

ONLY THE BEST FOR BOHOL!

State of the Province Address

Gov. Edgar M. Chatto

Introduction

The Honorable Vice Governor, Dr. Concepcion O. Lim, Honorable Members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Provincial Government Department Heads and our entire workforce led by Provincial Administrator Alfonso “Ae” Damalerio II, Dr Ramie Cadag of the Home Reach Foundation and Boholanos from abroad, private sector partners, development stakeholders from all sectors of our province, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

“You can make a lot of speeches, but the real thing is when you dig a hole, plant a tree, give it water, and make it survive. That’s what makes the difference.” So goes a quote from Wangari Maathai, an environmental activist, and the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, in 2004. This State of the Province Address is not just a speech; it is a summary of our accomplishments over the past year. It is, in a manner of speaking, about the trees we have planted and, to extend the analogy further, about the fruits we have reaped.

Exemplary Governance Springs from Executive-Legislative Unity

When we assumed office in 2010, we committed ourselves to good governance through shared leadership: between our co-equal branches, executive and legislative, and among our development stakeholders in the province. I have always been inspired by our executive-legislative unity, as enshrined in our Executive-Legislative Agenda, and as confirmed by your passage of important ordinances and resolutions in support of our agenda. Because of this unity, the Province of Bohol has emerged as the Best Governed Province in the country, based on the Local Governance Performance Management System (LGPMS).

The LGPMS measures a broad range of local governance areas, and it is a testament to how we have lived our principle of shared leadership. This means we have excelled in the areas of administrative, social, economic and environmental governance, as well as transparency, participation and financial accountability, worthy of emulation by other provinces.

Green Bohol: Giving Substance to our Sustainable Development Philosophy through Sound Environment Management

The philosophy of a Green Economy threads through our entire development framework. The environment remains a top priority for the PGBh, as showcased by many bold and notable resolutions issued by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan in defense of the environment, notably our exceptionally rich biodiversity. In environment management, we rely not just on our own knowledge, but on expert scientific research and sound technical advice. Thus, we have established a

breakthrough arrangement with the entire faculty of the University of the Philippines, led by our very own UP Chancellor Dr. Caesar Saloma, with the full support of President Alfredo Pascual. Chancellor Saloma and President Pascual have pledged the availability of the very best of UP's scientists and technical experts, *pro bono* - that is, without professional fees, to assist us in our policy decisions through academic-based technical advice, supported by strong research.

We have already benefited from their advice on such important issues as the New Bohol Airport, on which they gave us a strong policy position, the proposed Panglao Reclamation project, on which they presented authoritative recommendations, and the Albur Sanitary Landfill, on which a technical working group led by Dr. Rene Rollon undertook a comprehensive review and policy recommendation. Even better, the whole UP system has opened its doors to more partnerships: UP Los Baños in agriculture, and UP Manila/Philippine General Hospital in health care. In fact, we are now in discussions to access their expertise in the area of mental health, which is still very much wanting in our local hospitals.

A pioneering initiative in sustainable natural resource management is the Carood Watershed Model Forest. We have supported watershed development not only through the Bohol Environment Management Office (BEMO), but also by integrating it with agriculture. The Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) collected seeds from PGBh departments, germinated them, and distributed the seedlings for planting. All this, because we hope to enhance production of high-value commercial crops from fruit trees, while contributing to watershed development and the greening of the entire province.

We are eagerly awaiting the completion of the amendment of the Bohol Environment Code of 1998, spearheaded by BEMO.

Law enforcement is vital in natural resource protection. In this respect, valuable assistance is provided by the Provincial Legal Office (PLO) in ensuring that environmental laws, regulations and ordinances are enforced correctly. Because of our environmental initiatives, the Province of Bohol was recognized by the EcoGov 2 Program of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as a "Learning Destination for Good Environmental Governance".

Reaching Our Constituents Directly through the HEAT Bohol Caravan

Throughout 2011, we sustained our commitment to the HEAT Bohol Development Agenda: **Health and Sanitation, Education and Technology, Agriculture and Food Security, and Tourism and Livelihood**. We even expanded our **HEAT Bohol Caravan**, a now widely-known bi-monthly activity. Managed by the Office of the Governor through its Special Projects Unit (SPU), this event is an effective mechanism for delivering services directly to indigent constituents in our component LGUs. This is no small feat, for we are bringing services not normally available at the municipal or even provincial level, such as the processing of NBI Clearances, for which people normally have to go to Cebu or even Metro Manila.

