REGION 2 REGIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH CAPACITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

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OCTOBER 2009

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ACRONYMS

COA Commission on Audit

DOST Department of Science and Technology

DOH Department of Health

HRC Health Research Consortium

NAST National Academy of Science and Technology

NUHRA National Unified Health Research Agenda

PCHRD Philippine Council for Health Research and Development

PNHRS Philippine National Health Research System

RHRDC Regional Health Research Development Councils

RICUP Research Information Communication Utilization Programme

RUHRA Regional Unified Health Research Agenda

SOME Structure/Organization Monitoring and Evaluation

I. Background and Objectives

The Cagayan Valley Health research and Development Consortium was organized in September 2, 2006. Sixteen academic and government institutions constitute its membership.

In 2008, the CVHRDC conducted a strategic planning exercise after a review and evaluation of its past year's performance. As an output, the consortium was able to craft a three year development plan and an operational plan for 2009.

The consortium also conducted a series of symposia to generate research proposals and as a result two proposals were reviewed and approved for funding under the regional research fund mechanism. The proposals were designed to address the identified priorities in the areas of maternal and child health, quality of care and communicable diseases control.

The overall objective of this rapid assessment is to strengthen health research and development in Region 2. Specifically the assessment will identify critical issues and gaps in health research and development in Cagayan Valley Region and recommend measures that the health research consortium can use to improve the management and implementation of health research and development plans, programs and activities

II. Methodology and Activities Undertaken

The assessment was carried out by the members of the SOME with administrative and logistical support from PCHRD. A member of the committee on research management joined the SOME in some of the assessment meetings and sessions. The assessment team utilized the assessment framework and rapid appraisal instruments developed by the SOME committee for this purpose (see Annex A).

Two meetings were held as part of the assessment process. The first meeting was conducted on the morning of July 3 with health researchers and a meeting later in the afternoon with the members of the Advisory Committee in attendance. A list of participants is attached (Annex B).

III. Findings and Observations

A. Overall Findings and Observations

The health research consortium for Region 2 is well-organized and counts among its members some of the country's leading colleges and universities that are recognized for their capacities to undertake research.

The region has a set of health research priorities that was developed in 2005. Feedback from health researchers suggests that the RUHRA was not well-disseminated. There is also little evidence about its application in the development of a capacity-building plan and in the formulation of a resource mobilization strategy.

One of the significant achievements of the consortium was the formulation in 2008 of a three-year research and development plan (2008-2010). The plan mentions the consortium's vision and mission statements, its objectives, activities and expected outputs. It also includes an estimate of the budget needed to fund the proposed activities. However, the plan does not include a strategic assessment of the major problems and issues and as such it is difficult to assess the adequacy of the activities that are being proposed. The plan also uses mainly qualitative indicators which renders the measurement of progress towards the achievement of its goals and objectives very difficult.

Given its short organizational existence, CVHRDC has made a lot of progress and shown a number of important accomplishments. However, despite its efforts, the consortium is still unable to make significant progress in addressing its research priorities. Most of the researches being conducted are too few and too limited in terms of scope and coverage to make a difference. The consortium needs to take advantage of funding opportunities at the national level in addition to the resources in the region that it can access.

B. Preparation and Utilization of Health Research Agenda

 RUHRA (2006-2010) was developed in 2005 but many health researchers are not aware of its content and significance.

In 2005, with assistance from PCHRD, a group of researchers facilitated the preparation of the RUHRA in region 2. The preparation process involved reviewing documents and consultations with stakeholders. Eight groups of priority research issues were identified: communicable diseases, accidents, lifestyle disorders, reproductive health, health care financing, regulation, environmental health and hospital services.

Despite the existence of and easy access to this reference document (downloadable through the PCHRD website) many health researchers who were present during the consultation meeting expressed their lack of awareness and familiarity with its content. The researchers could not recall the priority research areas described in the document. Most of the researchers agreed that the document was not well-disseminated. This sentiment was shared by the members of the Advisory Committee.

The health research agenda does not include a systematic analysis of the identified priority needs.

