

Building the Technical Expertise of LGUs for the Robust Implementation of Ridge to Reef Approach/Watershed Ecosystem Approach to Local and Provincial Land Use and Development Planning in the Philippines

Activity Report/Completion Report

1. Title:

Vision Validation and Core Values Alignment Workshop

2. Duration and Date:

The activity was conducted for one (1) day, on August 8, 2024.

3. Venue:

The activity was conducted at the International Convention Center (ICC) Hall B, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University North La Union Campus (DMMMSU-NLUC) in Bacnotan, La Union.

4. Content and Methodology:

The Vision Validation and Core Values Alignment Workshop for the La Union province was funded by the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) and implemented by the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in partnership with the Provincial Government of La Union. This activity aims to present and validate the produced problem tree based on perceived problems, opportunities, and potential directions for the province's development as well as the formulated long-term vision aligned with the aspirations of its leaders and residents during the last workshop. The proposed vision was the outcome of the integrated ideas of all the LGUs with regard to the pressing problems of their municipalities. This serves as a guide for the broader Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) based on the ridge to reef/watershed ecosystem management (R2R/WEM) approach. Synthesis and recapitulation of the formulated problem tree derived from the previous visioning workshop conducted last May 07, 2024, was presented by For. Marinelle R. Agonia.

The active involvement and participation of different National Government Agencies (NGAs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and other stakeholders help ensure all identified problems are understood and accurately captured. Incorporating diverse perspectives from the stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership of problems and facilitate the implementation of effective solutions.

In essence, validating the problem tree strengthens the problem-solving process by ensuring the identified problems by the LGUs are accurate, inclusive, and actionable. This, in turn, leads to the design of a more relevant and sustainable vision statement for the province of La Union.

The activity program flow is as follows:

Table 1: Vision Validation Workshop for the Province of La Union Program

Time	Agenda	Personnel-in-Charge
7:00 AM	Registration	APN Staff
8:00 AM	Preliminaries	PGLU Officer
8:10 AM	Opening Remarks	Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz Project Leader, APN
8:15 AM	Messages	Hon. Mario Eduardo C. Ortega Vice Governor, Province of La Union Hon. Raphaelle Veronica Ortega-David Governor, Province of La Union
8:30 AM	Acknowledgment of the Planning Team Members	Mr. David M. Rabelas, EnP Planning Officer III PGLU - OPPDC
8:40 AM	Synthesis of the Visioning Workshop	Dr. Lorena L. Sabino and Mrs. Marinelle A. Decena Project Staff, APN
10:40 AM		Ms. Michaela Louise T. Delfinado, EnP PPDC, PGLU
11:00 AM	Open Forum/Discussion	
12:00 NN	Lunch Break	
1:00 PM	Mission Statement and Core Values Workshop	Dr. Lorena L. Sabino Project Staff, APN
3:00 PM	Presentation of the Proposed Vision Statement	Ms. Michaela Louise T. Delfinado, EnP PPDC, PGLU
4:00 PM	Closing Remarks	Hon. Aaron Kyle M. Pinzon Chair, SP Committee on Housing, Land Use and Relocation

Activity 1. Synthesis of Visioning Workshop

During this activity, the outputs of the May 7, 2024 Visioning Workshop were consolidated. A significant portion of the time was allocated to reviewing and validating the problem trees created by participants in the previous workshop. This step was crucial for aligning the perspectives of both groups and fostering a shared understanding of the pressing problems currently faced by the leaders and citizens of the province of La Union.

