

SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

By Jesse M. Robredo

Our culture of excellence lives on.

Last June 2004, no less than the United Nations, through its Department of Public Administration and Finance honored us with the year's UN Public Service Award for Local e-Governance, a first for a Philippine city.

On May 8, 2004, in Fukouka, Japan, Naga City was conferred the 2004 Women-Friendly City Award by the UN-Habitat and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). We were cited as one of the three gender-responsive cities in the Asia-Pacific, the other two being Cebu City and the City of Visakhapatnam of India.

Various national and international magazines have affirmed these awards and citations that somehow embedded Naga's place in the world map as model city for innovations and good governance. This reminds us of *Asiaweek Magazine* citing Naga in 1999 as one of the most improved cities in Asia. Also in 1998 the League of Cities of the Philippines, through its *Interface Magazine* singled out Naga as one of the most livable cities in the country. Then the *Philippine Graphics* in 2003 identified Naga, along with Manila and Cabanatuan, cited Naga as a dynamic city in terms of urban renewal. Only recently, we have been featured by a prestigious women's magazine, *Good Housekeeping* in its January-February 2005 issue as "one of the 5 'proud places' in the country which are doing right by its people and its environment." The other four are: Marikina, Tagaytay, Makati, and Oroquieta City.

We have been noted as **"fighting neck and neck with the more endowed Marikina for nationwide and worldwide recognition as the most livable city in the country."**

Still looking back, we were Cybercity Awardee for Asia-Pacific in 2002, a prestigious award conferred by the United Nations Development Program and The Urban Governance Initiative based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The World Bank and the Procurement Watch cited Naga City as Model City for Government Procurement in 2003.

Last December 17, 2004, we were recipient of two (2) Galing Pook awards in a single year, another first for a Local Government Unit anywhere in the country. The two Galing Pook Awards went to our i-Governance Program and the Reinventing the Naga City School Board Project which are now being replicated by other LGUs in the country and the subject of closer studies by prestigious academies and international finance organizations. We now have nine (9) innovative programs cited by the Galing Pook Foundation, the most number for any LGU in the country. More importantly, the institutionalization of these best practices has been recognized when we were conferred the Award for Continuing Excellence (ACE) Award given by the foundation in 2003.

Also, we garnered the 2004 Best City Website and the 2004 Best LGU Website Awards jointly given by the National Computer Center, the Department of Science and Technology and UNESCO.

For the third time in a row, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry named Naga as one of the Most Business-Friendly Cities in the country.

So far, we have received 8 international and 107 national and regional recognitions and citations in the performance of our diverse mandates. We are probably the most awarded local government unit in the country. The attention it has brought us have resulted to the infusion of more resources coming from international and national entities to Naga City

With a high sense of pride sweeping the city, it is no wonder that a culture of excellence has radiated even among our young talented citizens.

- In November 26, 2004, the Naga Central School I Rondalla romped away as the National Champion in the National Music Competition for Young Artists, rondalla category, held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.
- Moreover, in the same competition, 9-year old Donne Casey Calara of the Universidad de Sta. Isabel won the top prize in Piano category A-1 before an enchanted crowd at the CCP.

Things are looking up

What we are today is the result of what we have successfully achieved through the years. We have been achieving milestone after milestone but challenges are never constant, that is why we continually re-invent ourselves and reach our targets along the way.

Indeed, things are looking up for Naga City. Not even the natural disturbances that hit us at the closing months of the year, nor the uneasy economic situation obtaining throughout the country hindered us from effectively performing our tasks in making a difference in the lives of our people.

- *New Investments*

Due to our painstaking preparations and the sustained building up of business confidence during the previous years, we see a heightened business activity in the city that will kick off within the first two quarters of the year.

More fast food chains will establish their branches in other parts of the city, particularly along the Panganiban growth corridor. Next month, Jollibee will start construction of its third outlet within the city, a drive-through type, along Panganiban Avenue.

CBD I will see be given a new look with the rising of a homegrown mall that will feature an elevated bridge way that will traverse two blocks along Elias Angeles Street. A bigger Manila-based mall has scheduled groundbreaking rites within this year. This long-awaited establishment will be the beginning of our big-ticket investments.

We also see more investments in the Information Technology Sector with the arrival here of investors and technical people who are conducting ocular inspections of potential sites and infrastructures for call centers and IT-oriented industries.

- International partnerships

Because of our triumphs in innovative governance, Naga City has caught the attention of various international organizations, financial institutions and research bodies that eventually entered into joint undertakings and development projects with us.

The World Bank, through PHILSSA and COPE, is implementing a P13.5 million drainage and urban poor resettlement upgrading projects in Barangays. Lerma and Triangulo.

We also entered into an agreement with the US-AEP Integrated Water Resource Alliance (IWRA) which chose Naga as a pilot city for waste water resource management. Only recently, the USAID has approved a grant for a waste water treatment study, in collaboration with the City Environment and Natural Resources Office.

Still, the International Council for Local Environment Initiative (ICLEI) has partnered with the city government in preparing a feasibility study on the proposal to put up bio-gas plant in Naga City.

This month, a full delegation from Thailand will be visiting city, where they will meet with our local officials on the prospects of establishing alternative energy resource in our community.

The Hongkong-based Clean Air Asia Initiative is working closely with the city government in devising doable anti-pollution strategies in the highways, waterways and in workplaces. This is the result of our good record in maintaining pollution-free surroundings as well as in the protection of our environment and resources.

Indeed, early signs point to an interesting and prosperous 2005 ahead. There may even be surprises, meaning new developments beyond our expectations.

In the second week of January 2005 alone, we conducted the biggest medical and surgical mission ever held in the region, in partnership with the visiting 105 Filipino American Surgeons and medical practitioners from the Philippine Medical Association of Chicago and the Philippine Medical Association of Metropolitan Washington, D.C. This would not have been possible without the support of the Bicol Medical Center, Ago Foundation Hospital, the Camarines Sur Medical Association, the Philippine Dental Association of Camarines Sur and a number of professional and civic groups in the city.

The successful medical and surgical mission, with components on ophthalmology and free dental services, the latter conducted entirely by volunteer local dentists, treated a total of 5,418 indigent patients from Metro Naga and other towns of Camarines Sur.

The major and minor surgical and dental operations and procedures and the free consultations conducted and free medicines distributed during the mission easily translate into P9.7 Million if these procedures were conducted in private hospitals by private practitioners.

In one of the interviews I had recently on what the prospects are for the year 2005, I said that 2004 was better than 2003. But more importantly, 2005 will be better than 2004. *“Why are we so optimistic and confident that new developments will take place soon and that we are ready to face them?”*

Without doubt, we fared better in 2004 than in 2003, despite the fact that we continually raise our standards, and that external economic factors and uneasy socio-political landscape affecting the nation were even made worse by the last typhoons that hit us.

On this note, allow me to present to you our report card, for the year just past. And after we have evaluated ourselves and examined our gains as well as shortfalls, we shall ask a few more important questions: Are we ready to graduate to a new level of performance? What more can be desirable? Or what more should be done?

2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Local Economy

The city's economic condition has gotten better every year since we have been given the mandate to serve and lead. New businesses have sprung up. Three more new banks opened in 2004, summing up the total number of banking institutions to 43, although unfortunately one has to close shop in early 2005, not only in Naga but also in its other branches in Bicol which was beyond our control. **Clearly, our 42 banking institutions are far ahead in number than those found in Legazpi City which has 25 banking institutions as of 2004 which more or less affirms our dominance as Bicol's trading and financial center.**

Total Business Tax collection amounted to P49.34 Million in 2004, compared to P47.95 Million in 2003, or an improvement of 2.9%. This reflected a 2.2% increase in the total number of establishments, from 4,254 in 2003 to 4,349 establishments in 2004. Actual business count by the City Treasurer's Office totaled 5,330 establishments in 2004 from 5,312 in 2003.

Comparatively, Legazpi City registered a total of 2,393 business establishments in 2004 where Naga City had 4,349.