A quick review of the RUHRA document shows that the priority areas for research do not provide an epidemiological, social, economic and policy-related description of the issues involved. Such gap in the analysis of the research issues makes it difficult for interested institutions and researchers to design and carry out research studies.

The RUHRA lists some of the important research issues but without a good description of the socio-economic context and epidemiological information, interested researchers will have great difficulty in translating them into research proposals.

During the consultation meeting, the representatives of one academic institution, the Saint Paul's University Philippines (SPUP) offered its assistance and facilities in hosting a meeting of researchers to review the research agenda. The meeting was scheduled to be held on July 30.

Strong interest to review the research agenda and transform it into an instrument that can be easily utilized and applied. Both the group of researchers and the advisory council agreed that a review of the research agenda is in order and that the document needs to have more applications.

C. Health Research Manpower, Facilities And Capacity-Building

 Researchers and governing board claim that region 2 has the capacity to undertake research and development activities.

The presence of some of the country's leading institutions of higher learning in the consortium strongly support the claim of the health researchers and the Advisory Committee that region 2 possesses the capacity needed to undertake health research activities based on the identified health research priorities.

Region 2 has a three-year capacity-building plan.

A review of the consortium's three year R and D plan shows that it has a capacity building component. The plan includes an activity to conduct a training needs assessment and various training activities to develop the skills of researchers in the region. Other features of the plan include: upgrading health research infrastructure in the region.

D. Funding and Logistical Support for Health Research

 Health researchers and the members of the advisory council expressed strong interest to access funds from PCHRD

During the session with researchers and the advisory council both groups demonstrated strong interest in accessing the research funds of PCHRD and DOST. This interest is a reflection of the inadequacy of the research funding under the regional research funds of the consortium wherein research proposals have a ceiling of 100,000 pesos.

The region has not come up with an estimate of its funding requirements based on its identified health research priorities.

While the consortium has proposed in 2008 a budget of 801,000 pesos to fund research proposals and to fund its operations, this amount is based on an estimate of the proposals that are under review and is not based on an estimate of the funding requirements of its priority research needs.

The consortium has not assessed the requirements of the RUHRA and used the results to estimate the necessary research studies. There is also no resource mobilization component in the consortium's three-year research and development plan.

3. Institutional support for health research exists

The health researchers and members of the advisory council claimed that member institutions have internal mechanisms that support the work of researchers. In academic institutions such support may be in the form of reducing the teaching load of researchers and some form of financial support for those who are invited to present their research papers.

E. Development of Research Proposals and Conduct of health Research studies

In 2008, the CVHRDC was able to generate and review five research proposals for funding of which two were approved by the consortium. The proposals are aimed at addressing quality of care issues, communicable disease control, training and educational issues, maternal and child health services. These proposals are still in the process of finalization priori to their approval and implementation.

The proposals that had been submitted are all designed to access the regional research fund and within the allowable 100,100 pesos ceiling. Despite the desire of some institutions for institutional collaboration, none of the proposals entail multidisciplinary and multi-institutional involvement.

F. Organization, Leadership and Management

1. Advisory Council, Secretariat and Working Sub-Committees

The Health research consortium of Region 2 has an Advisory Committee that is responsible for setting directions and approval of policies, plans and budgets. Secretariat support to the Advisory Council is provided by the DOST Region 2 office. Four working sub-committees research management, ethics review, capacity building, research information communication and utilization. (Please see Annex C) are responsible for carrying out the consortium's activities.

2. CVHRDC has a 3 year development plan

The 3 year development plan prepared by the consortium contains some elements of medium-term capacity-building and vision for the future. However, the plan does not contain the critical elements of a strategic analysis as basis for goal and objective setting. The plan also does not have clear performance indicators other than activity-based outputs so it will be difficult to measure progress towards the achievement of its development goals and objectives.

3. Not all sub-committees are fully functional

The subcommittees in the regional consortium are not yet fully functioning with the exception of the research management, capacity building and ethics committees.

One of the factors that contributed to this uneven performance of the different working committees is the lack of a full-time manager or administrator that is responsible for ensuring that planned activities are conducted in accordance with the agreed schedules and timetable. To address this structural inadequacy some members of the advisory council recommended the appointment of a former director of the DOST regional office to perform this function. One of the member institutions also offered its staff and facilities to organize and host a meeting to review the RUHRA.

