri-assets used for agri activities) insurances Ongoing by the PCIC.	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Intensify research, development and extension (RDE) for agriculture and fishery	Research and Development studies (DA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024 and 2025.

Annex D: Major Priority PAPs for Revitalizing Industry

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs / Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Dynamic industry ecosystem created	Industry Development Program The development and promotion of industries through industry clustering, implementation of industry plans, and other interventions, promotion of competitiveness through administration of awards program, voluntary certification and accreditation program The priority sectors of the program are Cacao, Coffee, Bamboo, Processed Fruits and Nuts, Wearables and Home-style, and Creative Industries.	To be implemented in 2024 and proposed for FY 2025 Budget with an amount of PhP1.693 million
Domestic market production and supplier base expanded	MSME Development Program Implementation of the MSMEs Development Program and other initiatives to promote the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises. This program is further subdivided into a) innovation/startup ecosystem development; b) creatives ecosystem development; c) institutional development and strengthening; d) market development program including the OTOP program; e) shared service facilities (SSF) project; and MSME development program for priority sectors.	To be implemented in 2024 and proposed for FY 2025 Budget with an amount of PhP13.855 million

Annex E: Major Priority PAPs for Reinvigorating Services

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs / Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Dynamic industry ecosystem created	<p>Industry Development Program</p> <p>The development and promotion of industries through industry clustering, implementation of industry plans, and other interventions, promotion of competitiveness through administration of awards program, voluntary certification and accreditation program</p> <p>The priority sectors of the program are Cacao, Coffee, Bamboo, Processed Fruits and Nuts, Wearables and Home-style, and Creative Industries.</p>	Proposed for FY 2025 Budget with an amount of PhP1.693 million
Domestic market production and supplier base expanded	<p>MSME Development Program</p> <p>Implementation of the MSMEs Development Program and other initiatives to promote the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises.</p> <p>This program is further subdivided into a) innovation/startup ecosystem development; b) creatives ecosystem development; c) institutional development and strengthening; d) market development program including the OTOP program; e) shared service facilities (SSF) project; and MSME development program for priority sectors.</p>	Proposed for FY 2025 Budget with an amount of PhP13.855 million

Annex F: Major Priority PAPs for Advancing R&D Technology and Innovation

STRATEGY	Major PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Accelerate commercialization of market-oriented and inclusive STI products	<u>Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program provided continuous assistance to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in adopting technology innovations to enhance operations and boost productivity and competitiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SETUP will elevate assistance to MSMEs by promoting Industry 4.0 technologies through initiatives like targeted workshops, increased financial incentives, collaborations with technology providers, and tailored consultations. These efforts aim to empower MSMEs to adopt advanced technologies, enhancing their operations and competitiveness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurture a supportive environment for R&D Increase financing opportunities for innovation-related projects or activities Increase the number of partnerships for R&D development 	<u>Local Grants-in-Aid (LGIA) Program</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program fostered sustainable economic growth by funding diverse scientific and technological initiatives, including research and development, technology transfer, human resources development, and more. These efforts were designed to enhance productivity, improve quality of life, and promote active participation across various science and technology sectors, contributing to the country's overall development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGIA will bolster regional research and development initiatives by collaborating with SUCs, HEIs, and research consortia. The program also plans to increase partnerships through Science for Change programs, such as NICER, CRADLE, BIST, RDLEAD, while extending support to innovative startups to foster entrepreneurship and technological innovation.
Accelerate commercialization of market-oriented and inclusive STI products	<u>Community Empowerment through Science and Technology (CEST)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation is currently underway, demonstrating a sustained commitment to providing assistance to the most impoverished rural and urban communities in the country. This comprehensive S&T initiative addresses critical areas such as health, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the upcoming years (2024-2025), CEST envisions an elevation of technologies within communities to more effectively address pressing concerns. The program will concentrate on integrating advanced solutions tailored to specific community needs, emphasizing not only the enhancement of living conditions but also

STRATEGY	Major PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p>nutrition, water, sanitation, education, community-based enterprise development, and disaster resilience, contributing to the holistic empowerment and well-being of the communities it serves.</p>	<p>fostering the development of community-based enterprises to promote sustainable economic growth and empowerment.</p>
Accelerate commercialization of market-oriented and inclusive STI products	<p><u>Smart and Sustainable Cities and Communities (SMART)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program initiated its implementation, with a particular focus on identifying target communities in Central Visayas. 	<p>The program will deliver transformative S&T products and services, enhance capabilities to support smart and sustainable development, promote the adoption of these technologies within communities, and actively engage in policy advocacy and formulation to ensure impactful and sustainable outcomes.</p>
Promote the creative industries as platforms for innovation	<p><u>MSME Development Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This program promoted the growth of creative MSMEs through various activities such as the FABLABS, FiStartUp, StartUp Island PH, AYO Roadshow, Philippine Creatives Industries Development Month, and Cebu Design Week. 	<p>Continue implementation in 2024 and 2025, with other activities, such as the MSME Digitalization Program and innovation ecosystem building through the Regional Innovation Committee.</p>

