

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department
Strategic Plan (2013-2017)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The precursor of the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) was the Congressional Economic Planning Office (CEPO) which served as the think tank of the House of Representatives under Speaker Jose P. Laurel. The CEPO was tasked to provide the development and industrialization plan of the Philippines and provide Congress with technical assistance on economic matters.
- 1.2. With the restoration of Congress after Martial Law, Speaker Ramon V. Mitra reconstituted CEPO into the Congressional Economic Planning Service (CEPS) under the direct supervision of the Chairman of the House Committee on Economic Affairs. However, Speaker Mitra felt there was a need to make CEPS as a think tank which was proactive and aggressive in nature, generating its own ideas and development strategies. The Speaker, dissatisfied with imperfection of the budget process, added to CEPS a mandate to study and develop further policies to improve the management of fiscal expenditures in relation to its impact on the economy. This was the reason why the Congressional Planning and Budget Office (CPBO) was created with a fresh mandate to tie up economic policy directions/ strategies with the prioritization of national expenditures.
- 1.3. Since then, the CPBRD—as reflected in its vision and mandate—has been at the forefront of proactive and responsive socio-economic legislation, oversight and policy advocacy working primarily in coordination with the various committees and departments of the House of Representatives and other external knowledge institutions toward the achievement of sustained inclusive growth.
- 1.4. Broadly stated, the mission/mandate of the CPBRD is to provide the needed technical, advisory and information support functions to help the House of Representatives come up with sound socio-economic and institutional legislations that benefit the whole country. The CPBRD is therefore committed to develop and recommend in-depth perspectives and policy agenda for the House of Representatives.
- 1.5. The rapid pace of changes in the policy environment, the increasing number of House members, and developments in information technology has re-shaped the expectations and demands from the CPBRD. To meet these challenges ahead, the CPBRD intends to pursue organizational reforms that will help strengthen its capacity to deliver its services. Therefore, the CPBRD has outlined its long-term objective/s, strategies and programs to provide a clear direction as to how the Department hopes to achieve its vision and mission.

2. THE DEPARTMENT

2.1. Vision

The Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department is a recognized congressional think tank for policy and institutional reforms.

2.2. Mission/Mandate

The Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department provides ideas, policy advice, technical assistance, and information support in the formulation and oversight of socio-economic legislation that promotes sustained inclusive growth. In pursuit of its mission, the CPBRD shall foster a culture of responsiveness, professionalism, and excellence.

2.3. Bureaus/Services

The CPBRD is headed by a Director General with the assistance of the Executive Director. The different offices under the CPBRD and their respective functions are as follows:

- The Congressional Policy and Budget Research Bureau (Office of the Executive Director) provides direction in the implementation and provision of technical, administrative, logistical and financial support to the different service groups, and supervises the conduct of special projects;
- The Economic Policy Research Service undertakes policy research focused on macroeconomic policy and competitiveness issues as well as reform measures in infrastructure, industrial development, and trade and investments.
- The Fiscal Policy Research Service initiates and undertakes policy research and analysis focused on fiscal-related matters such as public expenditure management, revenue mobilization and local and corporate finance;
- The Special Projects Service specializes in policy analysis and research on identified concerns on social welfare, labor and employment, education, health, poverty, agriculture, environment and other social and rural development issues.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>STRENGTHS</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. ESTABLISHED NETWORK/LINKAGES WITH KNOWLEDGE INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES;2. BEING A PART OF HREP BRINGS GOODWILL;3. ABILITY TO USE DIFFERENT MEDIA FOR RESEARCH AND NETWORKING;4. TRAINED, COMPETENT AND RESOURCEFUL PERSONNEL.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WEAKNESSES</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. INADEQUATE NUMBER OF TECHNICAL STAFF, OTHERS ARE RE-ASSIGNED/DETAILED TO OTHER OFFICES;2. LIMITED STATISTICAL TOOLS FOR POLICY RESEARCH;3. INADEQUATE/LACK OF LOGISTICAL SUPPORT, E.G. SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT;4. LACK OF CLEAR PERFORMANCE STANDARDS;5. CPBRD OFFICE LOCATION POSES HEALTH HAZARD;6. LACK OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAM.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. ACCESS TO LOCAL/FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIP;2. ACCESS TO FOREIGN FUNDING/AID FOR PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS;3. ADOPTION OF STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BY THE GOVERNMENT;4. INCREASING PARTICIPATION/ INVOLVEMENT IN INTER-REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY FORA/ ASSEMBLY;5. POSITIVE OUTLOOK ABOUT GOVERNANCE BY NATIONAL LEADERSHIP;6. FRESH PERSPECTIVES FROM INCOMING 16TH CONGRESS.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>THREATS</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. TOO MANY ASSIGNMENTS OUTSIDE CORE COMPETENCIES;2. TRAINED AND COMPETENT STAFF LEAVING OFFICE;3. POLITICIZED HIRING/APPOINTMENT/ PROMOTION OF PERSONNEL;4. UNCLEAR FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES VIS-À-VIS OTHER DEPARTMENTS;5. LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING;6. NO FORMAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR DATA-SHARING AMONG HREP DEPARTMENTS.