G. Information Dissemination and Utilization

Other than the participation to nationally organized events, the subcommittee has not been actively implementing information and dissemination of research activities. This is also partly due to the lack of completed studies for dissemination.

H. Ethics

Region 2 has a trained and functioning ethics committee. The committee has been involved in the ethical review of the research proposals that had been approved for funding by the consortium.

IV. Recommendations

1. Review and updating of the RUHRA and organizing the region's health researchers to focus on the top health research priorities

The consortium needs to revisit the research agenda and update its content and make it more relevant. The revision should include a systematic analysis of the research priorities and describe them along epidemiological, social, political and economic lines.

The revision should also include very specific recommendations and guidelines on how the agenda can be applied and put to use.

In order to generate more meaningful research proposals and enable the regions' health researchers to access higher levels of funding, the CVHRDC needs to organize its health research manpower and provide opportunities for collaboration among member institutions. The offer of SPUP to host the meeting of health researchers to review the region's health priorities is an excellent opportunity to mobilize the region's health manpower and focus on the preparation and generation of more substantive and responsive research studies.

2. Broaden the training needs assessment into an assessment of the manpower and facilities of region 2 based on the priority research needs and use the results to enrich the existing 3-year capacity-building plan

The existing effort to conduct a training needs assessment is a good start. However, it needs to be broadened to include other aspects of manpower development as well as the inclusion of the research facility requirements of the region. The results can be used to enrich the existing 3-year development plan.

3. Estimate funding requirements and development of a resource mobilization strategy

Another important activity for the consortium is the estimation of the funding requirements based on the identified research priorities. To facilitate this process, the region may need to develop or adopt costing or estimation models.

Based on the estimates of the funding requirements, the consortium can then develop a resource mobilization plan or strategy. The region should consider the inclusion of strategies and activities that will enable CVHRDC to access the research funds at the national level.

4. Pursue the recommendation for the designation/appointment of the former DOST regional director who will be responsible for the day to day management of the activities of the consortium

In order to ensure that the decisions and approved programs and activities of the consortium are carried out the consortium needs to confirm and approve the proposal to appoint a full-time manager or administrator. This appointment in conjunction with the move to review the region's health priorities and mobilize its health researchers will strengthen the CVHRDC's position as a leading exponent of health research and development in North Luzon.

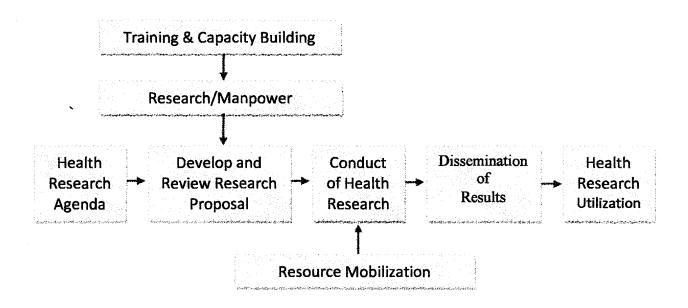
Annex A: Assessment Framework and Instruments

Framework for Developing Regional Capacity for Health Research

Under the PNHRS, the regions play an important role in undertaking health research activities to respond to the country's health needs and problems. Over the years, regional research activities were undertaken under the management and leadership of the Regional Health Research Development Councils (RHRDC). A recent evaluation of the RHRDC showed a wide variation in the performance of the 16 RHRDCs all over the country. The evaluation also recommended a number of strategies and approaches in order to improve the performance of regional capability to carry out and manage health research activities.

In line with this recommendation and in recognition of the strategic importance of the regions in supporting the PNHRS, the following framework is proposed to guide the PNHRS in strengthening regional capability to perform health research activities.

The framework consists of the different critical components of a research development program and a set of questions that identify key issues and problems as well as opportunities for strengthening the program.



Framework for Building Regional Health Research Capability

I. Preparation and Utilization Health Research Agenda: The health research agenda is a list of priority research areas in the region.

Some suggested principles and standards in the de3velopment of the regional research agenda:

- The research agenda should be based on local/national health problems
- There should be local evidence to support the research agenda
- The process of identifying the research priorities should be highly consultative and participative.