Annex G: Major Priority PAPs for Reinvigorating Tourism

STRATEGY	Major PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Restore traveler confidence and ensure the safe stay of international tourists	<p>Close collaboration with provincial local government units to ensure effective governance of the tourism sector.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity building on tourism development planning for PLGUs/LGUs and other local tourism stakeholders 2. Accreditation of Primary and Secondary Tourism Enterprises/Services 3. Capacity Building Projects for Tourism Stakeholders, Tour Guides, Tourist Drivers, Homestay Operators, TOPCOP, Philippine Experience Program, Filipino Brand of Service Excellence 	Aside from the continuation of the Major PAPs in 2023, the roll-out and orientation of the updated NTDP to PLGUs and other tourism stakeholders will be undertaken.
• Diversify portfolio of tourism products and services	Market and Product Diversification Programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faith-based Tourism Program 2. Dive Tourism/ Dive7 -Philippine Tourism Dive Dialogue 3. Culinary Tourism Program 4. Health, Wellness and Medical Tourism 5. Farm Tourism -Farm Fork Fitness Circuits 6. Outdoor-Adventure Tourism - Outdoors7 Summit 7. Ecotourism -Eco7Pass 8. Education Tourism -English as Second Language/ ESL7 -Edux7 9. Filipino Martial Arts Heritage Tourism/FMA7 - FMA Heritage Tourism Summit 10. Motorbike Tourism -Motor7 Touring Circuits 11. Golf Tourism 12. Film Tourism 13. Sports Tourism
Provide clear information to travelers and businesses	Coordination with Public and Private Tourism Stakeholders in the	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourist Assistance Call Center 2. Travel Philippines App

STRATEGY	Major PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	consolidation of tourism statistics related data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Production of Promotional / Marketing Materials (Brochures, Magazines) 4. Coordination with Public and Private Tourism Stakeholders in the consolidation of tourism statistics related data 5. Availability of Tourism Statistics Data to businesses, researchers, travelers and other tourism stakeholders 6. Updated Social Media Accounts of the Region 7. Capacity Building for Local Government Units on Tourism Development Planning and Tourism Statistics System 8. Establishment of information desks in the Tourist Rest Areas
Promote domestic tourism through tourism circuits and in coordination with the DPWH using its Tourism Road Infrastructure Prioritization Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation with LGUs regarding TRIP Program in coordination with DPWH. 2. Continuous coordination with DOTr for the enhancement of gateway access (airports and seaports). 	<p>On top of continuing the 2023 activities, the following will also be pursued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuance of Certificate of Tourism Importance to LGUs with TRIP Program 2. Validation of proposed road projects submitted by the LGU 3. Continuous coordination with DPWH for the TRIP Program
Improve internet connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuous coordination and collaboration with DICT for provision of Wi-Fi Internet Access to other sites with Zero Connectivity 2. Continuous coordination with the LGUs for inclusion of other sites with zero connectivity 	Programs will be continued.
Support tourism businesses to adapt and survive through upskilling of tourism workers	Tourism Industry Training PAPs and Filipino Brand of Service Excellence Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop on the FMA Heritage Significance 2. Workshop on the creation of Skimboarding clinic program for visitors 3. Retooling Workshop for DOT Accredited Bohol Tour Guides on the

STRATEGY	Major PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
		<p>new tourism circuits and tours developed by the Regional Office</p> <p>4. Workshop on the Creation of a local tourism brand</p> <p>5. Refresher course for Tour Guides</p> <p>6. Training on Homestay Program</p> <p>7. Seminar for Tourist Drivers as Tourism Frontliners (Bohol)</p> <p>8. Filipino Brand of Service Excellence Training</p> <p>9. Community Tour Guiding Training</p> <p>10. Canyoneering Guides Training (Specialized training under Community Tour Guiding Training)</p>
Promote domestic tourism	<p>1. Participation in Travel Fairs and Sales Missions to promote the tourism products, services and activities in Central Visayas through participation in domestic and international travel fairs and sales mission to increase tourist arrivals in the region (includes the production of collateral materials (print + digital, photo acquisition, content writing and video production)</p> <p>2. Provision of Assistance to Travel Trade & Media famtours, leisure and MICE to facilitate the provision of requirements of the visiting groups, not limited to preparation of itinerary, reception and ground arrangements, to promote the destination and bring in tourists. (includes rondalla serenaders, purchase of leis)</p> <p>3. Support to Special Events to provide support, financially or any other form to LGUs or tourism private stakeholders organizing special events or projects in the region which promotes the development of tourism in the area and bring in tourists</p> <p>4. Provision of logistical and financial support to events organized by industry associations, LGUs, and other entities which contribute to the development and promotions of the regional office's programs including Farms7, Outdoors7, Motor7, FMA7,</p>	Continuation of promotional PAPs.