We have seen a significant increase in the number of institutions involved – from 39 during our first HEAT Bohol caravan in Pres. Carlos P. Garcia, to 83 as of the last caravan in Antequera. There, we had 30 provincial agencies, 30 national agencies, and 23 private sector institutions. We have reached a total of 100,514 beneficiaries to date. This year, as more partner institutions reach out to us in the spirit of volunteerism, we expect to add much more to that tally.

Another way of extending our reach is our continuing observation of People’s Day, not just here in our Provincial Capitol, but in our established Governor’s Satellite Offices in the Municipalities of Talibon, Carmen and Jagna.

The Provincial Government’s Commitment to Health, Sanitation and Social Welfare

The PGBh is committed to serve the needs of its constituents. Our Emergency Preparedness Program Quick Response Unit is the Telephone and Radio System Integrated Emergency Response, otherwise known as TARSIER 117, which has proven its ability to assist people in times of emergency and crisis situations. This is our response to the nationwide call for activation of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils, to deal with the prevalent threat of climate change-related calamities, such as the most recent disasters in Cagayan de Oro City, Iligan City and the province of Negros Oriental. Although we are thankful that we have been spared from disasters of truly calamitous proportions, we continue to prepare ourselves for any eventuality. TARSIER 117 has responded to all sorts of emergencies, most commonly, medical emergencies. Credit is due to the entire TARSIER 117 team, who have always been ready to save lives, literally at a moment’s notice, day or night. Just recently, we have opened a more modern facility, which can only mean better, faster service.

We have established a Medical Outreach Unit under the Office of the Governor to manage the provision of medical services to hinterland barangays. It is this unit that collaborates with civil society and medical mission groups in the delivery of special health programs. Through our Consultant for Medical and Surgical Missions, we have extended medical outreach, health care and social services for less-privileged Boholanos. Throughout 2011, our medical, dental, and surgical missions reached a total of 23,960 beneficiaries, at a quantified cost of P140 million. It is truly a blessing that all these indigent patients had access to these medical, dental and surgical services, which would not have been available to them otherwise.

You may recall that we conducted the Bohol Health Summit in November 2010. Throughout 2011, we provided much-needed logistical and personnel support to the implementation of the Province-wide Investment Plan for Health (PIPH). Thus, we funded the construction and renovation of facilities for our district hospitals, in the amount of P43.3 million. We also partnered with the Department of Health (DOH) for funding support in the acquisition of essential equipment for our hospitals, in the total amount of P63.6 million.

We continue to support our Universal PhilHealth Program, despite recent changes in national policy that have adversely affected LGUs' capacity to support PhilHealth memberships for their indigent constituents.

Our Provincial Nutrition Council has been a consistent Award Winner for the implementation of its Nutrition Program, both at the Regional and National levels. In fact, we have been acknowledged as a "Grand Slam Winner" in all categories in Region VII. The most recent conferment was for Bohol's status as an Outstanding Province in the Region, given by the National Nutrition Council last August of 2011.

We provided Assistance to Individuals In Crisis Situations (AICS) through the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO). Sec. Mar Roxas supplemented this with assistance of P2 million for indigent patients. Also under the PSWDO is the Bohol Crisis Intervention Center. It is a friendly residential facility that provides psycho-social interventions to women and children who have become survivors of gender-based violence.

Bayanihan in Education:

Our Award-Winning Partnership for the School Building Program

Bayanihan is not just a lofty ideal in our history books. Here in Bohol, we are practicing it through the *Bayanihan* Program for Long-Term Partnership in Education, managed by the *Bayanihan* Unit under the Governor's Office. This initiative is implemented through collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd), private and public agencies, the business sector, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Engineering Battalion. Our multi-sectoral partnership, which includes the construction of school buildings as a major component, is the reason why we were awarded the **Gawad Bayanihan Award** from the AFP during its 76th anniversary celebration, as the AFP's best partner province in the country. Aside from this, our DepEd Division of Bohol also won the award for the Best Implementation of the School Building Program nationwide. For their part, our AFP Engineering Battalion was recognized as the AFP's Best Engineering Battalion.