A. Content

- 1. In 1998, was there a well-defined health research agenda for the region?
- 2. If yes, what was the basis for the identified research priorities? Is there evidence to support the priority research areas? Does the agenda respond to the health problems from a local as well as national perspective?
- 3. If no, what constrained the region from having one? What were the key problems and issues that prevented the region from developing an evidence-based regional agenda for health research?

B. Process

- 1. How was the research agenda developed? Who were involved in its development?
- 2. What were the problems and issues encountered in the formulation of the research agenda? What could have been done to make the process more effective?
- II. Development of Research Manpower and Facilities: Refers to the availability of skilled manpower to conduct health research in the region.

Some suggested principles/standards:

- Number should be adequate to carry out the planned research activities
- There should be expertise in research methods and in the technical areas based on the priority list

- 1. Is there adequate research manpower (experts in research design and methodology and experts in specific content areas as defined by the health research agenda) in the region to carry out the region's health research plan?
- 2. If no, what is being done to address the lack of manpower? Is there a training program in place? Does the region possess the capacity to develop the skills of local researchers? What constraints are being encountered in the area of training and capacity-building?
- 3. Are there opportunities (institutions or individuals) that can be tapped to strengthen existing health research manpower?
- 4. What kind of support does the region expect from the national level to help develop the skills of local researchers?
- III. Resource Mobilization: Refers to the capacity of the region to mobilize funds and other resources for health research.
 - 1. Are there enough funds to carry out the planned research activities?
 - 2. If no, what are the constraints in mobilizing resources for research?
 - 3. Are there potential funding sources within the region that can be tapped for health research?
 - 4. What kind of support the region will need from the national level to develop regional capability to mobilize resources for health research?
- IV. Development and Review of Research Proposals: Refers to the capacity of the region to appraise submitted research proposals for content, design, and methodology
 - 1. In 2008, what is the quality of research proposals submitted in terms of content, design, and methodology?
 - 2. Are the specific content areas as defined by the health research agenda?
 - 3. If no, what were the reasons why?
- V. Conduct of Research Studies: Refers to the research output of the region both in terms of quantity and quality.
 - 1. In 2008, were the planned research studies conducted?
 - 2. If no, what were the reasons why?

- 3. Were the researches that were conducted of good quality?
- 4. If no, why? What can be done to improve the quality of health research in the region? What kind of support the region will need from national levels to make this happen?

VI. Research Dissemination

- 1. Were the researches that were conducted in 2008 disseminated? How?
- 2. If no proper dissemination was done, what were the constraints? Were the completed researches published?
- 3. Are there opportunities that can improve research dissemination in the future?

VII. Research Utilization

- 1. Were the research results utilized? How
- 2. If no, why? What were the constraints? What can be done to help improve the utilization of the research results?

VIII. Leadership and Management

- 1. Is the current composition of the governing council in the region adequate?
- 2. If no, what are the reasons why?
- 3. Is there a strategic plan in place for health research and development in the region? If none, why? What kind of assistance will the region need to make this happen?

Region 2 - Guide Questions for Health Researchers

1. Formulation of Health Research Agenda

1.1. Are you aware of the existence of a regional and national health research agenda? [Yes No
1.2. Have you seen or do you have a copy of these documents? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Remarks:
There is an interest to review and update their research agenda.
St. Paul's University — Tuguegarao has offered to convene the review and updating tresearch agenda.
1.3. Were you able to participate in the discussions leading to the formulation of the NUHRA/ RUHRA?
☐ Yes No
1.4. Were you able to participate in a forum where the Regional Health Research Agenda was discussed?
☐ Yes
1.5. Are you aware whether or not the Regional Health Research Agenda was used in the following?
1.5.1. Capacity building plan
1.5.2. Resource mobilization plan Yes No
1.5.3. Advocacy tool Yes No

2. Adequacy of Health Researchers, Research Facilities and Existence of Capacity Building Plan

∑ Yes					
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2.1.1 If No, why?					

