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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Benguet posts highest HDI in the Cordilleras**

The 2009 Human Development Index (HDI) revealed that people living in Benguet generally enjoy a better quality of life compared to the other five provinces in the region. In 2009, Benguet obtained an HDI of 0.883, the highest in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). It was followed by Kalinga with a composite index of 0.562, Apayao (0.529), Abra (0.508), Ifugao (0.483) and Mt. Province (0.449).

The HDI is a composite index measuring achievements in three basic dimensions of human development which are: to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. A province can be classified under high-HDI if its index is above 0.800; medium, if it is within the range 0.500 - 0.800; and low, if the index is less than 0.500. In 2009, Kalinga, Apayao and Abra were categorized under the medium-HDI provinces while Ifugao and Mt. Province belonged to the low-HDI range. Only Benguet managed to join the ranks of the high-HDI provinces.

Per HDI component, in 2009, Benguet obtained the highest Education Index (EI) among the six provinces in the region at 0.988. The EI was estimated as a composite of the mean years of schooling and expected average years of schooling. Mean years of schooling for adults in Benguet was 10.0 years or about 1.3 year higher than the national average. It was followed by Abra (8.7 years), Mt. Province (7.5 years), Apayao (7.4 years), Kalinga (7.1 years) and Ifugao (6.4 years). The expected average years of schooling for the youth was 14.0 years in Benguet, the highest in the region and 2 years higher than the country's average. For the education index, four provinces were classified under high-HDI group: Benguet, Abra, Mt. Province and Apayao. The province of Kalinga and Ifugao were categorized under medium-HDI.

Benguet was also highest in the Income Index (II) at 0.802. The II is measured using real per capita income. Except for Benguet, all other provinces in the region were classified under the low-HDI group in the standard of living component.

The generation of the 2009 HDI is a joint effort of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) and the Human Development Network (HDN) adopting the refined version of the Human Development Index introduced in the Human Development Report 2010 published by the United Nations Development Programme.

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