We continued to fund the Special Program for the Employment of Students (SPES), with 816 beneficiaries at a total cost of P4 million in 2011, on a counterparting arrangement with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Bohol Educational Subsidy Program, which has had 1,194 beneficiaries so far. In addition, we have the ongoing CPG Scholarship Program, with 140 full scholars, as well as the Scholarship Fund of P2.5 million from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). These programs are being managed by the Bohol Employment and Placement Office (BEPO) and Special Education Fund (SEF) Office.

The youth are an important sector where Education is concerned. Because we want to enable the youth to become more productive members of society, we have activated the Provincial Youth Development Council. We are also committed to our Sports Development Program, through funding support and logistical assistance in the conduct of major activities, such as the recently-concluded Central Visayas Regional Athletic Association (CVIRAA) Meet, right here in the Province of Bohol.

Our advances in education are not limited to infrastructure, financial and logistical support. We are passionate about the effectiveness of teaching methods in our schools. Thus, we continue to lead the replication of the Dynamic Learning Program (DLP), in partnership with DepEd, throughout the province: a unique, learner-centered approach to teaching pioneered by the **Magsaysay Award-winning Bernido couple**. We believe in the unbridled potential of our students, and we believe that this potential can be unlocked by the DLP's strategic approach.

Back in July 2010, we declared our intention to conduct a summit for each of our pillar agenda under the HEAT Bohol Development Framework. We have done exactly that. This year was the time for the Education Sector to hold its own summit. Spearheaded by the SEEM Cluster, the Summit led to a productive planning process to address Education-related issues and opportunities. In 2012, therefore, you can expect more innovative initiatives to come from the Education Sector.

Bohol is Now the Banner Province for Agriculture in Region 7, Posting a Record 21% Jump in Rice Production

This is not merely our claim. This is a declaration made by the Regional Director of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Region 7. In 2011, the Province of Bohol posted a record 21% increase in rice production, reinforcing our status as the Banner Province for Agriculture in Region 7. Our Provincial Agriculturist is actively facilitating collaborations, such as the one we have with the Korean Program for International Agriculture (KOPIA). We are now working with them in the development of Korean rice cultivars and in Rural Development Agriculture. We have also garnered support from the Korean *Saemul Undong* system to the Bohol Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BOFAMCO) in the form of rice planting equipment.

From the DA, we have obtained a total of P9 million through packages of assistance for the following priority programs, aside from farm-to-market roads: our Organic Agriculture Program, our High-Value Commercial Crops program, and our Farm Mechanization Program, with modern rain gauges. In addition, we have gained access to P2 million from Senator Kiko Pangilinan for our Bahay Kubo FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY Project: FAITH, for Food Always In The Home, and HOPE, for Herbal Organic Plants Enhancement. Through this, we are championing a shift in the consumption preference of Boholanos towards vegetables, and the introduction of crisis crops, including indigenous root crops, as alternatives to rice. For CHARITY, which means Chicken Always Ready In The Yard, we are going beyond crops, and have launched a Community-Based Native Chicken Production Project, for the production of a Boholano strain of the native, organic chicken. There are, also, the ongoing AgriPinoy Programs for Rice, Corn, High-Value Commercial Crops and Fisheries.

Fighting Rabies while Empowering Communities: A Multi-Sectoral Approach that has Earned Us Another *Galing Pook* Award

In the area of Veterinary Services, we are extremely proud of our landmark project, the Bohol Rabies Prevention and Eradication Program (BRPEP), spearheaded by the Office of the Provincial Veterinarian. From being No. 1 in the region and No. 4 in the entire country in rabies incidence just three years ago, we have succeeded in achieving zero rabies incidence. Because of the program's success, and its multi-sectoral implementation approach, we are, once again, a ***Galing Pook*** Award-winning province.

I tell you, when it comes to partnership and collaboration among development stakeholders, the Province of Bohol really leads the way. I was there, together with Dr. Stella Marie Lapiz, when we presented the project to the *Gawad Galing Pook* Panel, and they were impressed with the program, and even more so when they discovered that one member of our team was a Barangay Captain with direct and continuing involvement in the project. There are other ongoing programs which continue to be implemented by the OPV: LETS HELP BOHOL, Meat Control and Safety, Dairy Development, Livestock Upgrading, and the already multi-awarded Barangay Livestock Aide (BALA) Program.