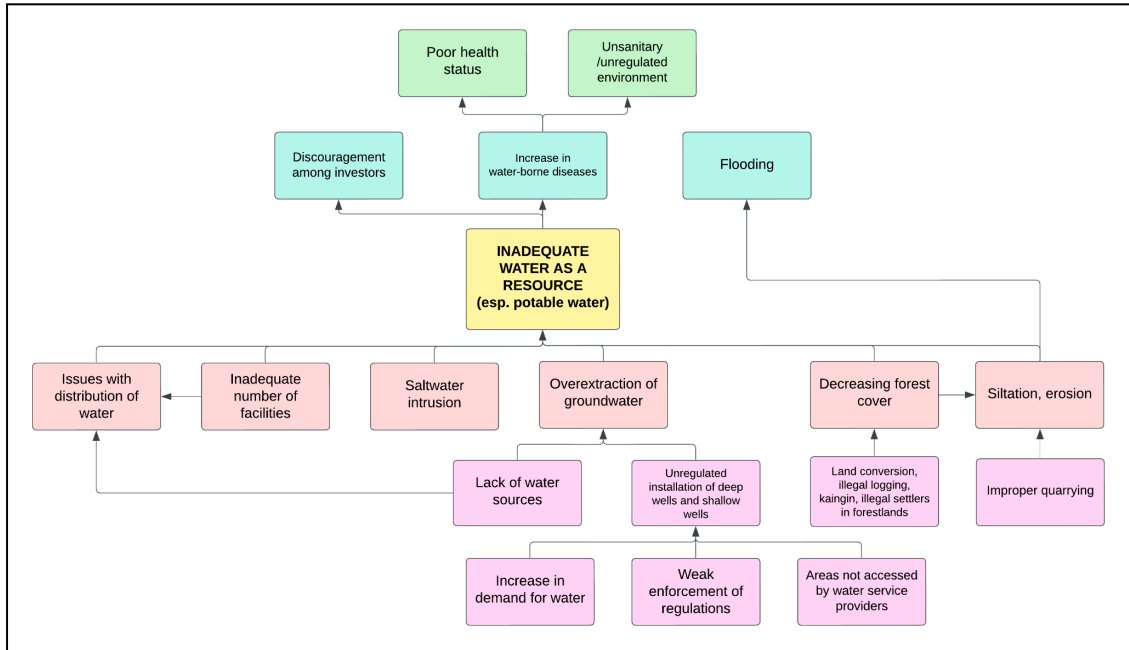


Figure 1. Updated problem tree under the Environment theme

Under the Environment theme, the core problem was redefined from the inadequacy of potable water to the broader issue of ‘inadequate water as a resource’ (Figure 1), reflecting that it is not only potable water that is inadequate in the province. Moreover, problems contributing to the over-extraction of groundwater were included such as the weak enforcement of regulations, the presence of areas not accessed by water service providers, and the increasing water demand. Other primary causes identified include issues with water distribution and an inadequate number of facilities.

In terms of the consequences, an economic facet was added, with the participants noting that discouragement among investors is an effect of water scarcity. In addition, the term ‘malnutrition’ was revised to ‘poor health status’ to better reflect the health implications of inadequate water resources.

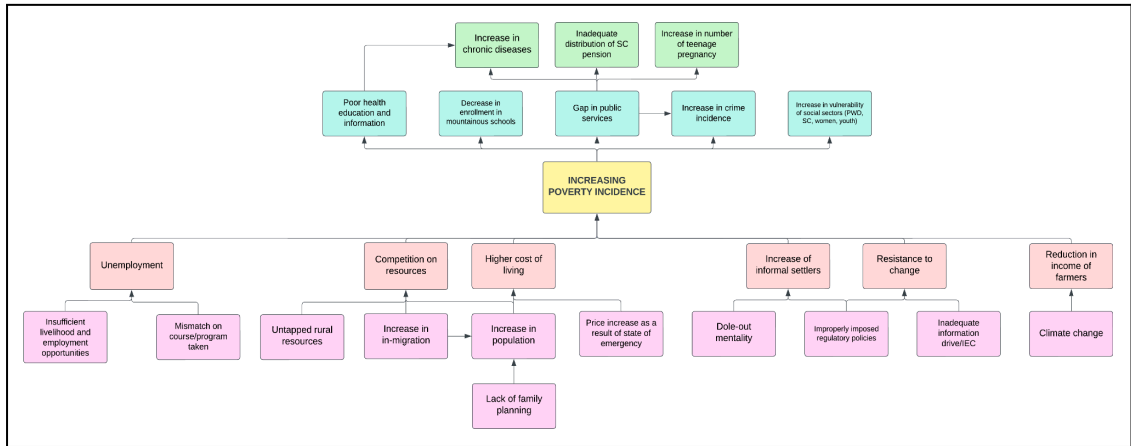


Figure 2. Updated problem tree under the Social theme

Notable revisions were made to the problem tree under the Social theme (Figure 2). The previous core problem ‘exceeded carrying capacity (gentrification)’ was replaced with ‘increasing poverty incidence’ as the participants found this problem the most pressing under this theme. Although the province’s overall poverty rate is not high, the trend of increasing poverty necessitated this shift.