STRATEGY	Major PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p>Ecotourism, Education Tourism (e.g.) Farmers Market, 2. Cebu Board-riding Festival, 3. Dragon Boat Regatta, 4. Ride Out Trail Runs, 5. Audax Ride, 6. Ironman, 7. Ocean Canoe Paddle Forward, 8. Mountaineering Fest, 9. Cebu-Bohol-Negros Oriental-Siquijor Motor Loop, 10. Global Accessibility Awareness Day (PADS)</p> <p>5. Production of IEC Materials to produce product-specific content for information, education, and communication materials to influence market perceptions and behavior for domestic, and eventually, international tourism; and support the development of new offerings in the region</p>	

Annex H: Major Priority PAPs for Boosting Health and Nutrition

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Outcome 1: Healthy environment, behaviors, and choices promoted		
<p>Ensure communities, workplaces, and learning institutions support physical, mental and social well-being</p>	<p>Public Health Management Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented various programs to address infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, mental health, and substance abuse. <p>Among the highlights of the program were the implementation of the "HIV/AIDS and STI Awareness Caravan" for the young key population in selected higher education institutions in the region and the "Chikiting Ligtas 2023: Join the Big Catch Up, Magpabakuna para sa Healthy Pilipinas!"</p> <p>Environmental Health and Safe Setting Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would deliver efficient, effective and relevant programs that would lead to the reduction of environmental and occupational health related diseases, disabilities and deaths through and mitigation of hazards and risks in the environment and workplaces. 	<p>The DOH will continue the implementation of the following programs, activities, and projects:</p> <p>(a) Health Promotion; (b) Family Health, Immunization, Nutrition and Responsible Parenting; (c) Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases; and (d) Non-Communicable Diseases Management and Control Programs.</p>

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p>The Healthy Communities Campaign was implemented in the LGUs through the use of the Community Health Promotion Playbook.</p> <p>Tutok Kainan Dietary Supplementation Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a stunting reduction program designed to provide dietary supplementation and other first 1,000 days services. <p>In 2023, a total of 1,800 6 – 23 months children from Bohol, Cebu, and Negros, and 2,000 6 – 23 months children from Cebu, Negros Oriental and Siquijor benefitted from the implementation of the Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the project, respectively.</p>	
	<p>Nutrition Shepherding Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a peer-to-peer platform that involves guiding and mentoring low-performing LGUs on nutrition by a team at the regional level to enhance their knowledge and skills on nutrition program and management. <p>The Central Visayas RDC also showed its support to the project through the passage of RDC Resolution No. 39 (s. 2023), requesting the local government units in Central Visayas to strongly support the Nutrition Shepherding Project.</p>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Healthcare system strengthened		
Access to healthcare services improved	<p>Health Facilities Enhancement Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This program aims to improve public health facilities by constructing new and upgrading and rehabilitating existing public health facilities across the country such as barangay health stations, rural health units/urban health centers and LGU hospitals. 	<p>The DOH proposed the improvement and/or enhancement of the following DOH-retained hospitals:</p> <p>(a) Don Emilio Del Valle Memorial Hospital (i.e., construction of oxygen plant, renovation of OB building, etc.);</p> <p>(b) Cebu South Medical Center (i.e., completion of support facilities for Bldg. B, etc.);</p> <p>(c) Eversley Childs Sanitarium General Hospital (i.e., upgrading of hospital electrical system, hospital equipment);</p>

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
		(d) Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (i.e., Construction of 3-Storey Building for Out-Patient Department – Center for Behavioral Sciences).
	<p><u>Preparation of Policy Recommendations to Improve the Implementation of HFEP-funded Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Central Visayas Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) proposed policy recommendations to improve the implementation of HFEP-funded projects based on the findings of project site inspections of HFEP-funded projects. The recommendations were approved by the Central Visayas RDC through RDC Resolution No. 92 (s. 2023), requesting the DOH to adopt the recommendations of the Central Visayas RPMC on the enhancement of the implementation of Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP)-Funded Projects 	RDC to follow-up DOH actions on the recommendations.
Access to healthcare services improved	<p><u>Demand Generation and Service Delivery</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This programs includes skills in planning, designing and assessing social and behavior change communication strategies (SBCC), conduct of community-based RPFP classes and sessions, and development of IEC materials. Demand generation would then be linked to the family planning services. 	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
	<p><u>Conduct of the RPFP and AHD Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve RPFP and AHD, the following activities were conducted by CPD 7 in 2023: (a) RPFP for special groups; (b) Training of trainers for <i>Kalalakin-ang Tinud-anay sa Responsibilidad ug Obligasyon sa Pamilya</i> (KATROPA); (c) Regional Population Management Conference; (d) Orientation-Workshop on the Development and Operationalization of Local Population and Development Program for highly-urbanized cities (HUCs), component cities, municipal population officers, and Sagguniang Kabataan; (e) Regional Peer Educator's Conference; and (d) Training Workshop for AHD. 	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p><u>Preparation of Policy Recommendations to Expand the Coverage of Healthcare Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Central Visayas RDC, through the Social Development Committee, spearheaded the preparation of policy recommendations to expand the coverage of healthcare services of cancer patients and senior citizens. The RDC passed the following resolutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) RDC Resolution No. 37 (s. 2023), requesting the DOH to identify cancer assistance fund access sites in the provinces of Bohol, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor; (b) RDC Resolution No. 38 (s. 2023), requesting DOH to include the establishment of senior citizen's ward as an additional indicator in the assessment for licensure and accreditation of health facilities, particularly for government hospitals; 	RDC to follow-up DOH actions on the proposed policy recommendations.
Access to healthcare services improved	<p><u>National Health Workforce Support System Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This program aims to address the inadequacy of health workers in priority areas, provide quality health services for marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged population and complement the local government health workforce. 	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025