I emphasize that all of these programs and projects are conducted with a focus on enterprise development, so that our households may augment their family incomes.

A Strong Marketing Program for Bohol's Tourism Industry

"Bohol: Heart of the Islands." "Bohol has it all, and it's all in Bohol." These are the core messages that we are sending out to the world, through a strong, sustained tourism promotion and marketing program. We want tourists and visitors to realize that Bohol is "Authentically Philippines", and with our pristine environment and emphasis on local arts and culture, through our Center for Culture and Arts Development (CCAD), they will see what is authentically Filipino. The Bohol Tourism thrust is all about recognizing what Bohol truly is – the heart of the Philippine Islands – both geographically and culturally. We are at the heart of the Visayas and, culturally, Bohol is authentically Philippines. We want the world to understand that much more than the trifecta of Loboc, Chocolate Hills and the Tarsier, we have the five pillars of tourism, and we want Bohol to be discovered and rediscovered annually by tourists, eventually becoming a perennial destination.

This is an outcome of the Tourism Summit that we conducted through the Bohol Tourism Office (BTO), to ensure the sustainable growth of our tourism industry, and to unify the tourism marketing of our municipalities with one voice. As further proof of our commitment, we extended a helping hand to the Municipality of Panglao during the Panglao Tourism Forum.

Bohol Surpasses the P1-Billion Mark in New Investments

The Bohol Business One-Stop Shop was established in 2009. Today, the Bohol BOSS, lodged at the Bohol Investment Promotion Center (BIPC), has achieved a record increase in investments. Investments posted for 2011 surpassed all expectations. Total investments amounted to P1.3 Billion from 2,197 new enterprises, greatly exceeding our target, and posting a very impressive 64% increase over last year's total investments. In addition, there are more women micro entrepreneurs, at 52% of total, and these enterprises have generated employment for thousands of Boholanos. This is further evidence of the increasing number of entrepreneurs who are confident about Bohol's business enabling environment. Already, 26 out of our 47 municipalities have installed business process and licensing systems.

Subsequent to the conduct of our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Summit, we sent a Benchmarking Mission to the cities of Metro Manila and Davao, to learn the secrets to a successful Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. Now, the province's ICT Council has a more strategic focus to jumpstart sustainable investments in the BPO industry.

To benefit our indigent families in the countryside, we have established the Countryside Development Program through **Purok Power Movement**. This program, implemented by our Prosperity Teams, has gained a stronger push as municipalities are already awarding best-performing *puroks*. What is evident here is the program's impact on grassroots social service delivery, and as a vehicle for people empowerment and participation in governance. Our assistance for livelihood also extends to our rebel returnees, through our **Kauban sa Reporma Kalayaan Resettlement Center** in Danao.

It is not just our indigent families that need assistance. Sometimes, even our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) find themselves in emergency situations. Thus, we have an OFW Help Desk lodged at the Bohol Employment and Placement Office (BEPO) under the Office of the Governor. Its services cover the whole range of needs of our Boholano OFWs: linking with OFW organizations, repatriation in cases of death or distress, livelihood and reintegration programs for returning OFWs, and facilitating contact between OFWs and their dependents. To date, our Help Desk has assisted 237 OFWs, with 10 more pending cases.

Through BEPO, we have facilitated access of more Boholanos to stable employment: through Local and Overseas Jobs Fairs, Mobile Passporting and Licensing Services, Anti-Illegal Recruitment Efforts, and overall job placement for applicants. The beneficiaries of these various services totaled to more than 11,600 in 2011. Because of such initiatives as the STARS Project, which stands for Skills Training Advocating Reliance on Self-employment, as well as various skills development initiatives in partnership with TESDA, Bohol garnered another set of awards: the Regional and National **Kabalikat Awards**.

It bears emphasis that the focus on Poverty Reduction is being sustained through all of these efforts, but with a more positive angle: an emphasis on Prosperity. All of these Prosperity initiatives fall under the scope of the Social, Economic and Environment Management (SEEM) Cluster.