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2.2.1 If No, why?					
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2 What a	re the usu	al problems in th	he dissemination of	of your research findings?
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Region 2 - Guide Questions for Council Members

Health Research Agenda:		
1.1. Is there a well-defined health research agenda for the region?	⊠ Yes	☐ No
1.2. How was the research agenda developed?		
Undertaken by three agencies (CHD, DOST and NEDA). Two conducted and a technical working group was convened.	o regional	workshops we.
1.3. Was the research agenda utilized?		
1.3.1. How was it utilized?		
-		
Manpower, Facilities and Capacity Building Plan		
2.1 Do you have an inventory of health research manpower and re your identified research needs?	search fac	ilities based on
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know		
2.2 Is there adequate research human resource in the region to carresearch plan?	ry out the 1	region's health
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Regional Health Research Capacity Assessment

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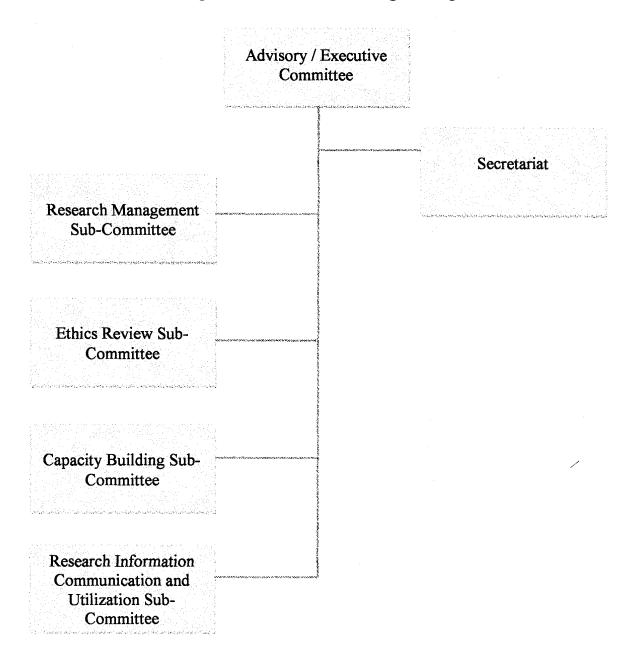
3.	Resource Mobilization: Refers to the capacity of the region to mobilize funds and other resources for health research
	3.1 Do you know how much is your funding requirement for your priority research needs? ☐ Yes ☑ No
	3.2 Are there enough funds to carry out the planned research activities? $\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$
	3.3 Has an annual work plan and budget been proposed?
	∑ Yes, when was it prepared? 2008 No
	3.4 What kind of support does the region expect from the national, regional, and international levels to develop regional capability to mobilize resources for health research?
	Provision of additional funding and technical support
4.	Development, Approval and Conduct of Research Studies:
	4.1 To 2009 hours and and house 5
	4.1 In 2008, how many proposals were produced by the consortium?
	4.1 In 2008, now many proposals were produced by the
	4.1 In 2008, now many proposals were produced by the consortium? 4.2 In 2008, how many proposals were reviewed in terms of ethics, methodology, content and utilization?
	4.1 In 2008, now many proposals were produced by the consortium? 4.2 In 2008, how many proposals were reviewed in terms of ethics, methodology, content
	4.1 In 2008, now many proposals were produced by the consortium? 4.2 In 2008, how many proposals were reviewed in terms of ethics, methodology, content and utilization?

	asons?				
Rese	arch Disse	minatio	n and Utilization	n	
5.1.	Does the co	nsortium h	ave an established	system for dissemination o	f research results
5.2.	Were the res	searches th	at were conducted/	completed in 2008 dissemi	nated?
	Yes Yes	☐ No	Don't Know	Not applicable	
5.3.	Were the res	search resu	ılts disseminated to	the relevant stakeholders?	
	☐ Yes	☐ No	Don't Know	Not applicable	
5.4.	How were t	the results	disseminated?		
ِ	Published	in peer-re	viewed journals:		
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☐ Yes	☐ No	⊠ Don't Know		
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s there an	existing data	base of research stud	dies conducted in the region?	
☐ Yes	None None	Don't Know		
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6. Leadership and Management