Annex I: Major Priority PAPs for Ensuring Food Security

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs / Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Boost productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector	Tamlang Valley Sustainable Agriculture for Growth and Resiliency (TVSAGR) project in Negros Oriental The project was endorsed in 2023 by the RDC aims to boost the food production of Negros Oriental i.e. to increase crop, livestock, and aquaculture production as well as capacitate local farmer communities as development partners.	For implementation by the Province of Negros Oriental and agency partners.
Boost productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector	DA 7 crop productivity programs: -Rice Program -Corn Program -High Value Crops Development Program -Organic Agriculture Program Implemented i.e. regular programs of the DA 7.	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.
Boost productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector	Livestock Program (DA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.
Boost productivity and resiliency of the local agriculture and fisheries sector	Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (DA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.
Strengthen buffer stocking of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters	Palay Procurement (NFA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.
Strengthen buffer stocking of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters	Rice Distribution (NFA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.
Strengthen buffer stocking of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters	Rice Dispersal (NFA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.
Strengthen buffer stocking of rice and other basic food items for emergencies and disasters	Pest Control Management (NFA 7)	This will be continually implemented in 2024-2025.

Annex J: Major Priority PAPs for Improving Access to Quality Education towards Learning Recovery

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Outcome: Access to Education Expanded		
Strengthen school inclusion programs to ensure access of children in situation of disadvantage	<u>Indigenous Peoples Education Program</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program is the Department of Education's (DepEd) response to the right of indigenous peoples (IP) to basic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Regional Training of Trainers for Division Pool of Trainers Elect new sets of officers for Consultative Advisory Body

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p>education. It aims to be responsive to their context, respect their identities, and promote the value of their indigenous knowledge, skills, and other aspects of their cultural heritage.</p>	<p>and to enhance Regional Cultural Standards.</p>
Intensify and develop interventions to keep children in school	<p>School Based Feeding Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DepEd VII facilitated, provided technical assistance, and monitored the progress of program implementation regarding the procurement of nutritious food products and milk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct the classification on the mapping of the beneficiaries by Grade level K-12 for SBFP Budget allocation for Fiscal Year 2024 • Monitor payment or liquidation process of SBFP Fiscal Year 2023 implementation of Nutritious Food Products and Milk from commercial sources
Ensure equitable distribution and timely provision of education facilities	<p>Basic Education Facilities Fund Project</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Construction of a total of 320 new classrooms by DPWH b. Repair of 1,892 DPWH implemented school building projects c. Repair of 70 DepEd implemented school building projects d. Construction of 9 Gabaldon schoolhouses e. Construction of 32 last mile school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously monitor and coordinate with DPWH to fast-track completion of BEFF projects • Continuously coordinate with School Division Officers to fast tract project completion of the DepEd implemented projects
	<p>Construction of 4STRY20CL at Dr. Cecilio Putong NHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project was completed as of 2023 <p>Construction of 4STRY12CL at Felix E. Bompat High School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project was completed as of 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish libraries, science laboratories and health and sanitation facilities in these schools. • Continuous monitoring of school building projects by the RDC RPMC and Local Project Monitoring Committees (LPMC).

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p><u>Construction / Completion of 2 units of 3STRY9CL at Pamplona Central Elementary School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project was completed as of 2023 	
Outcome: Quality of Teaching and Learning Improved		
Improve learning outcomes	<p><u>SMILE (Strengthening, Management, Instruction, and Leadership for Excellence)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Phase 1 (2023-2025) which is primarily focused on addressing learning gaps and challenges on school performance, specifically on literacy rate, numeracy rate, participation rate, transition rate, drop-rate or school-leaver rate, retention rate, cohort survival rate, completion rate and other key performance indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify learning gaps and possible identify programs to address the gaps.
Improve learning outcomes	<p><u>Preparation of policy proposals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RDC Full Council passed Resolutions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting the Enactment Into Law of Senate Bill No. 155, An Act Furthering Local Leadership and Accountability in Basic Education Governance to Achieve Quality Inclusive Education Through the 21st Century School Boards and School Governing Councils; 2. Enjoining the Local Government Units in Central Visayas to ensure that their Local School Boards are fully functional and equipped to perform their advisory function, particularly in addressing learning poverty. 	