Counterparting: Bohol's Secret to Accessing More Resources for Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure is a basic requirement for development. To add to our substantial resources for infrastructure, we sought counterpart funding from external partners. We have many of these ongoing partnerships, which has multiplied the reach of our own resources. Our total resources allocated for infrastructure in 2011, including both internally- and externally-sourced funds, amounted to **P748 million**.

This total comprises the following:

1. Roads (including Barangay Roads), Barangay Waterworks Development and Electrification, and Other Support Infrastructure, including assistance from PRMF and national government counterparts given by no less than His Excellency Pres. Benigno S. Aquino III, in the amount of **P419.7 million**;
2. Hospitals, Health and Sanitation Facilities, including counterparts from the DOH, and from the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), **P221.0 million**;
3. School Buildings, including counterparts from DepEd, **P34.5 million**;
4. Farm to Market Roads, Agricultural Equipment and Other Assistance, including counterparts from DA, **P31 million**;
5. Equipment Acquisition and Capacity Development from PRMF, **P11.8 million**; and
6. Additional funding for Other Priority Infrastructure Projects, made possible by our *Gawad Pamana ng Lahi* and **Seal of Good Housekeeping** Awards, as well as the **Local Governance Support Fund (LGSF)**, **P30 million**.

All of these figures highlight the Provincial Government's strong commitment to infrastructure. In addition to the Provincial Engineer's Office (PEO), which is tasked with the formidable mandate of implementing our infrastructure projects, it is proper here to also acknowledge the support services provided by the Provincial Motor Pool Office (PMPO) and the Provincial General Services Office (PGSO).

I would like to highlight that we have been very fortunate to secure the support of the National Government in our development thrusts. As a result of his recent Presidential Visit to Bohol, His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino committed to the concreting of the Balilihan-Hanopol-Batuan Road. The initial amount of P146 million is now under implementation. This road is the shortest route from the eastern part of Bohol to the center, connecting the major tourism sites of the eastern side, such as *Abatan* River and *Mag-aso* Falls, to the Chocolate Hills. It opens new tourism attractions along the way, such as the *Makapiko* Rapids and the lush greenery in the area, aside from boosting agricultural transport. Since the time this was converted into a national road by virtue of R.A. 10040, sponsored by yours truly

during my term as 1st District Representative, maintenance of this 26-kilometer road section has already saved a lot of money from the coffers of the PGBh.

More savings have accrued to the PGBh by virtue of the following Republic Acts, again sponsored by this representation, converting other provincial roads into national roads: R.A. 09992, Converting the Antequera-San Isidro-Libertad (Tubigon) Provincial Road, and R.A. 09345 Converting the Panglao Island Circumferential Road in the Municipalities of Dauis and Panglao, including the Riverside Road of Songcolan-Totolan, and the Amb. Pablo Suarez Bridge in Totolan, Dauis.

Aside from road development, the Albur Sanitary landfill received a much-needed boost with the President's commitment to support its completion, including the release of funds in the amount of P114 million. Furthermore, we required the TIEZA to undertake an inventory of all prior development in the area and subjected the whole plan to re-evaluation by technical and environmental experts, namely the TWG from UP led by Dr. Rollon, to assure adherence to applicable environmental laws and waste management standards. After that, social preparation activities are under way, prior to any resumption of construction activities.

Now, given that tourism is one of our pillars for economic development, the need for the implementation of the New Bohol Airport Project is being felt more urgently than ever. Thankfully, the study conducted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for the project's implementation under a Private-Public Partnership (PPP) Scheme has been completed. It is now under final review at the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), and we are awaiting the official announcement by President Aquino for its commencement. Also, DOTC Secretary Mar Roxas and DBM Secretary Butch Abad have confirmed the budgetary allocation for the airport, which is among the President's priority infrastructure.

Aside from infrastructure, Human Resource Capacity Development is a support service that runs through all other PGBh services. The Human Resource Management and Development Office (HRMDO), recognizing the role of Information Technology in the transition from Transactional Human Resource Management to Strategic Human Resource Management, has developed the Human Resource Information System. It encompasses the use of biometrics, payroll centralization and automation, Electronic Personnel data administration, and a system now being developed to track employee training and development efforts.