Moreover, our Bayantel telephone connection as of January 2005 summed up to **8,599** commercial and residential subscriptions, whereas Legazpi City has only **4,017** line connections. This does not include comparative data for Digitel connections for the two cities due to unavailability of data as of the moment. NTC records in 2000, however, showed that Naga had a total of over 13,000 telephone line connections whereas it was over 11,000 in Legazpi City despite the fact that Legazpi has more number of households than Naga City.

Our RPT Gross for 2004 totaled P64.57 million compared to P53.29 million in 2003, or an impressive increase of 21.2%.

In 2004, the city government expended a total amount of P326.08 million which was P27.38 million lesser than 2003's expenditure of P353.46 million. As will be shown later, we have done more with less. Our very healthy financial condition is a result of the fiscal prudence that we have consistently exercised over the years.

The achievements in our financial operations and tax collection efforts are attributed to the collective and collaborative efforts of the City Treasurer's Office, the City Accountant's Office, the City Assessor's Office and the City Budget Office. The

wholehearted cooperation by the other city hall departments and offices, by their belt-tightening measures, has brought us to where we are now.

Investments

Despite the poor economic situation obtaining nationwide, Naga City continues to report rising indicators in investments.

While the number of new enterprises for 2004 stood at 1,010 compared to 1,013 in 2003, or 0.3% lower, **the amount of investments put in by new enterprises for 2004 was recorded at P391.26 million, 65.9% higher than 2003's P235.85 million.**

Including new building permits and new subdivision permits, **the total investment that Naga City obtained in 2004 was placed at P886.15 million, or 14.2% higher than the P775.84 million that we registered in 2003.**

Naga City Public Market

From various revenue sources, the Naga City Public Market has generated a total of P 19.49 million for 2004. While we continue to subsidize its operations because of low rental rates, it is providing business and livelihood opportunities for around 1,400 stallholders and 1,000 transient vendors.

Prices of prime commodities were kept at bay, due to the determined efforts by the Naga City Price Monitoring Council and other line agencies. Four hundred-forty (440) defective and uncalibrated weighing scales were confiscated and one hundred-fifty (150) of these were condemned.

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Diff. |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Total collection | P 19.49 million | P 21.69 million | (10.2) |
| Illegal vendors apprehended | 380 | 210 | 81.0 |
| Defective scales confiscated | 440 | 110 | 300.0 |

In addition, three district markets complement the operations of the Naga City Public Market providing spaces for more than 120 stallholders. In partnership with a private entrepreneur and the Barangay Council, we opened up the Tinago District Market last year. We plan to do the same in Dayangdang and Concepcion Pequena this year.

Naga City Abattoir

The Naga City Abattoir generated a total gross income of P 7.26 million in 2004 with TLC Beatrice Foods, Inc. contributing P 0.82 million. This is slightly higher than the 2003 gross income of P 7.08 million, details of which are shown by the chart below:

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Diff. |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Slaughtered Animals: | | | |
| Hogs (Heads) | 57,551 | 61,294 | (6.1) |
| Hogs (Kilos) | 3,375,965 | 3,530,848 | (4.4) |
| Large Cattle (Heads) | 2,173 | 2,466 | (11.9) |
| Large Cattle (Kilos) | 242,582 | 258,873 | (6.3) |
| Total Gross Income | P7,255,635.32 | P7,082,257.18 | 2.2 |

We have not fully realized the benefits of the operations of the TLC Beatrice Foods, Inc. in the region. Clearly, there are opportunities for large and small hog raisers given the current utilization of the plant's capacity.

Employment and Livelihood

Guided by the City Government's Program, *Trabaho o Negosyo Para sa Lambang Pamilyang Nagueño*, the Metro Peso continued to chalk up gains in providing social and economic support to the Nagueño family. Specifically, the program provided values development, economic and business skills as well as livelihood loans to indigent families to strengthen their moral fiber and economic status as members of a mainstream society.

Under the city government's ultimate aim of providing employment and livelihood to each family breadwinner in the city, the program targets those families which are either planning or actually engaged in a family business, especially those who have never availed of the livelihood assistance being extended by the city government to its citizens.

Under the city government's "Trabaho o Negosyo sa Pamilyang Nagueño", we were able to provide livelihood assistance to some 1,572 beneficiaries in 2004, compared to 640 in 2003, or an impressive improvement of about 146%.

This amounted to P9.46 million in soft loans in 2004 compared to only P4.60 million in 2003, or an improvement of 106%. Of these amounts, 1,922 beneficiaries made good their payments of the loans, compared to 1,082 beneficiaries who remitted loan payments in 2003, or an increase of 78%.

In fact, total loan collection rose to P4.48 million 2004, from P2.53 million in 2003, or an increase of 85%. The amounts collected are rolled over to cover more beneficiaries for livelihood and loan assistance.

These positive numbers indicate that our beneficiaries have been significantly profiting from their livelihood assistance. But more importantly, this also shows that we have not failed in inculcating in them the value of loan repayment, good business sense and discipline.

Last year, we focused on providing alternative employment and livelihood opportunities to the scavengers at the Balatas Controlled Dumpsite. We have reduced their number by a third. We hope to wean away a substantial majority of them from this hazardous trade by the end of this year.

Moreover, our Metro Peso reported the following accomplishments for 2004:

- 1,697 jobseekers were referred to overseas recruitment agencies
- 200 poor but deserving college students were placed for summer job
- 89 out-of-school youths graduated from Automotive Mechanic Course
- 1,857 graduating students were given career guidance
- 501 were referred for local employment during jobs fair
- 571 were referred for overseas employment during jobs fair

Agriculture

The City Agriculturist's Office consistently implemented various national and local agricultural programs such as extension services, technical assistance and the efficient delivery of services to farmers. Extension workers were assigned in every barangay to provide immediate response needed. These services include pest and disease

control and surveillance, livestock production, crop production, fishery program, home management services, youth development and trainings and seminars.

In consonance with the over-all development thrusts of the city government, agricultural programs and projects were focused in the creation of livelihood assistance to cut flower, rice, corn, and vegetable farmers, especially in the upland barangays. The establishment of demonstration projects with the participation of the farmer-recipients themselves had introduced them to modern farming techniques while support technical assistance and information encouraged them to pursue efficient and effective farming system to ensure high productivity and family income.

Our gains in the agriculture sector are further shown by the following presentation:

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Diff. |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|---------|
| Rice: Area planted (Has.) | 1,490.85 | 1,535.75 | (2.9) |
| Rice: Area Harvested (Has.) | 1,638.25 | 1,497.00 | 9.4 |
| Number of Farmers Involved (Rice) | 1,478 | 1,464 | 1.0 |
| Rice production (in metric tons) | 6,077.52 | 6,027.58 | 0.8 |
| Corn: Area planted (Has.) | 650 | 378.50 | 71.7 |
| Corn: Area Harvested (Has.) | 808 | 378.50 | 113.5 |
| Corn Production (in metric tons) | 3,077.64 | 1,286.90 | 139.2 |
| Vegetable: Area Planted (Has.) | 157.835 | 42 | 275.8 |
| Vegetable: Area Harvested (Has.) | 157.835 | 33 | 378.3 |
| Vegetable Production (in metric tons) | 1,097.72 | 369 | 197.5 |
| Total Farmers Involved (Vegetable) | 385 | 174 | 121.3 |

Note: The 2004 data on area harvested for rice appears bigger than the area actually planted because those areas planted with rice on November and December 2003 were harvested February and March of 2004.

Infrastructure

The city government implemented a total of 129 infra projects worth P 41.4 Million in 2004. Thirty-two (32) drainage projects in various barangays worth were allotted P 14.7 Million. Thirty-one (31) road projects worth of P 8 Million were completed. Thirteen (13) school improvement projects worth P 4..8 million were undertaken. These range from repair of classrooms to fencing and embankment. Furthermore, we conducted emergency repair for almost all the public schools in the city after Typhoons Yoyong and Unding amounting to almost P 3 million.