Several contributing factors were added to the problem tree, including unemployment due to insufficient livelihood and employment opportunities and the mismatch in the course/program taken during tertiary-level education. Competition for resources and higher cost of living were also specified as primary causes of increasing poverty incidence. Lastly, the reduction of income of farmers as a result of the changing climate was pinpointed by the participants.

Some participants expressed disagreement with terms such as ‘uncooperative citizenry’ and ‘lack of regulatory policies’ as contributing factors. They suggested replacing ‘uncooperative citizenry’ with ‘inadequate information drive/IEC’ to better capture the issue. Additionally, they emphasized that while regulatory policies exist, they are often ‘improperly imposed,’ rather than being entirely absent.

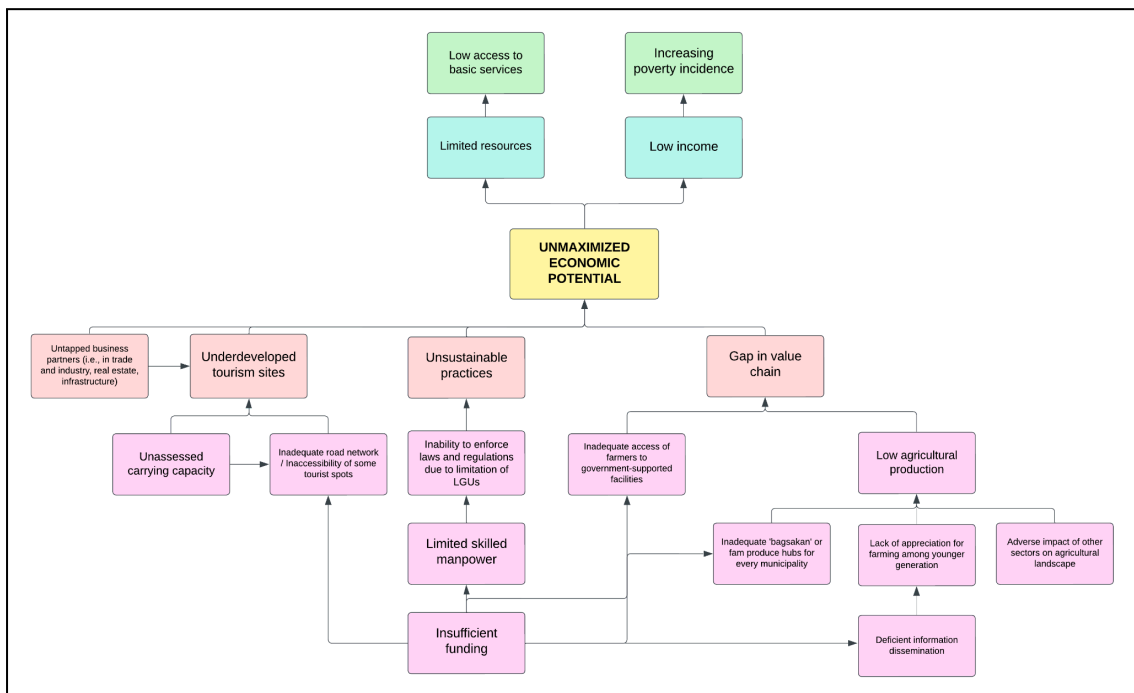


Figure 3. Updated problem tree under the Economic theme

The core problem of the Economic problem tree was revised from ‘unrealized economic opportunities’ to ‘unmaximized economic potential’ (Figure 3). Participants attributed many of the contributing factors to insufficient funding. Moreover, the previous problem tree was expanded to include various secondary causes.

The value chain gap was linked to the farmers’ inadequate access to government-supported facilities and low agricultural production, with the latter being linked to inadequate *bagsakan* or farm produce hubs, lack of appreciation for farming among younger generations, and the broader impact of other sectors on the agricultural landscape.