Protecting the Gains of Development by Ensuring Bohol's Peace and Security

Development is impossible without lasting peace. We have, therefore, focused on ensuring continued Peace and Security, by religiously meeting with the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC), and through constant coordination with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Philippine National Police (PNP) and other agencies. This has led to a significant reduction of crime rates in 2011. While there were two particularly worrisome incidents early this year, these should not erase the records of 2011, which show a huge drop in crime incidence...not only due to LGU, AFP and PNP efforts, but also due to community involvement.

Again, our ***Gawad Bayanihan*** Award from the AFP is relevant here. Furthermore, our AFP 802nd Infantry Brigade also won recognition for having the best **Internal Peace and Security Plan (IPSP) for *Bayanihan***. All this recognition indicates that we are succeeding in our peace-building efforts, from our School Building Program to the deployment of our Prosperity Teams. We have also continued to improve our jail facilities to ensure maximum security at the Bohol District Jail, while improving the quality of life of our inmates.

Making our Presence Felt: Keeping the PGBh Profile Visible in the Media

Amidst all these initiatives, we have always kept the profile of the PGBh visible in the media. Through the ***Kita ug Ang Gobernador*** Radio Program, led by the Effective Development Communications (EDCOM) Unit under the Office of the Governor, the public is regularly apprised of our programs and projects. This radio program also serves as a sounding board for the public. With the partnership of the Bohol Tri-Media Association, the program is broadcast province-wide by eight radio stations, cable *teleradyo*, and even internationally through the internet.

There is an internal communication mechanism that we rely on in communicating with far-flung municipalities: the Bohol Law Enforcement Communication System (BLECS). I am pleased to announce that, in 2011, we upgraded the system's communication facilities and equipment.

ODA-Assisted Reforms and Achievements: the Provincial Roads Management Facility (PRMF) and Other Programs

Many of Bohol's great strides in development have been facilitated by partnerships with Official Development Assistance (ODA) agencies. Our leading partnership today is the Provincial Roads Management Facility (PRMF) under the auspices of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

Its primary reform area is in road maintenance, with emphasis on high-quality, all-weather gravel roads constructed in accordance with industry standards. In 2011 alone, PRMF Physical Works totaled to P73.9 million covering 21.11 kilometers, providing improved road access to 112,259 men and women in 73 barangays from 19 municipalities. This commitment will increase in 2012, in terms of amount and distance, in the form of maintenance contracts, road rectification works and road rehabilitation projects.

Capacity Development is a major component of PRMF assistance. Capacity development for 2011 amounted to P11.8 million, covering equipment, ICT hardware and software support, and capacity development. Our partnership with PRMF has resulted in the capacity development of PGBh staff, producing a no-less-than-impressive turnaround in quality of services. Our PEO staff, for example, are now capacitated to undertake Detailed Engineering Road Design, covering topographic surveys, geotechnical studies, highway engineering design, and construction drawings using modern engineering software.

Aside from road service delivery, our partnership with PRMF has improved capacities in key governance functions: planning-budgeting linkage, public finance management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental management, internal audit, human resource management, procurement, and public-private partnership. Thus, we were able to produce the following milestones: the Provincial Road Network Development Plan (Version 2), Executive and Legislative Agenda, Human Resource Management and Development Plan, Strategic Financial Management Plan and Bohol Information Systems Plan. We are also trailblazing in our efforts to fully comply with audit findings, through the Provincial Internal Audit Office (PIAO).

We are reaping remarkable success in local revenue generation, through the Enhanced Tax Revenue Assessment and Collection System (eTRACS). This is implemented under PRMF through the partnership of the Provincial Treasurer's Office (PTO), Provincial Assessor's Office (PAssO) and the Bohol Information and Communications Technology Unit (BICTU) under the Office of the Governor.

eTRACS implementation in pilot municipalities resulted to an increase in their municipal revenue, at an average of 32% among all pilot municipalities, and even as high as 59% in some cases. This increase in revenue, of course, can only redound to the improved delivery of basic services. It is also noteworthy that the project earned the satisfaction of taxpayers due to the efficient processing of transactions.

There are other ODA programs: the GREAT Women Project, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) led by OPA, Realising DReAMS Project, funded by the European Union, lodged at PPDO, and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) 6th Country Programme, lodged at the Provincial Health Office (PHO). Just recently, we entered into a MOA with the DENR and Asia Foundation for the LGU-led Land Management Capacity Development Program. In fact, a training workshop on public land titling is ongoing right now.