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of these resolutions forwarded to DepEd, all CV LGUs and Congressmen. 	
Outcome: Resilience to Hazards Enhanced		
Promote activities and programs to boost the well-being of teachers and learners	<p><u>DepEd's Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Contingency Plan of the Region, Division and Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct of capacity building Construct temporary learning spaces to those schools affected by disasters / emergencies Provide Psychological First Aid to those teaching and non-teaching personnel and learners. Strengthen climate change adaptation and mitigation advocacies Establish MATATAG Center for the Region and Division Offices

Annex K: Major Priority PAPs for Building Sustainable Settlements and Well-Planned Communities

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Outcome: Built environment upgraded		
Increase options to avail of housing and respond to local housing demand	<p><u>DHSUD</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Filipino Program (4PH) 	<p>(Based on EO No. 34, s. 2023)</p> <p>DHSUD to identify national and local government lands that are suitable for housing and human settlements.</p> <p>DHSUD to identify available public lands and recommend to the President the issuance of Proclamations declaring said public lands as alienable and disposable and reserving the</p>

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
		same as alienable and disposable.
	<p>NHA Housing Assistance Program for Calamity Victims (HAPCV)</p> <p>The remaining projects under the Yolanda Permanent Housing Program in Northern Cebu are in various stages of implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kandaya Homes 1 (Daanbantayan) • Kandaya Homes 2 (Daanbantayan) • Borbon Heights (Borbon) • St. Vincent Ferrer Homes 2 (Bogo City) • Bantayan Permanent Housing Project Site 2 (Bantayan) • Santa Fe Permanent Housing Project Site 1 (Santa Fe) • Santa Fe Permanent Housing Project Site 2 (Santa Fe) • Esperanza People's Village (San Francisco) • Montealegre People's Village (San Francisco) • Ponson Island Permanent Housing Project (Pilar) • Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Homes (Tudela) <p>The Naga Permanent Housing Project for the Naga City landslide victims is ongoing.</p> <p>The Central Visayas RDC passed a resolution requesting the NHA to adopt the recommendations of the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) for the enhancement of the implementation of NHA-funded projects.</p>	<p>RPMC to continue to closely monitor the implementation of the YPHP projects and the Naga Permanent Housing Project.</p> <p>NHA 7 to fast-track the completion of the calamity projects for typhoon and landslide victims.</p> <p>NHA 7 to closely coordinate with the Local Water Utilities Administration for the provision of permanent water supply systems to the YPHP housing projects.</p> <p>NHA 7 to implement the permanent housing projects under the Typhoon Odette Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Efforts in Cebu, Bohol and Negros Oriental.</p>

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p>The Central Visayas RDC endorsed to the NEDA Board-Investment Coordination Committee the Permanent Housing Projects under the RMB 100 Million Grant from the Government of the People's Republic of China for Typhoon Odette Reconstructions and Rehabilitation Efforts. The specific sites in the region are Argao in Cebu; Bais City and Canlaon City in Negros Oriental; and Sierra Bullones and Pilar in Bohol.</p>	
	<p>NHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resettlement Assistance Program to LGUs (RAP-LGU) • Housing Assistance Program for Indigenous Peoples (HAPIP) • Resettlement Assistance for Former Rebels – Provides housing assistance to former rebels • Government Employees Housing Program (GEHP) • Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP) 	
	<p>SHFC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abot Kaya Pabahay Fund – Development Loan Program (AKPF-DLP) • Community Mortgage Program (CMP) 	
	<p>NHMFC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Loan Receivables Purchase Program 1 (HLRPP-1) • Socialized Loan Take-Out of Receivables (SHeLTeR) • Balai Berde - Designed to increase capital allocations exclusively for green-certified projects that contribute to environmental sustainability and resiliency. 	

Annex L: Major Priority PAPs for Expanding Training and Skills Development

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025 (Proposed PAPs of TESDA for 2025)
Outcome: Relevance and responsiveness of senior high school, higher education, and TVET courses to market demand enhanced		
Institutionalize area-based demand-driven TVET	<p><u>Area-based Demand-driven TVET Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Technical Education Skills Development (RTESD) Plan for 2023-2028 wherein Area-based Demand-driven TVET is a central strategy, was formulated. 	Disseminate and implement the RTESD Plan at the regional/provincial level
Develop relevant entrepreneurial skills for the changing global economy	<p><u>Community-Based Training Program Designed After Special Training for Employment Program</u></p>	In 2025, the program will be implemented in 53 LGUs in Cebu, in the Municipalities of Tubigon and Inabanga in Bohol, and in districts 1, 2 and 3 in Negros Oriental.
Outcome: Access to formal/ informal education and training programs improved		
Institutionalize Technical Education and Skills Development Programs at the local government units	<p><u>Barangay TVET Trainers Development</u></p>	In 2025, the program will be implemented in districts 1, 2 and 3 in Negros Oriental
Institutionalize Technical Education and Skills Development Programs at the local government units		The following PAPs will be proposed for implementation in 2025: (a) Modernization/ Upgrading of Training Equipment/ Machineries and Tools for Higher- Technology TESD Courses in the Provincial Training Centers (PTCs) of Minglanilla, Samboan, Toledo, Daanbantayan, and Carmen; (b) Rehabilitation of Training Center/ Workshop/ Modernization/ Upgrading of Training Equipment of Various Registered Training Programs of the Regional Training Center-Cebu, PTC-Inabanga, and PTC-Tubigon; (c) Construction of 5-storey Building of the Regional Training Center – Cebu; (d) Construction of Extension Building in Samboan; (e) Re-establishment of Automotive Servicing as the Distinctive Area of Responsibility (DAR) for SIPTVETS Project; (f) Construction of Dormitory for Trainees in PTC-Inabanga; (g) Construction of second floor of existing TESDA Bohol Provincial Office Building; (h) TVET Program Delivery to Negros Oriental Task Force to End Local Communist Arm Conflict or NOTF-ELCAC; (i)