6.1. Describe/draw the organizational structure of the governing council:



6.2. Who is respons	sible for the daily op	erations of the consortium district
There is a tech	nical person from th	he CHD and admin person from the DOST that is
1	-	consortium. However, they are not full-time
continue worki	ng for the consortiu	OST who is very much involved as a volunteer to m and is willing to be involved in the day to day During the meeting the members of the consortium
		ed director to manage the consortium.
Control Contro	A CONTRACTOR OF THE CONTRACTOR	
6.3. Which of the fo	ollowing subcommit	tees are functional? Check appropriate boxes.
R&D	□ Functional	☐ NOT Functional
Ethics		NOT Functional
HRD		☐ NOT Functional
RICUP		☐ NOT Functional
	☐ Functional	☐ NOT Functional
	☐ Functional	☐ NOT Functional
	Functional	NOT Functional
_ 		
6.4 Define the role	e and responsibilities	s of the members of the governing council:
0.4. Define the fole	s and responsionnes	s of the members of the governing council.
<u>See Annex C: (</u>	<u>)rganization Structu</u>	<u>re</u>
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Is there an existing Manual of Opera	tions? Ye	es 🛭 No	☐ Don't
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Do you have a five-year strategic pla	in? (Get a copy o	f the docum	ent)
☐ Yes ⊠ No ☐ Don't Kno			•
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There is a three year research and a	levelopment plan ai	nd a one yec	ır operation
for 2009.	•	·	•
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Do you have an operational plan for		copy of the	document)
Yes No Don't Kno	ow		
Remarks:		onto print a little color all enterior and all encountries are con-	had had so come in had his hour with a hour to have a consequence

Rapid Appraisal Methodology

Region 2 - Guide Questions for Review of Documents

1. Guidelines for Research	Agenda
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	research agenda evid Yes 🔀 No	lenced base	ed?
Remar	ks:		
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vacanti della contra			
And Andrews			
1.2. Does	the research agenda c	over the fol	ollowing?
1.2.1.	Epidemiological	☐ Yes	⊠ No
1.2.2.	Sociological	Yes	⊠ No
1.2.3.	Economic	Yes Yes	⊠ No
1.2.4.	Policy	Yes	⊠ No
Remar	ks:		
The R	URHA contained soc	<u>io-economi</u>	ic profile and health indicators of the region.
l Karananan arabasa			

	Yes No		
Rema	arks:	e de la composition	

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Plan			
2.1 What	t kind of plan do t	they have?	
	Strategic Plan		Plan
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IIIC)	nuve u 5-year re	secu en una aere	elopment plan and a one-year operational p
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2.2 Does	s plan clearly con	tains the following	ng?
2.2.1	Objectives and	Goals X Yes	□ No
2.2.2	Indicators	⊠ Yes	□ No
2.2.3	Strategies	⊠ Yes	□No
	Activities	Yes	□No
2.2.4	Budget	Yes Yes	□ No
	arks:		
2.2.5			

Regional Health Research Capacity Assessment Report

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4 What is the pe	ercentage of fund	utilization?		???	
Remarks:					
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☐ Yes	s 🛛 No				
Remarks:					
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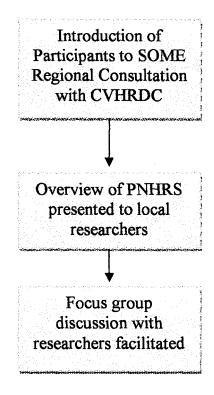
Annex B: Conference Proceedings and List of Participants

Cagayan Valley Health Research & Development Consortium (CVHRD) - Region 2

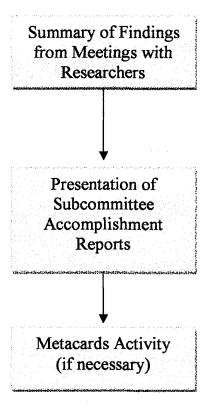
I. SOME ASSESSMENT TEAM AND TECHNICAL STAFF

Name	Designation/Institution
Dr. Joe Rodriguez	SOME Committee member
Ms. Arlene Ruiz	Research Agenda Committee member
Ms. Remedios Birondo	Committee on Science & Technology – House of Representatives
Merle Opeña	PCHRD
Annie Catameo	PCHRD
Sweetmavoureen Agan	PCHRD
Mark Tano	PCHRD