The chart below shows a more detailed summary of accomplishments:

| Infra Projects - 2004 | Cost (Millions) | % of Total |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Flood Control & Drainage . | P 14.7 | 35.5 |
| Roads | 8.1 | 19.5 |
| Schools | 4.9 | 11.7 |
| Barangay Facilities | | |
| a. Multi-Purpose Centers | 3.6 | 8.7 |
| b. Pathwalks and Pathways. | 2.7 | 6.4 |
| c. District Markets & Others | 0.9 | 2.3 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Balatas MRF | 2.0 | 4.8 |
| Government Buildings/Facilities | 1.8 | 4.4 |
| Naga City Abattoir | 1.3 | 3.1 |
| Urban Improvement Facilities | 1.0 | 2.5 |
| Commuter Terminals | 0.4 | 1.1 |
| TOTAL | P 41.4 | 100.0 |

New building constructions in 2004 reached 501, compared to Legazpi City's 191 based on building permits approved during the same year. For the issuance of various construction permits, the City Engineers Office was able to collect P3.5 Million during the year.

For the record, Naga City has the longest road network in Bicol and has the highest road density among all the provinces and cities in the region. Our continuing investments in infrastructure have made all of this possible. Of the total length of 177.345 kms. --- 153.90 kms. are concrete; 2.5 kms. are concrete with asphalt overlay; 4.18 kms. asphalted, 2.77 kms. are of gravel type and 13.98 kms. unsurfaced.

Land Tenure and Shelter

The city government's Kaantabay sa Kauswagan (Partners in Development) is in the forefront of sustaining partnership with the urban poor. It has three-pronged goals:

(a) Normalization and regularization. By addressing tenurial issues relative to home lots for the urban poor of Naga – through a functional tripartite mechanism for settling disputes – the program seeks to give urban poor communities a sense of permanence and legitimacy over their occupied landholding, either on-site or off-site. **The number of beneficiaries now totals 8,529 who are settled in approximately 101 hectares of land in 22 on-site and 21 off-sites projects.**

(b) Poverty reduction. By helping the urban poor of Naga build capital, mainly by transferring title of their home lots over time, the program seeks to promote socio-economic empowerment of the urban poor which comprise around 25 percent of Naga's population. **The Urban Poor Affairs Office (UPAO), the implementing arm of the city government, has to date expended the amount of P126.73 million for acquisition of lots. This translates to an annual average allocation of P 8.50M for land acquisition alone.**

(c) Urban Upgrading. To complement the tenurial aspect, the program also seeks to facilitate upgrading of blighted communities by providing them with basic infrastructure and facilities, thereby restoring decent habitat, and the ease and comfort of normal living. Sites and communal facilities in Queborac, Pacol, Calauag and Sta. Cruz are now being upgraded in partnership with the World Bank which is appropriating the amount of P 54.5 Million for the purpose. We are awaiting approval from the NEDA Central Office for the project to commence.

Other accomplishments for 2004 include:

- Joint venture with PHILSSA and COPE on the P13.5 M World Bank – funded micro drainage project in Barangays Lerma and Triangulo.
- Distributed lot allocation certificates to 250 lot awardees at Balatas resettlement project

- Distributed housing materials assistance to 5,650 urban poor families worth P 1.13 million.
- Upgraded 11 urban poor sites totaling P 3.51 million in 2004
- Released the amount of P 0.19 million for the purchase of land intended for urban poor housing and resettlement

Social Services

The Sanggawadan Program, an innovation from AusAid's Street Urban and Working Children Program (SUWCP) reached a service count of 1,594 beneficiaries. The program provides one-half kilo of rice assistance to families of street and urban working children for every attendance in school, thus serving as incentive for the regular attendance of these erstwhile street children.

To complement our food assistance program, we have provided livelihood support to the Sanggawadan parents to gear toward self-sufficiency. A total amount of P 0.62 million has been loaned out to 486 beneficiaries. Repayment rates have been very high at around 85%.

In the school year 2003-2004, 147 beneficiaries of the project graduated in the elementary level, 48 of them with honors. Seventeen graduated in the secondary level.

It is interesting to note that of these street and urban working children, Michael Bacsain graduated valedictorian at San Isidro Elementary School while Alvin Agna graduated salutatorian at Tabuco Elementary School.

With 65 EduCare Centers spread in the city's 27 barangays, total pre-schoolers' enrolment increased by 3.3%, from 2,486 in 2003 to 2,568 in 2004. The number of EduCare workers was increased to 85 in 2004 from 75 in 2003. The increase in the number of teachers seems disproportionate to the increase in enrollment. This is because we are not merely concerned with access to but quality of services as well.

A total of 12,288 indigent residents benefited from our AICS (Assistance to Indigents in Crisis Situations) Program during the past year. Assistance varies from food, medical, transportation, burial and emergency shelter assistance. For 2004, we expended the amount of P3.29 Million.

Like in the previous years we have provided funding assistance to programs for differently-abled groups, women in distressed situations and street children.

During the last typhoons Unding and Yoyong, we extended direct assistance to some 16,016 affected families. Around 9,300 of them were given assistance to rebuild their damaged houses. We are very fortunate to have a very supportive private sector in the city in our relief and rehabilitation efforts.

For its efficient and outstanding accomplishments, City Social Welfare and Development Officer Jaime Reblando was awarded Outstanding City Social Welfare and Development Officer for 2004 during the national awarding rites by the Association of Social Welfare and Development Officers of the Philippines in Manila. Your City Mayor was likewise conferred as Outstanding Mayor in the city's pursuance of its social services to the marginalized sectors of our community during the same awarding rites.

Health and Medical Services

For the year 2004, the City Health Office has provided free medical consultation to 20,093 patients, which is the same number of patients that we have attended to in 2003.

Due to our heightened campaign in disease prevention and control, the City Health Office posted significant reduction of incidence of common diseases in the city's barangays.

- **Diarrheal Cases.** From 6,787 cases reported in 2003, this was reduced to almost half, at 3,548 cases in 2004.
- **Chicken Pox.** Only 53 cases were reported in 2004, a significant improvement from 184 cases in 2003.
- **Measles.** From 254 cases reported in 2003, the number was substantially reduced to 30 cases in 2004.
- **Human Rabies Death.** We reported only one (1) death due to rabies in 2004, compared to 7 cases in 2003.
- **Tuberculosis.** There was a slight decrease of TB cases in 2004, 405 pulmonary Tb and 1 extra-pulmonary TB, compared to 411 cases of pulmonary TB and 2 cases of extra-pulmonary TB.

Increased cases, however, were noted:

- from 279 **Bronchial** cases in 2003 to 481 in 2004;
- from 120 **Influenza** cases in 2003 to 350 cases in 2004;
- from 71 **Typhoid** cases in 2003 to 182 cases in 2004; and
- from 254 cases of **Dengue** fever in 2003 to 331 cases in 2004.

The rising incidences of these cases were partly attributed to the series of typhoons that hit Naga and Bicol at the closing quarter of the year. Definitely, a more aggressive campaign is required towards our goal of sustaining a healthier citizenry.

PhilHealth beneficiaries totaled to 15,830. We are doing a cost-benefit review of our PhilHealth enrollment with the end view of maximizing value for our money.

Naga City Hospital

The Naga City Hospital served a total of 54,807 patients in 2004 compared to a total of 58,345 patients served in 2003, or a slight decrease of 6.06%, reflecting a lower number of health cases. This translates to an average of 221.8 patients served by the hospital per day.

The city pharmacy accommodated a total of 88,634 prescriptions for free medicines in 2004, compared to 83,433 in 2004, or an increase of 6.23%. A total of 31,706 lab exams were conducted, compared to only 26,377 conducted in 2003.

A total of 1,384 dog-bite victims were recorded, compared to 1,473 in 2003, or a decrease of 6.04%. In this case, more preventive efforts have to be pursued by the City veterinary Office on responsible pet ownership.

Meanwhile, stewardship for *PhilHealth sa Masa* was transferred to the City Health Office effective November 2004 after it was handled by the Naga City Hospital for a year.

Veterinary Services

Rabies incidence was successfully controlled through sustained vaccination campaign by the City Veterinary Office. Of the estimated 12,000 canine population in the city, 76% was vaccinated in 2003 and another 62% in 2004.

