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The Long View

Chapter 1

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It is the aspiration of the Filipinos, particularly those from SOCCSKSARGEN Region to have a long-term vision for the region to become a prosperous, predominantly middle class society where no one is poor. The challenge is how every Filipino can afford to have a “matatag, maginhawa at panatag na buhay by 2040.” The region will have people who are healthy and live long lives, educated, smart and innovative, with a high-trust society where families flourish in culturally diverse, vibrant, and resilient communities.

The Long-Term Vision: AmBisyon Natin 2040

The SOCCSKSARGEN Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2017-2022 supports the PDP 2017-2022 which is anchored on the President’s 0 to 10-point Socioeconomic Agenda and the objectives of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) geared towards the country’s long-term vision on AmBisyon Natin 2040. The following development principles were considered in the formulation of SOCCSKSARGEN RDP: Good Governance; Convergence; Sustainable Development; Gender and Development; Population and Development; Volunteerism; and Resiliency.

The goals of inclusive growth and poverty reduction shall be pursued within the auspices of good governance characterized by well-intentioned people who are participatory, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable, follow the rule of law, and consensus oriented.

The Convergence Initiative shall involve engaging the private sector, civil society, and academe in the monitoring and evaluation of interventions in the pursuit towards

sustainable development for poverty reduction, food security, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Sustainable Development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals, while at the same time, sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend.

Gender and Development (GAD) is the development perspective and process that is participatory and empowering, equitable, sustainable, free from violence, respectful of human rights, supportive of self-determination, and actualization of human potentials.

Population and Development analyzes the patterns of population growth that are linked to challenges faced by the people including poverty reduction and the immediate actions that can be undertaken to deal with growth while ensuring a sustainable future for the region’s populace. Volunteerism shall be the core modality in harnessing citizen engagement to increase public participation in government affairs and promote a consultative process in policy and decision-making.

To prevent and reduce hazard exposure

and vulnerability to disaster and increase preparedness for response and recovery, and strengthen resilience, integrated and inclusive measures shall be implemented. Following the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the four (4) priorities for action include: understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience; and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Regional Challenges

The eradication of poverty remains the greatest challenge that SOCCSKSARGEN Region (XII) needs to address. Although poverty incidence among families in the region has improved from 37.1 percent in 2012 to 30.5 percent in 2015 this is still short of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target to halve poverty incidence among families to 20.4 percent in 2015. With the transition from MDGs to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the region shall continue to support the eradication of extreme poverty.

There is also a need to sustain economic growth to ensure that gains shall be shared by the marginal groups. Economic growth in the region as measured by the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) has been increasing since 2011 and posted the highest growth level of 8.4 percent in 2013. But this started to slow down to 6.4 percent in 2014 and further decelerated to 3.3 percent in 2015. The region’s economy rebounded in 2016 as it recorded an accelerated growth of 5.0 percent. The agriculture sector was hardest hit by the extreme dry weather condition as it posted a negative growth of 9.5 percent in 2016.

High economic growth can be achieved by

the region given the right interventions, the skills of its human resources have to be enhanced. From 2011 to 2015, majority of the employed persons are laborers and unskilled workers (37.4%) followed by farmers, forestry workers and fishermen (18.5%). More than half of the region’s labor force would need education and appropriate skills upgrading to enable them to contribute to regional development.

Regional Development Goal

The overarching goal of the region’s development is to reduce poverty and to share equitably the gains of economic growth with the most disadvantaged sector. The attainment of the region’s goal shall be anchored on the following major strategies:

1. Transforming agriculture into a competitive agribusiness industry;
2. Ensuring that all school-age population are given equal opportunities to basic, higher and technical-vocational education;
3. Improving existing dilapidated hospital buildings, upgrading facilities and equipment, and engaging more health workers;
4. Building resiliency of communities and reducing vulnerabilities of individuals and families;
5. Accelerating build-up of resilient infrastructure facilities integrating DRR-CCA measures;
6. Improving public financial management;
7. Institutionalizing the Restorative Justice Program, enhancing the three-pronged harmonized rehabilitation program and the Volunteer Probation Assistance (VPA) Program;
8. Sustaining and supporting the peace initiatives of the government; and

9. Harmonizing land uses from ridge-to-reef by integrating forest land use plans, watershed management plans, protected areas management plans, and other related forestry plans into the LGUs' CLUP and diversifying livelihood sources of upland farmers through multi-storey agroforestry and partnership with private investors and forest products processors.

Desired Outcome

By 2022, SOCCSKSARGEN Region seeks to create a strong foundation for a more inclusive growth, a high-trust society, and a globally competitive knowledge economy. This vision will be achieved by adopting the key strategies of enhancing the social fabric, reducing inequality, and increasing the potential growth of the economy. These strategies will be sustained by a strong foundation in national security, infrastructure development, building resiliency, and ecological integrity.

Enhancing the social fabric aims at getting back the peoples' trust by making public institutions citizen-centered, efficient and clean. The administration of justice will be swift and fair. Actions will be undertaken to increase awareness of the region's cultural diversity and its value.

Reducing inequality focuses on expanding economic opportunities and increasing access to these opportunities directed at economic groups that lag behind to allow the people to feel the change. For the disadvantaged individuals, it is reducing vulnerability, enhancing social protection, and improving human capital emphasizing health, nutrition, and education.

Increasing potential growth will be made possible by advancing to a knowledge economy. Technology adoption will be

promoted and innovation encouraged. Aggressive efforts will be pursued to ensure that a family will be of a size that can be adequately cared for. This will be complemented by measures to delay childbearing and lengthen the space between births.

Underpinning the foregoing strategies is an enabling and supportive economic environment. Growth will be supported by maintaining macroeconomic stability, putting in place a strategic trade and fiscal policy, and enhancing access to financial services. The tax system will be made more efficient and a regional competition policy will be localized and implemented to ensure a level playing field. The foundations for sustainable development will have a physical environment that is characterized by a balanced and strategic development of infrastructure while ensuring ecological integrity and a clean and healthy environment. It is also about building resiliency against disasters, as well as improving access to basic services and livelihood opportunities. Equally important is ensuring national security against internal and external threats, and restoring public order and safety. There will be earnest efforts to secure lasting peace through the resumption of peace talks and pursuing economic justice.