Limited skilled manpower was identified as a challenge, hindering the ability to enforce laws and regulations. This, in turn, contributes to unsustainable practices. Underdeveloped tourism sites were also connected to two causes: unassessed carrying capacity and inadequate road network/inaccessibility of some tourist spots. The former raises several concerns, often cutting across other thematic areas. Lastly, the problem of untapped business partners in trade and industry, real estate, and infrastructure was also seen as contributing to the core problem.

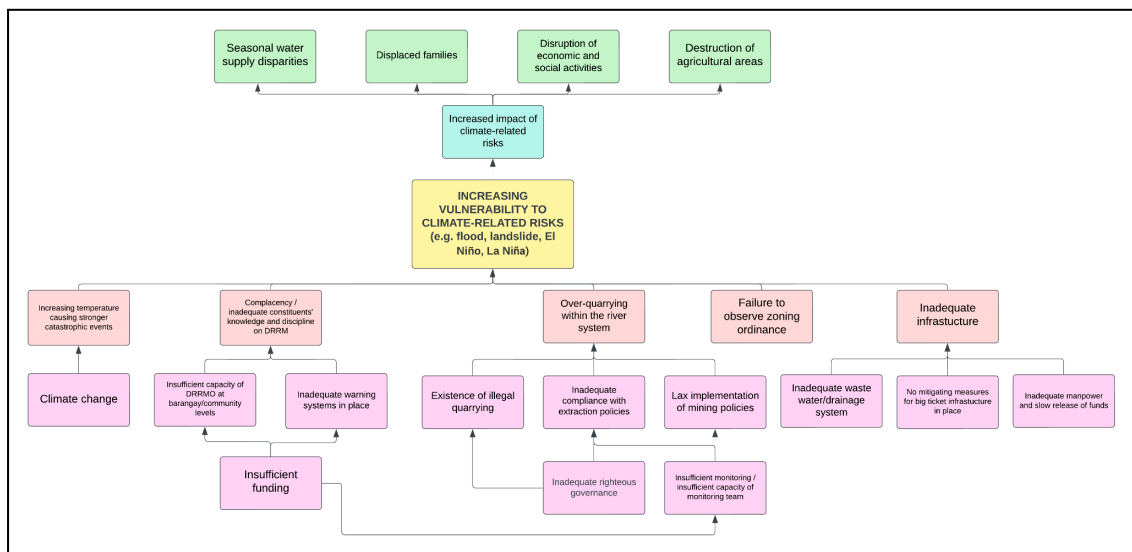


Figure 4. Updated problem tree under the DRRM/Infrastructure theme

To better reflect the core problem under the DRRM/Infrastructure theme, it was revised from ‘increasing disaster risks’ to ‘increasing vulnerability to climate-related risks’ (Figure 4). A significant discussion focused on the issue of ‘over-quarrying within the river system.’ Participants highlighted the challenges faced by the multipartite monitoring team of quarrying sites such as insufficient members, infrequent monitoring, and overall lack of capacity. Coupled with the inadequacy of righteous governance, problems such as illegal quarrying, inadequate compliance with extraction policies, and lax implementation of mining policies arose.

The revised problem tree also identifies the complacency or insufficient knowledge and discipline among constituents regarding DRRM as a primary cause. This was

attributed to the insufficient capacity of DRRMOs at barangay/community levels and inadequate warning systems in place. Additionally, failure to observe zoning ordinances was also included in the problem tree.

In terms of the effects, the occurrences of flood/siltation, erosion/landslide, and El Niño/high heat index were revised to ‘increased impact of climate-related risks.’ The disruption of economic and social activities was also added as a secondary effect.