In 2004, a total of 1,038 stray dogs were impounded, compared to 778 in 2003. As a result, incidence of dog bites decreased by 5% compared to the number of incidents recorded in 2003. Because such performance was not as impressive, more intensified efforts need to be pursued to totally rid these stray animals.

Following is a chart provided by the City Veterinarian:

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Variance |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|------------|
| Dogs vaccinated | 7,447 | 9,082 | (18) |
| Dogs impounded | 1,038 | 778 | 33.42 |
| Dog registration | 215 | 361 | (40.44) |
| Dog bites incidence | 1,574 | 1,658 | (5.07) |
| Canine Rabies | 1 | 8 | (87.5) |
| Human Rabies | 1 | 7 | 86 |
| Dogs treated for lab exam | 2 | 11 | (82) |
| Vaccination: Hemosept | 1,224 | 329 | 272.04 |
| Vaccination: Hog Cholera | 733 | 707 | 3.68 |
| Treatment: Swine | 770 | 478 | 61.09 |
| Dispersal Monitoring | 74 | 113 | (34.51) |
| Hot Meat Operation: Apprehended | 67 | 108 | (37.96) |
| FMD Monitoring | 126 | 168 | (25) |
| Trainings conducted on Hog Production | 7 | 5 | 40 |
| No. of participants on hog production | 243 | 159 | 52.83 |

Nutrition

As a Hall of Famer in the Philippine Nutrition Award, Naga City continues to post gains in advancing the health needs of its children and their mothers. Today we have the lowest malnutrition rate among pre-schoolers at 5.6%, where the Bicol regional average stood at 33.62%, one of the highest in the country.

Comparatively, malnutrition rate in Camarines Sur stands at 41.4% and 25.6% in Legazpi City.

The chart below will show our excellent performance in 2004 as against our accomplishments during the previous year:

| PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS ON NUTRITION | 2004 | 2003 | % Diff. |
|---|-------|-------|---------|
| A. FOOD ASSISTANCE | | | |
| 1. Center-Based Feeding | 957 | 912 | 4.93 |
| 2. Home-Based Feeding | 205 | 100 | 105 |
| 3. Provision of Weaning Foods (Nutri-Mix) | 2,973 | 2,350 | 26.52 |
| 4. Nutri-Ataman | 79 | 124 | (36.29) |
| 5. Nutri-Nanay | 174 | 164 | 6.09 |
| 6. Nutrition Care for the Elderly | 286 | 286 | 0 |
| B. NUTRITION EDUCATION | | | |
| 1. Mother's Class | 1,276 | 592 | 115.55 |
| 2. One-on-One Counseling | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--------|--------|---------|
| a. Mothers of Malnourished | 905 | 2,347 | (61.44) |
| b. Pregnant | 1,891 | 1,356 | 39.45 |
| c. Lactating | 1,662 | 1,1145 | 45.15 |
| 3. Plotting of Growth Monitoring Charts | 79 | 124 | (36.29) |
| C. MICRONUTRIENT SUPPLEMENTATION AND FOOD FORTIFICATION | | | |
| 1. Iodized Salt Utilization | 13,102 | 12,436 | 5.36 |
| 2. Provision of Multi-Vitamins and Iron | 79 | 14 | 464.28 |
| 3. Provision of Multi-Vitamins and Iron (for malnourished pregnant mothers) | 174 | 164 | 6.09 |

Moreover, Naga City received the following awards in the field of nutrition for 2004:

- The National Nutrition Council Region V awarded a CERTIFICATE OF MERIT to NAGA CITY for the continuous NUTRITION HONOR AWARD maintenance and sustainability on the implementation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) in the 27 barangays of Naga City from C/Y 1998 to C/Y 2003 with the full support extended by the City Nutrition Committee through the chairmanship of Mayor Jesse M. Robredo. Given on November 23, 2004 at the People`s Hall, Albay Capitol.
- Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS) of Abella, Ms. Fely Gallenito, was awarded 2nd PLACE – OUTSTANDING BARANGAY NUTRITION SCHOLAR (Regional Level)
- SPECIAL AWARD ON NUTRITION were also given to three barangays of Naga City: Tinago, Concepcion Pequeña and Concepcion Grande

Population & Development

In consonance with the national policy of promoting responsible population and family planning programs, the city has been aggressively pursuing its information dissemination campaigns from the barangay to the household levels.

The city last year organized the Naga City Natural Family Planning Council with members from the cross-section of the community, including representatives from the religious sector and the academe. Its unifying campaign is to “Go Natural” which the council accordingly adopted as its theme. It aims to address issues on the growing problem on population and women’s reproductive health with natural family planning method as the safest and best method in family planning.

The chart below summarizes our achievements in population planning efforts during the past year vis-à-vis the accomplishments recorded in 2003:

| PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS ON POPULATION AND FAMILY PLANNING | 2004 | 2003 | % Variance |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| A. RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD AND FAMILY PLANNING | | | |
| 1. Family Planning Service Delivery | | | |
| a. Current Users | 14,359 | 14,761 | (2.72) |
| b. Contraceptive Prevalence Rate | 57.75% | 61.46% | (6.04) |
| 2. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) | | | |
| a. Mother’s Class | 1,294 | 1,257 | 2.94 |

| | | | |
|---|-------|-------|---------|
| b. One-on-One Counseling | 4,857 | 4,403 | 10.31 |
| B. ADOLESCENT HEALTH AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM | | | |
| 1. Lectures on Adolescent Health and Family Planning Technology | 5 | 7 | (28.57) |
| 2. Conduct of “Hearts and Minds” Seminars to selected barangays | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| C. GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT | | | |
| 1. Maintenance of Family Welfare Club (FWC) | 26 | 26 | 0 |
| 2. Referrals of FWC members to Metro PESO for Loan Assistance | 15 | 14 | 7.14 |
| D. POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT INTEGRATION | | | |
| 1. Maintenance of Barangay Service Point Officers (BSPOs) | 48 | 48 | 0 |

Education

Consonant with the city government’s thrust of making education accessible to all city residents while sustaining our high standard of quality of education, two (2) more new elementary schools were opened last year: Teodora Moscoso Elementary School and San Rafael Elementary School. The City Government caused the transfer of ownership to the Department of Education school sites for the two schools and another site for the Leon Mercado High School in Pacol.

We hired 14 new teachers for elementary and high school bringing now the total of locally paid teachers at 60. While we only hired secondary teachers before, we have taken in elementary school teachers as well to reduce class sizes.

Our Reinventing the School Board Program was chosen as one of the Top Ten Local Government Programs under the 2004 Gawad Galing Pook Awards. Also during the year, Naga City was the regional winner in the National Literacy Awards but only place fifth in the national contest.

More achievements were recorded during the year:

- Provided Wireless Internet access to all high schools in the city, including high schools in Pacol, Cararayan, Carolina and San Isidro – perhaps the only one of its kind in the Philippines where public schools in the remote area have their own wireless internet connection.
- Completed the distribution of compiled workbooks for English, Science and Math in all elementary schools, from Grades 1 to 6.
- Implemented the standard classroom size of 45 students per classroom (*Table below*):