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025 (Proposed PAPs of TESDA for 2025)
		Construction of Green Building for TESDA Provincial Office/Training and Assessment Center in Negros Oriental; (j) Construction of 2-storey Technology Building for PTC-Siquijor; and (k) Purchase of Computer Laboratory Equipment for PTC-Siquijor
Strengthen alternative training modalities		The following projects will be proposed for implementation in 2025: (a) Acquisition of New Training Equipment / Machineries/ Tools for the Mobile Training Program (MTP) in Samboan, Cebu
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Full Private Education Student Financial Assistance (FPESFA)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Full Private Education Student Financial Assistance-GAD (FPGAD)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Full Scholarship GAA (FS 101)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Full Scholarship GAD (FS-GAD)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Full State Scholarship Program (FSSP)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Full State Scholarship Program – Gender and Development (FS- GAD)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Half Private Education Student Financial Assistance (HPESFA)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Half Private Education Student Financial Assistance-GAD (HPGAD)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Half State Scholarship Program (HSSP)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Half State Scholarship Program – Gender and Development (HS- GAD)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Scholarship Program for Coconut Farmers and their Families (ChSCho)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Scholarship Grant Program for Children and Dependents of Sugarcane Industry Workers and Small Sugarcane Farmers (SIDA-SGP)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>ISTATISTIKOLAR</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025
Expand scholarship programs	<u>Medical Scholarship and Return Service Program (MSRS)</u>	Program to be continued in 2024 and 2025

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025 (Proposed PAPs of TESDA for 2025)
Expand scholarship programs		In 2025, TVET scholarship program will be implemented to support the priority programs of Negros Oriental (i.e. Tamlang Valley Support Program, Bamboo and Rubber Production, Kapatiran Support Program)

Annex M: Major Priority PAPs for Intensifying Employment Facilitation

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Outcome: Access to employment opportunities increased		
Intensify the conduct of job fairs and livelihood assistance	<p><u>DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livelihood assistance were provided to 14,721 beneficiaries some of whom have become entrepreneurs 	Continue the implementation of the program with the following targets: 4,190 in 2024 and 5,228 in 2025
Intensify the conduct of job fairs and livelihood assistance	<p><u>Conduct of Job Fairs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job fairs regularly conducted in the various LGUs 	Continue the conduct of job fairs with a target of at least 150,000 qualified jobseeker referred to placement in 2025.
Intensify the conduct of job fairs and livelihood assistance	<p><u>Special Program for Employment of Students (SPES)</u></p>	Continue the implementation of the program in 2025 targeting 7,459 beneficiaries
Conduct skills mapping and establish a database of skills at the local level	<p><u>National Skills Registration Program</u></p>	Continue the implementation of the program in 2025 targeting 6 LGUs and 60 establishments
Conduct skills mapping and establish a database of skills at the local level	<p><u>PhilJobNet</u></p>	Continue the implementation of the program in 2025
Outcome: Labor market governance improved		
Institutionalize the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) in all LGUs	<p><u>Conduct of monitoring of PESO institutionalization</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on status of PESOs in Central Visayas was presented to the RDC Social Development Committee in May 2023 	Continue monitoring of PESO institutionalization

Annex N: Major Priority PAPs on Sustaining the Provision of Social Safety Nets

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Outcome 1: Improvement of poverty alleviation interventions		
Strengthen 4Ps and other social protection programs in the region	<p><u>Resolution enjoining the LGUs in Central Visayas to adopt the Enhanced Social Protection Operational Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are already LGUs that have adopted the enhanced operational framework. 	LGUs will be encouraged to adopt the same.
Strengthen 4Ps and other social protection programs in the region	<p><u>Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of beneficiaries in Central Visayas which recently include the Set 12 beneficiaries. The RDC endorsed a resolution requesting the NAC to recommend to the 4Ps Oversight Committee to study the need for executive measures providing penalties for individuals and corporate entities who accept 4Ps cash cards as loan collateral. 	<p>The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.</p> <p>Regionwide adoption of the endorsed resolution.</p>
Strengthen 4Ps and other social protection programs in the region	<p><u>KALAHICIDSS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program has served 1.4 million households benefiting from the 2,488 community sub-projects. 	<p>The program under the NCDDP-AF modality is targeted to end by June 2024. Moreover, for the PMNP modality, DSWD is proposing funding for identified water-related needs.</p>
Strengthen 4Ps and other social protection programs in the region	<p><u>Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RDC 7 supported the Amendment of Republic Act 11916 to expand benefits to senior citizens from P1000 to P2500 monthly pension. 	<p>The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.</p>
Facilitate employment of vulnerable groups	<p><u>Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP)</u></p>	<p>The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.</p>
Facilitate employment of vulnerable groups	<p><u>Integrated Livelihood Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14,721 beneficiaries were provided with assistance. 	<p>The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025. But, a decrease in the number of beneficiaries will be expected due to the GAA Budget Allocation.</p>
Facilitate employment of vulnerable groups	<p><u>Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers Program</u></p>	<p>The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.</p>