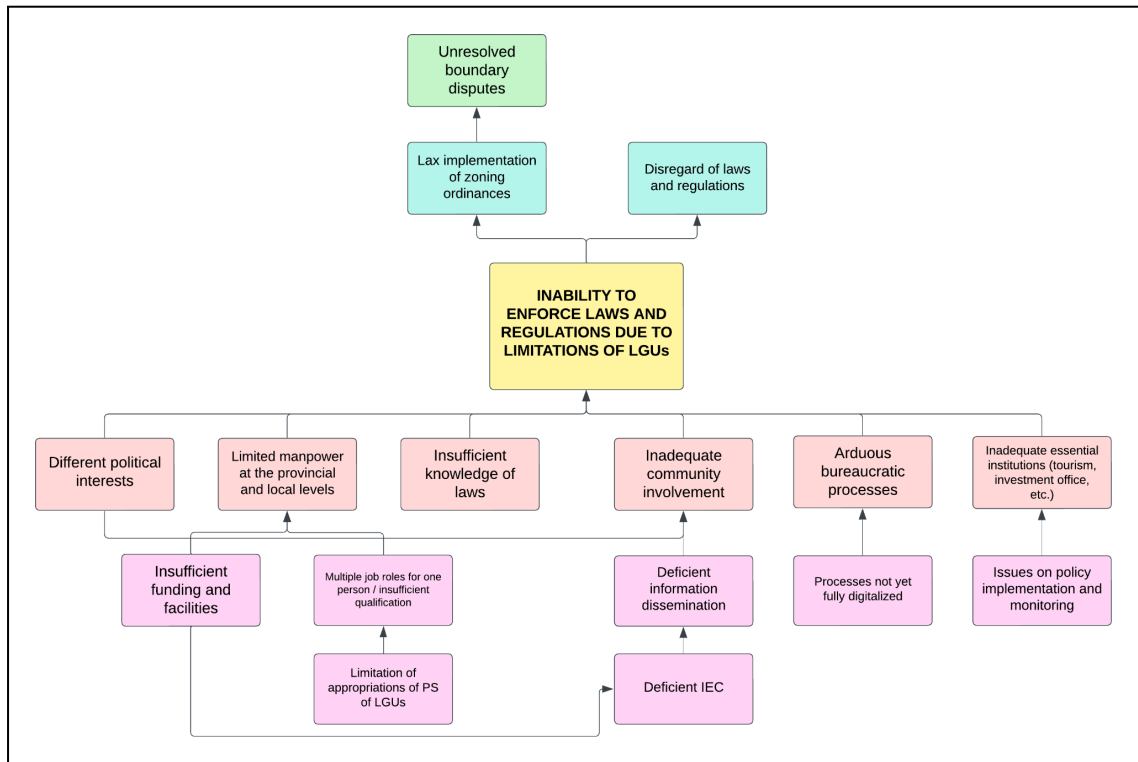


Figure 5. Updated problem tree under the Institutional theme

Under the Institutional theme, the core problem was revised to ‘inability to enforce laws and regulations due to limitations of LGUs’ (Figure 5). Participants emphasized their desire to strictly implement laws and regulations but were hindered by several factors. Five (5) primary causes were added to the problem tree. One is the issue of arduous bureaucratic processes due to a lack of full digitalization. Another is the inadequacy of community involvement stemming from the deficiency of information dissemination among communities. Differences in political interests were also identified as a primary cause and a contributing factor to inadequate community involvement. Upon consideration, insufficient knowledge of laws was moved from an effect to a primary cause.

A lengthy discussion also addressed limited manpower at the provincial and local levels of government. Participants noted that guidelines limit total appropriations for personal services (PS) to 45%. This creates pressure on personnel, often leading to one person fulfilling multiple roles. This hinders their ability to accomplish tasks effectively and efficiently.

Activity 2. Presentation of the Proposed Vision Statement

Dr. Sabino started off the presentation by stating the proposed vision statement “The premier ecotourism destination in Region I by 2055.” asking the participants on their perception of the proposed vision statement that derived from the previous workshop. A participant from the Multi-Sector Governance Council questioned the 30-years time frame allotted to achieve the vision emphasizing that 30 years is too much of a time and proposed to have a short-term time frame up of six (6) to nine (9) years. The concern was addressed by Ms. Delfinado, stating that it arose from the guidelines of PDPFP provided by Dr. Rex Cruz and that six (6) to nine (9) is too short to see the fruits of your programs. Dr. Rex Cruz followed through with the clarification that the vision statement of the province should only involve the locals of the province itself and not by others. Dr. Cruz also emphasized that “ecotourism development” is just a strategy and that they should consider the province’s long term goals and aspirations that it should have. This was supported by Dr. Sabino stated that “the vision describes the desired state of the province 30 years or so it ends” as indicated in the Provincial Plan. Dr. Cruz also added that a vision statement should include a positional element and it is a lofty goal, should the vision of the province be aspiring to be the top, competing on a national or regional (Southeast Asia) level or should it only include the regional scale (Region I or Northern Luzon).