II. FLOWCHART OF ACTIVITIES: MEETING WITH RESEARCHERS FROM CVHRDC



III. FLOWCHART OF ACTIVITIES: MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF CVHRDC



IV. ATTENDANCE SHEET WITH RESEARCHERS

Philippin Intional Health Research System
Committee on Structure Organization Monitoring and Evalution

11th Regional Consultation Meeting with Cagayan Valley Health Research and Development Consortium
Hotel Roma, Tuguegarao City
July , 2009 Reserving S

(PARTICIPANTS

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V. ATTENDANCE SHEET WITH CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

Philippine Newbonds (seasons reported to the

Committee on Strutter Organization Monitoring and Evaluation

11th Regional Consultation Meeting w. Cagayan Valley Health Research and elopment Consortium

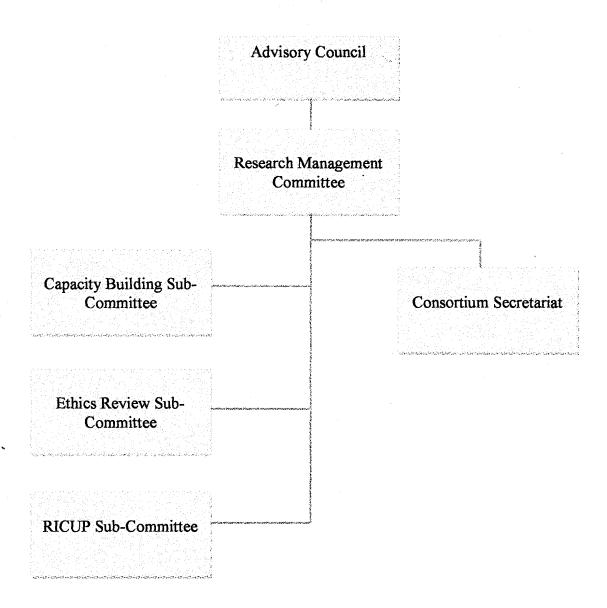
Hotel Roma, Tuguegarao City

He, July 2009 PM Session Council

(PARTICIPANTS FROM THE REGION)

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Annex C: Region 2 Organizational Structure



ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS (Region 2):

Advisory Council

- 1. Provides central direction, leadership, and coordination of all health R & D activities in the region;
- 2. Establish policies and guidelines, in consultation with stakeholders in the identification of priority health R &D programs and projects in the region;
- 3. Review and approve health research programs and related activities of the consortium;
- 4. Oversee the overall implementation, monitoring and evaluation or programs;
- 5. Ensure resource generation and mobilization; and
- 6. Develop awards and incentives system.

Research Management Committee

- 1. Assist the Board of Trustees in the conceptualization, planning, and implementation of the various programs/projects and related activities of the CHRDC;
- 2. Promote the development of research capacity and linkages on health R & D
- 3. Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure long-term sustainability of the Consortium; and
- 4. Conduct periodic review of health research and development programs and recommends the same to the Board of Trustees.

Sub-Committee on Ethics

- 1. Develop consortium's guidelines on ethical standards and practices in health research;
- 2. Facilitate the institutionalization of ethics review committees in health research organizations in Region 2;
- 3. Provide training and advocacy activities on bio-ethics for members of institutional ethics review bodies;
- 4. Review proposals as to compliance of ethical standards; and
- 5. Monitor compliance to ethical and other standards of on-going projects.

Sub-Committee on Research Information, Communication, and Utilization

- 1. Develop mechanism to facilitate dissemination and utilization of research information to various target clients;
- 2. Collect and package research information for database development; and
- 3. Collaborate with government, private sector, and non-government organizations for the use of health research results into policies, actions, products, and services.

Sub-Committee on Capacity Building

- 1. Assess the human resource requirements for health research of the institutions within Region 2;
- 2. Develop a comprehensive health research human resource development plan and monitor its implementation; and
- 3. Establish a sustainable mechanism for sharing of resources and exchange of expertise and information.