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE
DepEd - Division of City School, Naga City

| School | GRADE I | | Average Class Size |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|
| | No. of Classes | Enrolment | |
| DIVISION AVERAGE CLASS SIZE | | | 42.3 |

| | | | |
|------------------|----|------|------|
| NORTH | 48 | 2062 | 43.0 |
| NCS I | 11 | 493 | 44.8 |
| NCS II | 10 | 419 | 41.9 |
| Carolina ES | 4 | 160 | 40.0 |
| Calauag ES | 6 | 257 | 42.8 |
| Pacol ES | 3 | 121 | 40.3 |
| D. Abcede ES | 4 | 193 | 48.3 |
| R.V.Maramba ES | 4 | 178 | 44.5 |
| Panicuason ES | 2 | 94 | 47.0 |
| Grandview ES | 3 | 126 | 42.0 |
| Morada-Ramos ES | 1 | 21 | 21.0 |
| SOUTH | 38 | 1631 | 42.9 |
| Tinago CS | 4 | 166 | 41.5 |
| J.B.Meliton ES | 9 | 414 | 46.0 |
| D.M.Abella ES | 7 | 304 | 43.4 |
| Con. Grande ES | 6 | 269 | 44.8 |
| Mac Mariano ES | 5 | 198 | 39.6 |
| San Isidro ES | 3 | 118 | 39.3 |
| Del Rosario ES | 2 | 73 | 36.5 |
| Villa Corazon ES | 1 | 42 | 42.0 |
| Villa Grande ES | 1 | 47 | 47.0 |
| WEST | 28 | 1148 | 41.0 |
| Tabuco CS | 7 | 297 | 42.4 |
| Sabang ES | 8 | 330 | 41.3 |
| Sta. Cruz ES | 5 | 218 | 43.6 |
| Mabolo ES | 4 | 159 | 39.8 |
| J. Rizal ES | 2 | 73 | 36.5 |
| Triangulo ES | 2 | 71 | 35.5 |

Note: Data as of July 2004

- Conducted computer training session for elementary computer teachers
- 60% of all Grade 6 students passed the computer literacy test, considered the highest and widest coverage among public school students in Bicol
- Appropriated P3.3M for school Empowerment Fund, and another P5.07M for education infrastructure
- Signed an agreement with the “Sa Aklat Sisikat (SAS) Foundation to improve reading comprehension for Grade 4 students. Naga Central School won first place in the nationwide SAS reading contest.
- Signed an agreement with the ABS-CBN Foundation for the e-TV works project which utilizes multi-media approach in improving students’ learning proficiencies
- Sent a 6-man study tour to the US, all expenses paid for by Ford Foundation

Recent achievement tests among city students affirmed the significant improvements we have chalked up in the field of public education:

- 12.5% increase in the results of the National Achievement Test in 3 core subjects in the Elementary Level.
- 14.2% increase in the results of the National Achievement Test for High School students.
- For SY 2003-2004, Naga City ranked first in the High School Readiness Test throughout Bicol with an average percentage point of 60.77% against the Bicol regional average of 42.86%. Camarines Sur, unfortunately, was ranked 11th out of the 13 school divisions in Bicol.

- We also registered the highest percentage of successful examinees among the 13 school divisions in Bicol for the High School Readiness Test during SY 2003-2004.

Naga City Public Library

Meanwhile, the newly-opened Naga City Public Library (NCPL) at the city hall compound drew in a record readership of 200 to 300 readers per day during the peak seasons of the school calendar, with students as major clients. The new address has somewhat affected the average number of walk-in readers, thereby requiring more dissemination among the public of the library's new location.

Peak seasons were August through the first half of October in the first semester and February and March in the second semester.

As observed, the Reference Section (especially Filipiniana and Bicoliana sections) had the highest number of readers. Since its transfer to a new and imposing public library building in the City Hall compound, library hours were rescheduled.

During the regular semester/period, NCPL opened its doors to the public 6 days a week from 10 AM to 6PM without noon break, including Saturday services. Other library users were scholars of graduate studies, researchers of private and public institutions and professionals.

Moreover, we have secured a modern bookmobile that will encourage more readership among the residents without leaving their barangays as this mobile library will go to their barangays on a periodic basis.

To aid readers' research, the NCPL installed easy finding guides/aids to book collections such as color coding of books, Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and indexing of periodicals articles.

The following chart sums up accomplishments for 2004:

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Variance |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Number of readers | 10,848 | 39,783 | (72) |
| Number of internet users | 689 | 527 | 30.74 |
| Books purchased | 1,056 | 118 | 794.91 |
| Books allocated by National Library | 755 | 755 | 0 |
| Books donated by private individuals/groups | 732 | 41 | 1,685 |
| Total number of books | 6,582 | 4,540 | 44.97 |
| Number of books circulated | 12,757 | 18,262 | (30.14) |

Bicol Science and Technology Centrum

The Bicol Science and Technology Centrum (BSTC) reported the following accomplishments:

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Diff. |
|--|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| Number of visitors | 50,360 | 49,324 | 2.10 |
| Total income | P 230,895.00 | 205,630.00 | 12.29 |
| • Participation Fees | P 184,395.00 | 176,130.00 | 4.69 |
| • Rental fees from AVR | P 46,500.00 | 29,500.00 | 57.63 |
| Participants in seminars, meetings held at AVR | 7,016 | 920 | 662.61 |

The BSCTC has also undertaken the following tasks:

- Rehabilitated and upgraded the of BSTC lobbies, main gallery and other science galleries and facilities
- Installed three wall murals (size, 11' x 14') at the main gallery. Mounting up of world map, space shuttle orbit and clouds wall murals enhanced appearance and attractiveness of the ambiance at main gallery and enlivens visitors mood.
- Establishment of Astronomy gallery with EX3 Classroom-type Mobile Planetarium System. The Gallery showcases the wonders of the universe through planetarium viewing augmented by actual stargazing activities using the MEADE-Cassegrain computerized telescope. Various other exhibits and gadgets are also on display such as posters and wall murals, solar system models, celestial globes, Earth, Moon, Venus, Mars globes and the attractive Blue Planet model, astronomy videos and cds, spacecraft models, including the famous International Space Station model.
- Creation of Gallery on Lights, Shapes and Colors, a gallery whose main concentration is the presentation of exhibits on lights, colors, shapes and optical illusion.
- Acquired IBM "Try Science" program, a gateway to experience the excitement of contemporary science and technology through on and offline interactivity with various science centers and would link BSTC to over 400 science and technology centers worldwide. It is a partnership between IBM Corporation, the New York Hall of Science (NYHOS), the Association of Science Centers (ASTC) and science centers worldwide.
- In cooperation with the Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges (formerly BCAT) College of Engineering, the Bicol Science Centrum installed a Wireless Multi-Switching System, a wireless remote switching system applied to a wireless microphone to provide efficient means of relaying with tourists during exhibit sessions. It also enhanced audibility range and greatly contributed to easy comprehension and conveyance of instructions to Centrum visitors and optimum learning experience significant to the gainful transfer of S&T Education.

Environmental Management

For three consecutive years now, Naga City has been cited by the DENR and DILG as the cleanest and greenest city in Bicol. Our tree-lined streets and highways may have been partly ravaged by the recent typhoon, but our greening and beautification efforts have been revived and we will continue with plans for more beautification and upgrading of our parks and public landmarks.

Also during the year, the city's air quality has been monitored by DENR as fair and nearly good, especially during the 2nd and 4th quarters, an impressive feat for a growing urban center like Naga despite its having the biggest number and largest concentration of motor vehicles throughout Bicol.

Last February 20, 2004, the ENRO inaugurated the Citywide Materials Recovery Facility which now processes into recyclable use 40 tons of garbage daily. Fifty (50) percent of the collected waste is converted into organic fertilizers, 35 percent segregated as recyclable materials and 15 percent as residue which is set aside by the operator for future use.

The MRF operator employs 48 personnel --- 4 compose the technical staff while 44 are segregators of biodegradable and recyclable materials.

More accomplishments by the City Environment and Natural Resources Office are shown by the table below:

| | 2004 | 2003 | % Variance |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Clean Air Program: Vehicles Screened | 266 | 60 | 343 |
| Passed | 32% | 69 % | (54) |
| Failed | 68% | 31 % | 120.71 |
| Seedlings distributed for tree planting | 3,215 | 2,500 | 28.6 |
| Garbage Trucks: Trips per day | 11 | 9 | 22.22 |
| Garbage generated per day (Tons) | 62 | 60.43 | 2.60 |

Meanwhile, the Isarog Garden Society Foundation, Inc. our partner in the operation and maintenance of the Naga City Ecology Park has reported the immediate rehabilitation of the park following the devastation wrought by Typhoon Unding and other succeeding weather disturbances at the end of the year. Its President, Ms. Susan Pural said the Park continues to be the favorite venue of students and tourists. For the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2004 alone, the Foundation generated a total amount of P 0.38 million out of gate receipts, members' contributions, donations and subsidy by the city government, which amount they expended for the uplift and improvement of the park as an interesting evolving landmark in the city.