Another concern was whether to choose “Agri-ecotourism” or “Eco-agritourism” and it was finalized by choosing the former option as agreed by everyone. Moreover, an NGA participant raised that the word “premier” connotes some point of confusion that can be raised by neighboring provinces thus, the word “leading” instead of “premier” was proposed. Therefore a new proposed vision arose “The leading Agri-Ecotourism region by 2055”, however, it was not finalized. Additionally, a conflict whether to choose Region I or Northern Luzon as the positional element was raised and it was discussed that Northern Luzon is quite impossible due to the fact that the province could not compete with Sagada and the likes. The changes on the proposed vision gave way to have Dr. Rex Cruz to remind everyone that the vision that’s being finalized was a product of multi-echelon or multiple proposed ideas by different sectors forming into one (1) and also, that agri-ecotourism is a subset of tourism. However, due to multiple conflicts, the workshop was not enough of a time to finalize the final vision statement. Therefore, a pre-work template was sent to all participants to let them select options to each component of the vision statement.

5. Participants and Facilitators

This activity was attended by a total of 94 participants composed of the members of the Planning Team for the Updating of the PDPFP of the Province of La Union for CY 2026-2035. The members of the planning team are outlined in Executive Order No. 31, Series of 2024 of the province, with the Provincial Governor as its Chairperson. The Planning Team is composed of the Core Group, Support Group, and Technical Working Groups. The participants of the workshop can be seen in Appendix 1.

The APN Project Staff from IRNR-CFNR and personnel from the Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator of the PGLU (OPPDC-PGLU) jointly facilitated the event.

6. Reflections/Concerns/Recommendations/Lesson Learned:

The Vision Validation and Core Values Alignment Workshop proved to be a valuable tool in refining and solidifying the Vision and the Core Values for the Province of La Union. By actively engaging the Planning Team, the workshop was able to build upon the insights gained from the previous Visioning Workshop and ensure that the final outputs were aligned with the diverse perspectives of the team.

While the workshop was productive, given the size of the Planning Team, it may be beneficial to allocate more time in future sessions. This would allow for more in-depth discussions and ensure that all knowledge and perspectives are thoroughly explored.

7. Activity Materials

Upon registration, each participant was provided with a printed copy of the program flow and an identification card indicating their designation and affiliated office. The venue was equipped with necessary technical equipment, including microphones, to ensure smooth facilitation of the proceedings. This allowed speakers and participants to effectively engage in discussions, particularly during the question-and-answer segment, where inquiries, comments, and concerns were addressed during the validation process.

For. Agonia commenced the session by presenting the formulated problem tree through a PowerPoint presentation, carefully validating each cause and effect component with the participants. Following this, Ms. Micha Delfinado, Head of the Office of Provincial Planning and Development Coordination (OPPDC) from the Provincial Government of La Union, delivered a presentation on the existing vision of the province. She emphasized the necessity of updating the province's vision to align with the identified problems and challenges. Ms. Delfinado elaborated on the key components of a vision, presented the outputs of the previous workshop, and provided an overview of the current provincial direction. She also presented a short video entitled "Ambisyon of 2024" through a PowerPoint presentation, further highlighting the province's strategic aspirations.

The session concluded with Dr. Lorena Sabino, Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and member of the project staff, facilitating the synthesis and finalization of the proposed vision statement. Dr. Sabino presented the proposed vision to all stakeholders, ensuring that it was validated and reflective of the collective insights and aspirations of the participants. This collaborative process reinforced the alignment of the updated vision with the province's current challenges and goals. The link to the Google Drive containing the lecture materials of the resource persons is provided below:

Google Drive Link: <https://bit.ly/3Yb59JQ>

8. Appendices

Appendix 1. Directory of participants.