And, of course, we have our Bohol-Jiangxi Sisterhood Agreement. The sixth year of this partnership was commemorated last December, in a formal ceremony conducted here in Bohol, graced by dignitaries of Jiangxi Province in China.

Many VIPs have visited our shores. In addition to our President, His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III and his top Members of Cabinet, we are very fortunate to have been visited by the Czech Republic's Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister Tomas Dub and Ambassador to the Philippines Josef Rychtar, South Korea Assemblyman Lee Do Sun, and Canadian Ambassador Christopher Thornley. On the lighter side, our beautiful island province became the site of a photoshoot for the Miss Earth Candidates.

Sharing Our Resources with our Component Municipal LGUs

Through all of these programs and projects, we have always made it a point to share our resources with our component LGUs. The delivery of our programs and projects is undertaken in these component LGUs, benefiting constituents all throughout the province. Whether our programs deal with our HEAT Bohol development agenda,

or roads, or other infrastructure and services, it is an inescapable fact that our resources are continuously shared with our component LGUs.

Safeguarding Financial Health: A Vital Role of the Local Finance Committee

None of these programs and projects would have been possible without the sound management of financial resources. This responsibility falls upon the shoulders of the Local Finance Committee, chaired by the Provincial Administrator, with its member offices: the Provincial Budget and Management Office (PBMO), Provincial Accountant's Office (PAccO), Provincial Treasurer's Office (PTO), Provincial Assessor's Office (PAssO), and Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO).

The LFC Member Offices are also implementing their own programs, such as the e-Budget of PBMO and e-NGAS and Financial Transaction Tracking System of PAccO.

The PPDO links this ever-important goal for financial sustainability with all other goals in the performance of its overarching, cross-sectoral mandates. It ensures that proposed development programs and projects adhere to the HEAT Bohol/LIFE HELPS Development Framework, while also ensuring, together with the LFC, that resources are not over-expended by one sector to the detriment of other sectors.

This is a difficult balance to strike, but with the cooperation and partnership of everyone in the Provincial Government of Bohol, we have done it. Our partners are not limited to the bureaucracy of the PGBh, but include Boholano development stakeholders in the business sector, academe and civil society in general. We would especially like to thank our three Congressional Representatives, who have been our partners in strategic programs to advance Bohol's best interests: Cong. Rene Lopez Relampagos of the 1st District, Cong. Erico Boyles Aumentado of the 2nd District, and Cong. Arthur Cua Yap of the 3rd District. We are also grateful for the partnership of all the Mayors of our component LGUs and our Barangay Captains throughout the province, for their unwavering support to our development agenda.

Reaffirming Our Executive-Legislative Unity

This Address started with an acknowledgement of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan's role in giving legislative force to our leadership thrusts and development priorities. Allow me to move towards its conclusion by mentioning concrete examples. The Ordinance Institutionalizing the Purok System in the Delivery of Development Programs in Every Barangay in the Province of Bohol, the enactment of the Bohol Organic Agriculture Ordinance, the Gender and Development Code of Bohol, and the Bohol BOSS, exemplify strategic and effective legislation. This is on top of the numerous Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) that you have authorized for our partnership programs. Truly, the Honorable Members of this August Body, led by Vice Governor Concepcion Lim, are our esteemed partners in development.

We would like to share all our triumphs, awards and recognition, whether for the PGBh or for this humble representation, with all Boholanos: they are the reason why we are here; they give meaning to all our efforts. I would also like to thank you, dear colleagues in governance, for your full and committed support.

Looking Ahead in 2012: Anticipating Opportunities, Future Partnerships and Further Collaboration

Despite all these successes, we do not rest on our laurels. As always, we look forward to more opportunities, future partnerships and further collaboration. Infrastructure is, again, a major item on the agenda. From the Road Board Fund, we are expecting P10 Million for the construction of road signage, especially for roads leading to tourist destinations, and P9.9 million for road development, in addition to our internally- and externally-sourced funds for roads. Our partnership with PRMF will provide more funding in 2012, in the amount of P90.9 million, spread out over 100 kilometers in road maintenance, road rectification and road rehabilitation.