Peace and Order

Improvements in the maintenance of peace and order have been noted since the installation of a new police chief in the person of Chief of Police Ramon S. Ranara.

From a total crime volume of 239 in 2003, a 13.81% decrease was noted, with 206 reported in 2004, or an average of 11 monthly crime rate, compared to 13.8 cases in 2003. Of this number, 137 were solved, compared to 209 in 2003, or an improvement of 34.50%.

In 2004, index crimes such as theft, robbery, homicide and physical injuries totaled to only 14 cases, whereas there were 128 cases in 2003, or a notable variance of approximately 89%.

In our campaign against illegal drugs, the anti-drug enforcement unit has conducted 16 operations and apprehended 16 suspected drug users and pushers, 15 of whom were charged in court. The amount of shabu confiscated totaled 11.16 grams compared to 576.79 grams in 2003.

In the enforcement of traffic rules, 1,049 persons without crash helmet were apprehended compared to only 297 in 2003.

In the fire department, losses and damages to property were recorded at P1.2 million in 2004, compared to P9.8 Million in 2003, or a difference of 87.7%. This could be the result of more business establishments securing fire safety inspection certificates in 2004, compared to the previous year (2,260 in 2004 vs. 1,250 in 2003).

Enhancing Capacity

Consistent with our direction to improve our effectiveness, we have tasked our Electronic Data Processing Unit (EDP) to look at new IT applications in our operations. They reported the following accomplishments:

Governance/Business Enhancement

- Installed newly-upgraded Business License System
- Installed and networked Business Licenses' "One-Stop Shop"

- Developed Web-based Location Clearance Issued for Building Construction
- Installed extended wireless internet/Network connection from city hall network
- Produced a total of 5,747 digital maps for Geographic Information System (GIS)
- Designed a Household Profiling System
- Installed Wireless Internet/Network Accessibility to other remote offices and Local Area Network (LAN) backbone internet connection

Peace and Order

- A Police Blotter System is on the development stage

ICT Education

- Installed “Internet Learning Kiosk” at NCPL and Museum Building, January
- Installed and networked BSTC’s “IBM Kid Smart Learning Center” and the try “Try Science Program” (January)
- Installed Live Streaming Video and Audio of Peñafrancia Festival 2004 and RMN Live Broadcast at *naga.gov.ph*

Tourism, Arts and Culture

In February 2004, Naga City hosted the first-ever International Rondalla festival which drew some 320 rondalla artists from 6 countries including 12 ensembles from various cities and provinces of the country with our very own Naga Central School I Rondalla as one of the few selected featured rondalla ensembles. The much-publicized festival brought honor not only to our city but to the whole country, as well.

It raised consciousness about the historical rootedness of rondalla to Filipino and Bicolano culture and that Naga City has the administrative and technical capability to hold international events and receive visitors with our renowned warmth and hospitality. There was no single untoward incident recorded during the weeklong festival which affirmed our reputation as a most peaceful city.

All the hotel rooms in the city were booked for the billeting of these artists and participants for 7 days who consumed local foods that brought in large sales receipts for caterers and restaurant owners.

- Despite the so-called economic crunch, the last Peñafrancia Fiesta drew in record crowds, one again flooding our city with devotees from all over. Incomes from visiting tourists and guests were so enormous they are not easy to quantify. Suffice it to say that hotels were again all fully-booked and fast food chains and malls were bursting with customers, coming from various places in the country.
- Promotion of Bicol Arts and Culture were encouraged and is expected to even more flourish with heightened initiatives from the private sector and the academe.
- Last year, we began with the production of the “Proud Ako MTV” which is being viewed by Bicolanos and non-Bicolanos from all over the globe through the Internet. Local radio stations, especially those in the FM band supported the project through free plugging of the song. Only last month, the ‘Proud Ako’ MTV was played in its entirety at the posh Main Theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines where I was invited as one of the resource speakers during the Karangalan Festival.

- I am glad to tell you that plans are underway to hold this year's *Gayon Bicol* Festival here in Naga City during the Peñafrancia fiesta. The festival used to be held in Intramuros, Manila. This year the Department of Tourism is planning to hold it right in our city that will feature the various socio-economic and trade and cultural showcases of the different provinces and cities in Bicol.
- Initial negotiations are also underway for Naga City to host the next International Chorale Festival in 2006, in cooperation with the Cultural Center of the Philippines.
- There are also on-going negotiations for Naga City to host sometime late this year the Asian Midget Basketball Tournament this year.

In celebration of the National Arts Month this February, the Naga City Government, in cooperation with the Developmental Institute for Bicolano Artists (DIBA) chaired by Mrs. Amelita Zaens and the Naga City Council for Culture and the Arts chaired by Kagawad Nene de Asis will be conducting the first-ever Oratorical Contest in Bicol, to be held February 21 at the USI auditorium. With its theme, "*An Bicolanong Nagueño*" contestants from 6 secondary schools and six tertiary colleges/universities.

Legislation

In cadence with the development goals of the city government, the Sangguniang Panglungsod enacted a total of 52 Ordinances and adopted 209 Resolutions for 2004.

Of the areas covered, 108 Resolutions and 32 Ordinances were focused on Government, New Politics and People Empowerment. Twenty (20) Resolutions and 3 Ordinances were also crafted for Labor, Livelihood and Employment concerns.

The Sanggunian also performed satisfactorily in addressing other various concerns such as: Family and Children; Youth, Education and Sports; Culture and Heritage, Public Health; Public Safety; Agriculture, Business, Trade and Industry; Infrastructure; Tourism; and Consumers' Rights and Public Utilities.

During the year, our city councilors also labored for the codification of all existing revenue ordinances. For the first time, they also initiated the setting of standard time in Naga City based on the Greenwich Meant Time (GMT) to keep us at pace with the demands of global communications and transactions.

The Sanggunian has always been in the frontline to articulate our people's voice on national issues that affect every Nagueño, such as the oil crisis, degradation of the environment, and the threatening cutback in the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) shares of local government units, among others.

As a marketplace of ideas and opinions, the Sangguniang Panglungsod has kept its independence while maintaining productive collaboration with the executive department and to a larger extent with various barangay councils, people's organizations, and the citizenry as a whole.

City-Sharing and Linkages

Owing to our excellent governance initiatives and best practices, various local government units from here and abroad have looked upon Naga as a model city for good governance whose best practices they wanted to replicate in their own localities.

Last February 7, municipal officials, led by their mayor, from Solano, Nueva Vizcaya traveled for more than 17 hours to get to Naga City and hear from us how we built various projects without spending a single centavo from the government. On February 20-22, Mayor Allen Singson and other top officials from Candon, Ilocos Sur will be briefly staying in Naga to study our experiences on good governance and innovative approaches in the hope of speeding up their business permit renewal system and other development projects.

Particularly, these officials from other LGUs want to learn from our triumphs in participatory governance, service delivery, fiscal management and administrative effectiveness that inspired citizen confidence and trust in government. Wanting to learn from us, local government officials and their representatives either come to us or invite us in various fora and conferences where Naga City is expected to present its strengths for replication and adaptation by their respective local government units.

Last September 24, 2004, Mr. Reuel Oliver and I were in Barcelona, Spain for the World Urban Forum where we presented a paper on the Naga City framework in localizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), a global program called for by the United Nations to combat poverty and oppression of the marginalized sectors of the community. In that forum, aside from my role as one of the resource speakers, a Naga City booth was set up in the storied Spanish City where we drew a worldwide audience.

We normally we receive local chief executives, other officials and department heads from various LGUs coming from different cities and municipalities from the country and other Asian cities. To name a few, these LGUs were Candelaria, Quezon; Angeles City; Bataan; Sorsogon City; Libon, Albay; Lucena City; Palawan; Samar; Catanduanes; Masbate, and Cavite. We also had provided lectures and governance orientations to delegations from Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Bangladesh, East Timor, Malaysia, and Cambodia.