4. DISCUSSION ON THE SWOT MATRIX

4.1. Strengths

- ❑ Stakeholders are now beginning to recognize the important role of the House of Representatives in policy and institutional reforms. While assistance was traditionally focused on the Executive branch, an increasing appreciation of the need to capacitate the legislature has led to an expanded access of the HREP to tangible and intangible resources. Some achievements in this direction include CPBRD's spearheading initiatives such as the House of Representatives Knowledge for Development Center (HREP-KDC), Electronic Resource Base for Legislation (ERBL) and Socio-Economic Research Portal for the Philippines (SERP-P), made possible through CPBRD's partnerships with donor agencies, other knowledge institutions, government agencies, the academe and other civil society organizations.
- ❑ This has also allowed CPBRD to expand the media it uses for research and networking, including having its own website apart from that of the HREP. In the next five years, CPBRD intends to tap into this trend and explore more avenues for knowledge sharing and other activities that could further strengthen Congress's position in the governance arena.
- ❑ CPBRD's strength lies in its most fundamental resource: its people. CPBRD is fortunate to have a pool of trained, competent and resourceful personnel that are capable of meeting the increasing demands of the Institution. The CPBRD has a pool of competent staff who have obtained their master's and doctoral degrees (with distinction) from prestigious universities here and abroad. The intellectual capacity of CPBRD's human resource has become indispensable in supporting our legislators on their functions, such as oversight, policy evaluations and advocacy work.

4.2. Weaknesses

- ❑ The CPBRD has identified several limitations or weak areas that need to be improved to better perform its mandate. The number of technical staff of the CPBRD has been reduced over the years due to re-assignment to other offices. Moreover, the increasing number of House members and the policy concerns becoming more complex have indicated the need to expand the number of technical staff to attend to these matters.
- ❑ As a policy research department, the CPBRD has limited statistical tools for policy research. Thus, it usually uses secondary research materials published by other research institutions such as the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, among others. Funding request for the purchase of statistical software such as Econometric Views (EVIEWES), STATA is always included in the budget proposal of the CPBRD but is not approved due to

budget constraints. In relation, training opportunities for staff such as the use of Input-Output Analysis and macroeconomic modeling are very limited. In recent years, it was only through linkages with institutions wherein technical staff were able to avail of training but these are not enough.

- ❑ Inadequate logistical support also limits the productivity of the CPBRD. Outdated computers, defective printers and slow and unreliable internet connection and sometimes unavailable supplies adversely affect the efficiency of the CPBRD.
- ❑ The lack of clear performance standards is perceived to have made performance ratings a bit subjective. Establishment of benchmarks (e.g., expected number of outputs per semester) should be done to make the performance ratings more objective to avoid demoralization among staff. A clearer set of performance standards would be a better basis in the granting of performance incentives in order to boost employees' morale and productivity.
- ❑ The location of the CPBRD office which is in between the north and south wing electrical rooms and air conditioning housing units pose health hazards to CPBRD staff. A number of the staff has also noticed black dust particles that come out of the ventilation areas. Moreover, the lack of wellness management program in the office undermines the staff's ability to cope especially with the increasing sources of stresses not just those related to work related but also from family and the environment.

4.3. Opportunities

- ❑ The CPBRD sees various opportunities to further enhance its effectiveness in producing knowledge products and in providing relevant technical inputs to legislation. It can capitalize on existing networks and linkages with other government agencies, research institutions, and multilateral development partners for information exchange and partnerships in research and advocacy work. Foreign funding can be tapped for programs and projects that support the research activities of CPBRD, and the logistical improvements needed to upgrade office equipment and ICT capacity. Technical assistance through grants can be utilized for CPBRD to develop econometric models and statistical tools for more in-depth policy research, and to train the technical staff on these research tools.
- ❑ Also, the CPBRD welcomes the initiatives toward the adoption of a Strategic Performance Management System that will make the hiring and promotions process merit-based. Essentially, this will address the lack of clear performance standards that currently limits the office from appropriately rewarding the well-performing employees.
- ❑ The House of the Representatives as an institution participates in inter-regional parliamentary forums. As part of the House Secretariat that provides technical assistance on socio-economic and institutional concerns to legislators, the CPBRD can extend the same technical and information support to delegations attending these regional meetings. Exposure of the CPBRD technical

staff in international conferences and assemblies can broaden the office's international perspective and network for information exchange and research.

- ❑ The current momentum of the Aquino administration in implementing reforms in government is a good opportunity for CPBRD to push desired institutional changes similarly supported by the House leadership. Moreover, the CPBRD looks forward to working with a new set of legislators who can bring in fresh perspectives to legislation in the incoming 16th Congress. The CPBRD can undertake researches supportive of the new ideas and legislative priorities of the next Congress.