Looking farther ahead, we are committed to realizing other envisioned infrastructure projects: the third stage of our circumferential road network, an expanded water supply system, and a proposed wastewater treatment and sewerage system in the island of Panglao. For these big-ticket projects, we have created a Technical Working Group, which is working double-time. Also, there will be more road development, and more utilization of the Energization Fund.

We will infuse P150 million for our Hospital Modernization Program in 2012. Our 10 devolved hospitals, with the support of the PHO, have crafted a modernization program that will serve a two-pronged purpose: one, to raise the quality of their medical services; and two, to increase their revenue-generation capacity. We will continue to collaborate with the DOH for our Health Facilities Enhancement Program, which will give us at least P57.5 million more in 2012. We are expecting, any time soon, the arrival of a hyperbaric chamber from the TIEZA, to be installed at the Bohol Medical Care Institute (BMCI).

In Education, we eagerly anticipate more support for the training of teachers under the DLP, and for the creation of more teaching items. We will also push for capacity development in appropriately responding to the challenges of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management, through trainings for emergency responders and ground-level volunteers.

An exciting partnership that we are exploring is with the Saitama Prefecture of Japan. This Prefecture has a commendable track record in water supply development and wastewater treatment/sewerage systems. Also, as a result of the recent visit of the World Bank, Bohol is set to be the **only** pilot province in the country for the Land Administration and Management Project (LAMP) 2.

We are opening new doors of partnership with Korea and Spain. We have held separate meetings with Korean Ambassador Lee Hye-Min and the Philippine Ambassador to Spain Carlos Salinas: Korea for Agriculture, Tourism and Investments; and Spain for Tourism, Investments, History, Culture and the Arts.

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding an eagerly-awaited activity this year, the ***Tigum Bol-anon sa Tibuok Kalibutan (TBTK) 2012***. We will hold this in May, appropriately, as it is the month of fiestas in Bohol. We are looking forward to

sharing our triumphs with our returning Boholanos, as well as collaborating with them on many development opportunities.

Finally, and this is a fitting clincher, we are extremely grateful that His Excellency Pres. Benigno S. Aquino III has been true to his promise to energize all *sitios* in the Province of Bohol within 2012-2013. Of course, in the spirit of counterparting that is standard practice in Bohol, we will provide counterpart funding for some of these sites. This year, 162 *sitios* in the second and third districts are programmed for energization. As of date, Gen. Manager Carlos Itable of BOHECO II has been directed by NEA Administrator Edith Bueno to submit the project requirements not later than February 24, so implementation can proceed immediately before the end of this quarter, made possible by Sec. Butch Abad of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). BOHECO I, which has already reported 100% energization, will undertake additional line extension in already energized *sitios* under its Share-A-Light Program. Assuredly, the *sitio* budget of the President will cover **all unenergized sitios** by 2013. There are 271 as of date, and with 162 to be completed this year, that leaves a very achievable target of 109 *sitios* for next year.

Already, our plans for 2012 look like a handful. No doubt, there will be more accomplishments, more opportunities, more partnerships, and more challenges. But for the moment, let us leave that to the future, and get back to the present.

Conclusion: Our Common Pledge to Give Nothing but OUR BEST for Bohol

What a triumphant year it has been! We collectively started our terms on June 30, 2010, with high expectations. How exhilarating it is to realize that, one and a half years into our terms, we have not only met, but have **exceeded** those expectations!

Still, despite our successes, there are many lingering challenges that continue to pose obstacles to our development goals. However, I do not want to end this Address on a sour note, emphasizing problems rather than solutions, and enumerating development obstacles rather than opportunities. As they say, it pays to be optimistic, and the most progressive countries around the world are those whose cultures reflect a 'can-do' attitude and a positive outlook. I, too, have observed that in Bohol. We do not question our ability to overcome obstacles and achieve our goals, we just get right down to the task and deliver. Judging from our harvest of awards this past year, I would say we are doing it right.

Thank you for this opportunity, Honorable Members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, and I look forward to this coming year with nothing but high hopes and optimism for the Province of Bohol. And let us all thank the Lord Almighty for all of these blessings, as we pledge our renewed commitment to our province. If we want to see Bohol as the Best of the Islands, then let us all pledge to give nothing but our best for Bohol!

Thank you, and good morning.

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