Last August 23 to September 3, 2004, we hosted the Regional Training Course on Urban Flood Mitigation at the Villa Caceres Hotel with 28 participants and 7 resource speakers from the Netherlands, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Philippines.

This 12-day training course which was sponsored by the Thailand-based Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program and the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation of the Netherlands tackled various issues and concerns regarding flood mitigation, earth system, geo-engineering and water management.

Following is a summary of other workshops and conferences where we had been invited as resource speaker with Naga's governance model as the focus of discussion:

- Roundtable Forum on e-Local Governance sponsored by UNESCO Philippines and the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, which led to the selection of Naga as having the best e-Local Governance Website (City Category)
- e-Governance Orientation Workshop for Luzon local chief executives sponsored by the Asia Foundation last October 14-15, Astoria Plaza, Pasig City.
- ICT4D South Luzon Conference sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology Regional office No. 4 and SEAMEO at the University of the Philippines Los Baños last November 24, 2004
- eGovernance Orientation Workshop for Mindanao local chief executives sponsored by the Asia Foundation held last November 15-16, 2004 at the Pearl Farm Resort, Island Garden City of Samal

DIRECTIONS FOR 2005 AND BEYOND

With this report, we can see progressive improvements recorded in various areas of concern due principally to our time-tested core philosophies of growth with equity, doing more with less, fiscal prudence, and a deep sense of civic pride. All together, these guiding principles contributed – with good governance as the animating tool – to the optimization of benefits and services to the broader sectors of our constituency.

After examining our strengths and hitting our targets, and underscoring some weaknesses, it is now time to move on to a new chapter which, as I have told you, will be more interesting given the past achievements and practical preparations that we have accomplished.

Along this line, we shall be re-dedicating ourselves to continue to work for the greater interest of the broader sectors of our community without prejudice to nurturing and continually re-inventing our good practices.

- In this period of rapid economic demands and technological challenges, we shall continue to create an environment in which existing businesses shall be encouraged to continue to grow while new businesses will be set up to prosper and adapt to local conditions.
- We shall create a positive climate for entrepreneurial independence and initiative; small business must become easier to set up and better able to survive
- With continuing modernization confronting us, the important task is to invest in human capital and make individuals and businesses fit for the knowledge-based economy of the future
- In partnership with the various learning institutions, public and private, we shall require a competent and well-trained workforce eager and ready to take new responsibilities
- We shall intensify our program to provide at least one job for each member of the family in the city, maintain minimum social standards, help families cope with change and open up fresh opportunities for those who are unable to keep pace
- We shall continue to reconcile environmental responsibility towards the present and future generations
- The concepts of efficiency and high performance must always be the bottom-line for public expenditures vis-à-vis service delivery to achieve better value for taxpayers' money
- Crime is a vital community issue. We should always consider safety on the street as a civil right of every resident. A policy to make our city worth living as we have experienced fosters community spirit, invites more investors and makes residential areas safer
- Poverty remains a central concern, especially among families and children. We shall strengthen our specific measures for those who are most threatened by marginalization and social exclusion
- We shall raise the standard of education in all public schools even more and provide them the basic tools conducive to learning that are normally found in private schools
- We shall encourage the flourishing of artists, athletes, and young achievers who value creativity in all spheres of life; they, the artists, shall act as the

guardians and articulators of our culture and heritage while the athletes will serve as models for healthful pursuits and bring civic pride and honor to our city

- In all these endeavors, we shall observe real partnership, with each one having the opportunity of sharing the rewards of success of others.

In more specific terms, these are the immediate targets we shall do this year:

Investments/Infrastructure

- We shall establish a Naga City Economic Development Office that will formulate plans and programs to optimize the economic and investment potentials of the city and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders and the business community.
- We shall continue to redevelop CBD I and give our local entrepreneurs a better chance to compete given the forthcoming investments in CBD II and the Almeda Estate. In this regard, I am requesting the Sangguniang Panglungsod to pass an ordinance that will regulate and remove dangling wires and cables of public and private power and communication utilities that have become eyesores, especially at the central business districts and other busy thoroughfares.
- We shall enter into joint ventures with private investors and leverage on the assets of the city. We will offer on a BOT scheme the construction of Convention Center on the donated city property in the Almeda Estate. In this connection, I am requesting the Sangguniang Panglungsod to pass an ordinance that will establish and regulate zoning and land use for properties located along Almeda Highway.
- We shall explore the possibility of transferring the PNR sub-station to another place within the city, as a strategy to resolve the land tenure problems of Triangulo, Tabuco and Lerma residents and to further enhance the CBD II area as an investment area.
- We shall invite new players at CBD II; at this point, property owners are negotiating with two possible big investments at CBD II. We will complete Phase 3 of the Metro Naga Coliseum and enter into joint venture with property owner to develop the area fronting the coliseum
- We shall invest in improving the Naga City Public Market (NCPM). But first, we need to strengthen its financial viability by: reinvesting incremental revenues of our proposed rate increase; rationalize rate structure and introduce system of cross-subsidies where non-essentials and prime locations subsidizing essentials and non-prime locations. In this regard, I am requesting the Sangguniang Panglungsod to expedite the assessment of the study conducted by the Naga City People's Council on improving the operations of the NCPM.
- We shall move towards the upland growth zone where there is growing interest to put up agri-leisure subdivisions and retirement homes. We shall affirm our strategy to significantly invest in infrastructure in these areas as we also acknowledge and invite the support of various utility firms, such as MNWD and telecom companies to expand their coverage and services in these areas. A developer is now preparing a blueprint on the first agri-leisure subdivision in San Isidro. We shall complete the final segment of the Carolina-San Isidro Road to complete the San Felipe-Pacol-Carolina-San Isidro-Cararayan-Balatas circumferential road before the end of the year.
- Because our telecom infrastructures are at par with the best in the country, we shall continue to focus on ICT and work with more possible locators and pursue more investments in this area considering the availability of manpower pool from our quality schools on IT and digital animation. We have started

discussions with Director Lilia de Lima of PEZA to put up a PEZA building in Naga.

- We are allocating a total of P25.2 Million for various construction of roads, drainage systems, pathways, road widening, and riverside beautification.
- For other special projects, we need to raise the amount of P144.0 million for 2005. This will cover Phase 3 of the Metro Naga Coliseum, a new commercial/institutional building along J. Miranda Avenue, completion of the HSBC Rediscovery Center and a Museo Pambata inside the Naga City Library and a Fruit Vendor Pavillion at the Naga City Public Market, among others.

Livelihood and Employment

- Continuing from where we left off before the series of typhoons last year, we shall complete our house-to-house survey to firm up our data base on the residents' employment and unemployment status in connection with our *Trabaho o Negosyo Para sa Lambang Pamilyang Nagueño* Program.
- We will use our franchising authority for Public Utilities in support of the program
- We shall continue to expand our micro-lending assistance to the poor sectors of our community.
- We shall create more jobs for local artisans and skilled workers by strictly enforcing the mandated law on local hires for all construction projects in the city
- We shall provide more venues for trading and vending. We opened the Tinago district market last year and we will soon open new district markets in Dayangdang and Concepcion Pequeña.
- We shall improve access to employment opportunities information and work with telecom companies to make it available through text messaging
- We shall continue to hold quarterly job fairs and enhance role of Metro PESO as a recruitment office.
- In partnership with the Naga Hog Raisers Association, we shall take advantage of the need for more demands of hogs by the TLC Meat Processing Plant.
- In partnership with the Rotary Club of Naga, we shall improve the facilities being used in the Automotive Mechanical Course under the Naga City Manpower Skills Development Program designed to benefit the out-of-school youth.