Name	Designation
Jard D. Molin	PTV
Ma. Rosette Ronduer Toreno	Special Investigator 11
Neil M. Floresca	Private Secretary
Maria Beuaff De Guzman	CLEMC
Cesar D. Scamo	MSGC - Ta
Darlie Ann Tesmah	AO IV
Mary Grace Azcuwa	CRFV
Nino Ryan Mangillmann	CRFV
Ema M. Quinesolan	Private Secretary BMC
Steven A. Angelo	Member/LLSO/Student
John Isla Rilleva	PTA I
Jerowyn F. Orarco	SSSU OP
Catherine Franco	PPDO LU
Gabriel Mendoza	TAO 11
Bishop Roucoll A. Sollez	PRESIDENT
Ralph Szsax	AAT II
Lyadon Cafellario	
Robert Lelina	AAPA
Able M. Ramos	PLO II
Albert F. Padello	PGLU - Assistant
Jorge M. Rekvante	SOS LU
Gov. Raphaelle Veromea Orteza-David	PGLU - Provincial Governor
Mayer P. Abaya	AA-LU
David M. Rabezas	POI
Basilia P. Liwanag	PO IV
Gio Ann Miranda	SAO:OIC MEU
Jerome Omatu	AO IV
Roshelle A. Mamaril	PO IV
Natividad A. Pelaez	President
Claudia O. Vez	Division IPFT
SFO3 Asprec David	CIOPNS
Michaela Delfinado	PPDO
Louis David Garcia	STAT LU
Taarme C. Obugacion	STAT LU
Ronald P. Carrillos	PPO III
Agina Nickson Q. Acosta	Assistant Provincial Officer
Roland Faminialagao	Draftsman III
Noemi Tadifa	Admin MCR

Carlos Tamayo	DIR
Milagros A. Cazette	
Merven Medrano	ECRR
Brenda O. Garela	
Aureliano F. Rullodo	PDRROR
Shiella Baldonado	Chair person
Jane N. Cereno	SBC
Manuel G. Acosta	
Pablo C. Almoite	EPJ
Ria V. Bansigan	Director IV
Marinette V. Aquino	PO II
Venus V. Cardenas	PO III
Lovely Anne C. Nipolos	ENGINEER I
ESINSP Amante N. Castillo	BFP- DEP. PEM
Felix Q. Balique	PMILLU PWES
Conrado Onbello Jr.	LGU Rosario
Jack E. Apigo	LTFRB RI-PO III
Antonio B. Fontanilla Sr.	Bakaug Magsasaka - Pres
Joceleene Bumatay	Acting CBMS
Sharon A. Viloría	OIC - OPAG
Mariz Daface Mendoza	Sr. EDS
Arnulfo A. Cacho	OPASSESSOR
Basilia P. Liwanag	DENR-POIO
Gio Ann Miranda	SAO-OIC MEU
Ageast Ross Ann Rodriguez	Chief Planning Section - PDEA
Mariel Faye M. Mina	DRAFTSMAN I
Antonio P. Co	PRESIDENT
Raquel B. Orpilla	Senior
Leany A. Domine	LU PCU
PLTCOL Anthony Otinguey	CIPPPU-LUPPO
Roshelle B.	CRFU
Eva Hernandez	CRFY
Grace Corrales	CRFY
Vida Bermudo	CRFY
Sharon A. Viloría	OIC - OPAG
Merlie E. Pacis	AO V
Rozel De Vera	ENGINEER II
May Rose R. Ancher	MUOV/ VOZ VI
Rein Bonifacio	PRESIDENT CREBA
Mariz Daface Mendoza	Sr. EDS
Matthew Joseph Almojuela	CSR
Ranilo P. Ipac	PSWDO
Camille Jane Calarala	SWO II-DSWD

Somaedam M. Vermas	PD/CSRS
Irum Janette L. Mendava	LAOO IV
Angela Condce Peralta	PGLU
Marianito D. Enguerra	Staff
Girlie Dimaculangan	DMMMSU
Reymart P. Rivera	DMMMSU
Julie Anne L. Javier	DMMMSU
Eunice Dea Villapando	DMMMSU
Randy N. Fernandez	DMMMSU
Hedoemer Bondaol	DMMMSU
Lilia C. Sampaga	DMMMSU
Lieslea M. Wagayen	DMMMSU
Angelo Lozano	DMMMSU

Appendix 2. Photo documentation.