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 242,833 individuals benefitted the program 	
Intensify data generation activities to come up with timely and disaggregated data	<u>Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGUs were capacitated by PSA in 2023. 	Anticipated nationwide rollout of CBMS in 2024.
Outcome 2: Achieving a universal, modern and integrated social protection		
Optimize use of technology in the delivery of social services	<u>PhilHealth Konsulta</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 207 Konsulta package providers were accredited. 	The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.
Expedite the implementation of the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) to facilitate the identification of vulnerable groups	<u>Philippine Identification System</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSA has reached 83 million registrations. 	PSA to continue extensive PhilSys registration and issuance efforts.
Outcome 3: Enhancement of the welfare of the children		
Enhance linkages/partnerships with other stakeholders in identifying and addressing the socio-economic causes of child abuses and exploitation	<u>Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons (RRPTP)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localization of Child Protection Policy is endorsed for prioritization. 	The program will continue to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.

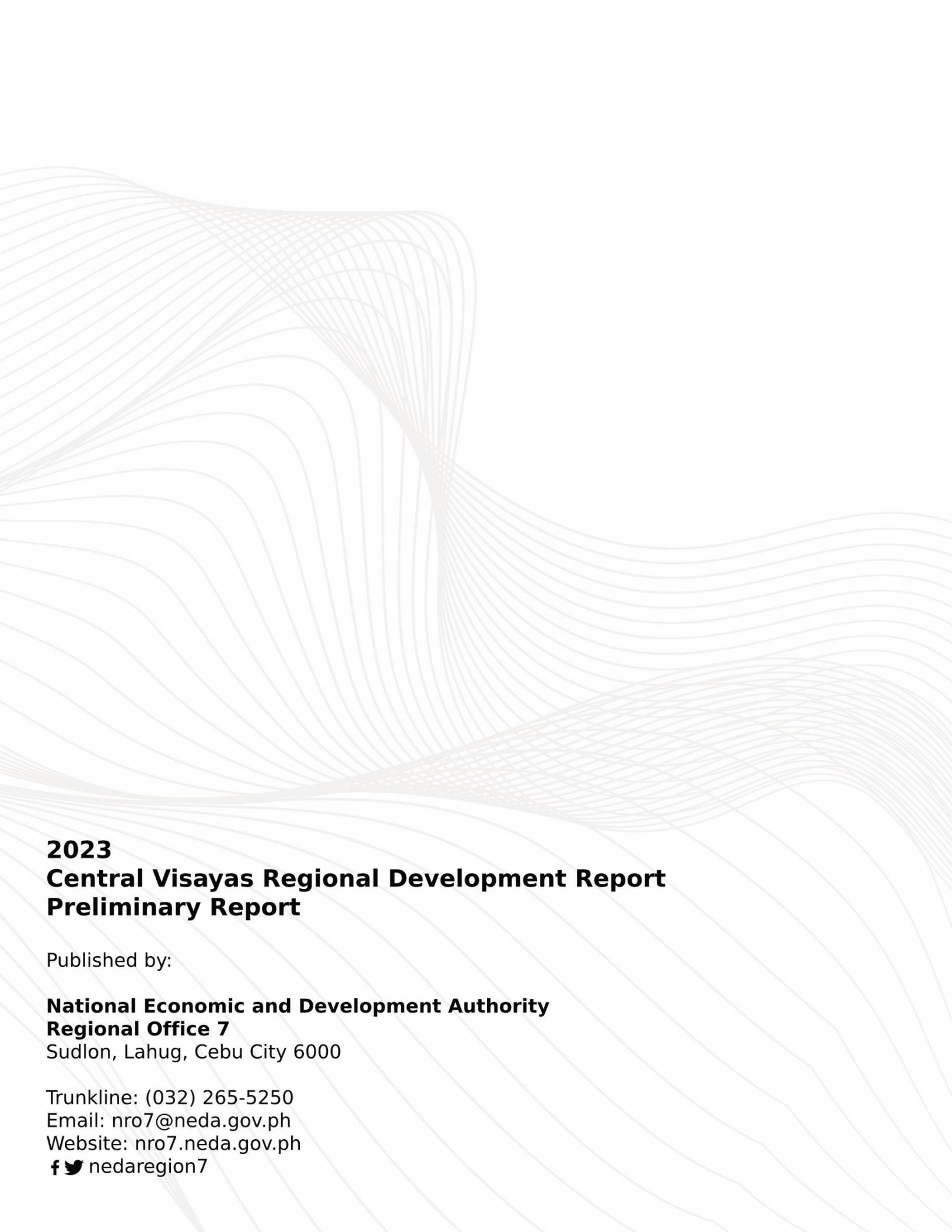
Annex O: Major Priority PAPs for Promoting Sustainable Natural Resources Management