Education

- We shall pursue the Reinventing the School Board project at the school level in order to enhance parent participation, community involvement and localized school planning.
- We shall devise 3-year development plans for all public schools in the city with targeted outcomes in academic achievement, availability of facilities and access to learning tools and equipment.
- We shall improve accountability of school principals to stakeholders.
- We shall seek to review all lesson plans and workbooks for revision next school year.
- For School Year 2005-2006, additional incentives to teachers will now depend on academic achievement of the school children.
- We shall open this coming school year a Caregiver school even as we noted that the School of Midwifery at the CSNHS campus is doing well given its limitations

- We shall seek more donors for tertiary scholarships and assess the feasibility of using vouchers for private high schools.
- We shall further expand our existing Day Care program by not only adding new centers but also expanding old centers as well.
- We will expand 'Sanggawadan' by doing selective feeding in schools where they are needed and involve the school principals in beneficiary selection.
- We will put up a Museo Pambata at the Naga City Library and a HSBC Rediscovery Center.

Shelter and Housing

- Effective this year, we shall start construction of the medium rise condominium housing at Villa Grande Homes with the National Housing Authority.
- We shall closely work with the *Gawad Kalinga* for new housing and shelter sites aside from Sabang, Triangulo and Del Rosario. We will be offering the acquired sites in Queborac, Bagumbayan Sur and Balatas for this purpose.
- We shall invest in facility upgrading while waiting for USCIP funding.
- We shall work out new arrangements for on-site settlers in Lerma and Triangulo considering the current difficulties in the area.
- By the middle of this year, we shall start relocation in Queborac and site development in Balatas as we also acquire new sites in Cararayan and Concepcion Pequeña.
- We shall pursue negotiations for settlement sites at San Antonio estate, Li Seng Giap and other properties for resettlement sites.
- We shall intensify collections from resettlement beneficiaries in order to significantly cover more grounds.

Health and Nutrition

- We shall work to finally eradicate the remaining 0.2% cases of severe malnutrition even as we have already attained the lowest rate of malnutrition incidence in the whole of Bicol.
- While we have achieved significant reduction and control of rabies infection in 2004 compared to our experience in 2003, we shall continue to intensify our rabies control campaign.
- There will be also intensified efforts against cases of dengue, respiratory diseases, diarrhea, measles, typhoid fever and other similar diseases
- We shall pursue our nutrition and information education program to further improve the nutritional status of family members, especially the mothers of malnourished children and extend livelihood assistance to families with malnourished children.
- We shall focus on strengthening our efforts in the delivery of adolescent health and youth development program services.
- We shall re-energize the health workers in reaching and providing quality care to women and couples with unmet needs for family planning and maternal health services.
- We shall work for the further upgrading of the Naga City Hospital through expansion of Out-Patient Services and category upgrading to a Secondary Hospital level with Operating Room Services.
- We shall pass new ordinance on our Socialized Medical Care Program (SOMECAP) that will reflect the benefits provided for by PhilHealth.

Environment

- We shall pursue with more vigor our Clean River Project, IWRA Project and the SMC “Salvar Salog” partnership that will serve as a pilot project in Bicol.
- We shall acquire new equipment for the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Balatas to expand its capacity.
- We shall also initiate a study on the feasibility of privatizing part of the MRF operations and facilities.

Governance

- Consistent with our policy of optimum service delivery, we shall introduce an amendment in the i-Governance Ordinance providing for administrative sanctions to employees and officers concerned for non-compliance of performance pledges
- We shall also introduce an amendment where we shall provide a privilege card system for NGOs under the People Empowerment Program.
- We shall have a more simplified, clearer, and time bound procedures for the issuance of PALCs and development permits, and for the issuance of franchises.
- We shall seriously work for the records reconciliation with GSIS as regards premium payments and loan repayments for the peace of mind of City Hall employees who are our workforce for development.

CONCLUSION

Some of us may not realize it, but our success story through the years, has always been anchored on the five (5) principles that we have been pursuing since the first time that we made a vow with our people. These principles and the faithful observance of them have actually helped us shape the future of Naga as a livable urban community.

These five principles are: Social Justice; Ecological Sustainability; Political Participation; Economic Productivity, and; Cultural Vibrancy.

Social Justice. This is evident in how we carry out our pro-poor programs, such as the Kaantabay sa Kauswagan and our campaigns for the protection of the rights of women, children, and the so-called disadvantaged sector. The less-privileged are given access to employment and livelihood opportunities through the Metro Peso and other concerned City Hall-based offices such as the City Social Development Center and the Urban Poor Affairs Office.

Ecological Sustainability. Our pro-environment programs have the source of studies by various groups. Despite our growing economy, Naga still enjoys its quaint parochial ambience with a generally clean air, clean river and green surroundings. We built the first and only Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Bicol which encourages proper disposition of garbage, use of renewable resources and recycling of both organic and inorganic wastes. In the process, we also rationalized scavenging and discouraged the indiscriminate throwing of toxins and other harmful chemicals. We also advocate improving public transport systems by keeping away smoke-belching motor vehicles from the streets and highways and preserving as well our green spaces, such as the Naga Eco-Park and public plazas.

Political Participation. This is best illustrated by our establishment of the Naga City People’s Council and our continuing partnerships with the NGOs and the private

sector in the planning and management of public services and facilities as well as in decision-making that engender a transparent popular citizen participation.

Economic Productivity. Vibrant economic activities are pulsating in the four corners of the city. While we invite new investors to come in to generate more jobs for our people, we also continue to give support to community-based activities, socially useful and eco-friendly enterprises.

Cultural Vibrancy. We have been actively promoting our cultural and historical heritage through partnerships with historians, the academe and artists. In fact, Naga became a vehicle to revive rondalla music as a symbol of Filipino identity by hosting the first-ever International Rondalla Festival last year. This early, plans are underway for the hosting next year of the International Chorale Festival in our city. We shall also be completing our City Museum after erecting a new modern library. Very soon, we shall have completed our Metro Naga Coliseum. But more importantly, the flourishing of culture becomes manifest in our daily life, on street corners, and in the creative works and in the songs and dramas of city life.

Responsible citizenship

Now that we have proven that we can make good governance work; and that we can even do better by continually raising our standards in the continuing task of delivering efficient service to our people within the framework of our mandate, a new level of engagement awaits that will require bringing our people in the forefront of responsible citizenship.

I am referring to the task of building a strong civic culture among the Nagueños. I always believe that where there is a strong sense of civic responsibility, people tend to have better health, better schools, higher productivity, less crime and more responsive government.

Where no one throws his waste anywhere, the city government will have more funds to use for more important concerns. Where there is less waste scattered around, there will be no need to allocate more money to hire more street sweepers or purchase more equipment simply to segregate them. With undisciplined disposition of garbage, there would be pollution and unhygienic surroundings that would mean the spread of diseases that will require the hiring of more doctors and the purchase of more medicines. All these would be charged to the taxpayers' money that that should otherwise been spent for more urgent concerns such as food, programs for job generation, livelihood and more classrooms for schoolchildren.

If we shall have no vandals, we shall have saved money instead of buying cans of paint or scrubs to remove the ugly graffiti on public buildings and walls. If there is order in the streets among drivers and commuters, we shall not be spending more to hire additional traffic aides and signboards.

Our triumphs at good governance in partnership with the civil society, the NGOs and POs will go to waste if we don't see the active involvement of every citizen in the life of our city.

We need sufficient civic education so that every citizen, through his own righteous way, can make a difference – in his family, in his neighborhood and in his beloved Naga City.

Proper civic education will build up a social capital out of every citizen who shall become embodiments of civic responsibility.

Under this concept, every Nagueño must feel important. Every Nagueño counts, because every Nagueño is needed for the realization of Naga's goals and the paving of road to greatness and prosperity.

The early Romans call this "Civitas", or the love of one's city by seriously playing one's role as an active, involved citizen. "Civitas" takes an even deeper meaning when devotion to one's city transcends even one's personal comforts and goals for personal gain and caprices. Definitely, throwing your litter down the Bicol River is not civic involvement. Breaking the law or an ordinance will not make one important nor part of a common dream of building a livable, prosperous and peaceful city.

Our primary task now is to nourish a well embedded civic culture among our youth, family members, the professionals, the workers and the community as a whole to truly earn our place in the sun as a "*Maogmang Lugar*."

That will be our target for the coming days.