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Increasing the resilience of communities	<u>Central Visayas Rehabilitation and Recovery Program for Typhoon Odette Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the agency-vetted PAPs in the CV RRP are yet to be implemented. 	The Central Visayas Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council will closely monitor the implementation of the proposed PAPs.
	<u>Preparation of the DRR/CCA-enhanced CLUPs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 23 percent of LGUs in Central Visayas have updated CLUPs 	The provision of technical assistance to LGUs in the crafting of CLUPs will be intensified.

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
	<p><u>Completion of Local Climate Change Action Plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 20 percent of the 136 LGUs have not completed their respective LCCAPs 	The provision of technical assistance to LGUs in the crafting of LCCAPs will be intensified.
	<p><u>Updating of Local DRRM Plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 36 percent of LGUs have updated their local DRRM plans based on the National DRRM Plan, 2020-2030 	The CV RDRRMC will intensify the provision of trainings to LGUs on DRRM planning based on the toolkit developed by JICA
Improving the resilience of the ecosystem	<p><u>Protection of Key Biodiversity Areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System, the Biodiversity Protection System (BMS), and the Urban Biodiversity Conservation Program 	The region shall sustain the measures implemented to protect and preserve the key biodiversity areas
	<p><u>Promotion of the Bio-sequestration Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main intervention implemented in the region to sequester greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is the enhanced-National Greening Program (eNGP) 	The region shall sustain the eNGP for the co-benefits the program offers such as addressing climate change and providing means of livelihood to communities who are dependent on these plantations
	<p><u>Implementation of Nature-based Solutions to Climate Change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management of forest, marine, and water resources, and inland wetlands has been pursued to address the effects of climate change in the region. 	The region shall pursue all four categories of nature-based solutions: forest practices, wetland-related practices, restorative agriculture, and ocean-based practices.
Accelerating low carbon economy transition	<p><u>Development of Renewable Energy Sources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investments have been made to develop biomass, hydropower and solar energy in the region. 	The region shall continue to advocate for the utilization of renewable energy sources.
	<p><u>Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emission from Transportation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing projects to reduce emissions from transportation include the BRT and the modernization of jeepneys. 	<p>The region shall expand the GhG abatement measures in the transportation sector by advocating for the implementation of electronic vehicles.</p> <p>The region shall also advocate for the implementation of the Bike Lane Masterplan in Metro Cebu.</p>

Annex P: Major Priority PAPs for Ensuring Peace and Security

STRATEGY	MAJOR PAPs/ Status of Implementation	Plans for 2024-2025
Outcome 1: Insurgency Problem of Central Visayas Addressed		
Sustain the whole-of-nation approach to counter insurgency and terrorism.	<p>1. The Support to the Barangay Development Program (LGSF-SBDP) is the Government's priority program to usher development and deliver basic services to conflict-affected barangays that lagged due to the terror caused by the CPP-NPA Terrorists. For 2023, 29 barangays in Central Visayas were recipients of PhP 6.6 million each under the SBDP. The amount was for the implementation of various projects which were identified as priority PAPs by the community. The types of projects supported by SBDP are: farm to market roads, water and sanitation system, health station, school building, and rural electrification. A total of 37 PAPs for the 29 barangays were identified. As of January 2024, 4 out of the 37 PAPs were on-going, 2 were under procurement, and 31 were under pre-procurement phase.</p> <p>2. The Capacitating Urban Communities for Peace and Development (CUCPD) program empowers local governments to address gaps in five sectors: youth and students, labor, transport, urban poor, and women. Target LGUs are: Toledo City, Talisay City, Guihulngan City, and Ubay, Bohol. The implementation involves the orientation of Provincial Focals, conduct of coordination meeting and distribution of the CUCPD Field Guide to DILG Local Offices and Local Government Units (LGUs).</p>	<p>Continuous conduct of capacity building and provision of technical assistance on the implementation of SBDP projects in Central Visayas</p> <p>Enjoin LGUs to pass ordinances and/or resolutions that support the institutionalization of peace and order, development and promotion of general welfare and ensuring the provision of budget through approved local plans of LGUs</p> <p>Strengthening regular convergence and coordination with the DILG, PNP, AFP and concern NGAs and LGUs for the processes of the endorsement and assistance to FRs and FVEs.</p> <p>Monitor the delivery of commitments for Peace by NGAs, LGUs and other partner stakeholders</p> <p>Strengthen information drive on peace, security and development by taking advantage of various social media platforms and undertake social preparation especially in conflict-affected areas.</p>



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