4.4. Threats

- ❑ The CPBRD relies primarily on the intellectual capital of its personnel. However, it is faced with problems of losing its trained and competent staff because of uncertainties in the appointment process. Also, external influence on recruitment and promotions can force the CPBRD to abandon more deserving aspirants for technical positions. This exerts greater pressure on the existing limited staff that has to respond to too many and wide ranging assignments that are sometimes outside the core competencies of the office. The existing staff may be resourceful and flexible to appropriately respond to requests/external demands, but the office is likewise losing opportunities to develop experts and specialists who can undertake more in-depth policy researches.
- ❑ There are several offices within the House Secretariat that provide technical assistance to House Members. Unclear delineation of responsibilities and functions among these offices has resulted in CPBRD taking on tasks that are/or could be similarly undertaken by other offices. Overlapping of functions implies not only the inefficient use of office resources, but it also becomes difficult to predict the kind of technical assistance that our principals expect from the CPBRD.
- ❑ Finally, opportunities for international network are rather limited. The use of travel funds is unclear so that CPBRD officers and staff are unable to maximize the benefits from foreign study tours, and exchange programs. Exposure of CPBRD in international conferences and educational tours, either as active participant or Secretariat to a House delegation, can help expand office linkages and deepen the staff's international perspective.

IV. LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

Long-term Objective: To continually provide new ideas, and efficient and effective technical assistance in the legislation and oversight of socioeconomic, fiscal, and institutional reforms.		
STRATEGIES	PROGRAMS	SUB-PROGRAMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in continuous professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resource Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retooling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attract and retain capable staff 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop incentive system to reward outstanding performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems and Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance efficiency of office operations to better address the growing demands of House members 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructuring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPBRD Restructuring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Improvement Logistical Support Enhancement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensify use of information and communication technology in all areas of operation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Enhancement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain linkages with other HREP offices, government agencies, stakeholders and other knowledge institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HREP Inter-Office Coordination Institutional Networking/ Outreach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a research agenda and translate this to timely, accurate, in-depth and relevant knowledge products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Agenda Formulation Statistical Tools and Techniques

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PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

1. RESEARCH PROGRAM

Rationale

- 1.1 The Members of the House of Representatives go through a legislative agenda-setting process at the start of every Congress to determine legislative priorities and inputs to the meetings of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC).
- 1.2 As a contribution to this legislative agenda setting for the new set of legislators, the CPBRD, serving as one of the institutional memory of Congress, provides vital inputs and in-depth perspectives during the discussions of various legislative proposals in the areas of macroeconomic stability, trade and investment promotion, agricultural competitiveness and sustainable environmental management, human capital development, and public sector governance.
- 1.3 To support the Members of the House of Representatives during the deliberation of these legislative priorities, the CPBRD produces timely, accurate, in-depth and relevant knowledge products for the legislators to analyze related issues objectively and pro-actively. In the course of delivering these outputs, the CPBRD is expected to use updated and relevant statistical tools and techniques to come up with rigorous and sound policy recommendations.
- 1.4 Through this process, the CPBRD hopes to contribute to the formulation of significant laws that will provide the impetus for global competitiveness and meaningful growth, the kind of growth that will eventually translate to vastly improved economic and social outcomes for the Filipino people.

Program Brief

- 1.5 The Research Program shall focus on two major sub-programs, namely:
 - 1.5.1 **Research Agenda Formulation** involves collaboration with other government departments and agencies, research institutions and various stakeholders. This involves active and objective deliberations of legislative proposals from the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC), the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan of the National Economic and Development Authority; Country Strategy Plan of the Multilateral Donor Agencies such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Asian Development Bank; policy studies of research institutions such as the Philippine Institute for Development Studies; policy papers prepared by sector/industry stakeholders; and expert opinion of leading economic experts. From this menu of policy recommendations, the CPBRD shall

come up with a list of sound, well-researched and deliberated legislative proposals which shall be presented during the workshop for incoming legislators in collaboration with the other departments of the House of Representatives.

Based on the legislative priorities selected, the CPBRD shall produce timely, accurate and relevant knowledge products such as Policy Briefs, Notes, Facts in Figures, etc. that will support Members of the House of Representatives in making objective and sound policy decisions during the deliberations of these legislative proposals in the course of the 3-year period of Congress. Other policy recommendations not considered during the legislative priority setting at the start of Congress are also presented in venues such as forums, focused group discussions, etc.

- 1.5.2 The ***Statistical Tools and Techniques Enhancement Program*** is necessary to attain the objective of providing technical assistance in the legislation and oversight of socio-economic, fiscal and institutional reforms is the use of relevant, updated and adept econometric and statistical tools and techniques such as macroeconomic models, surveys/polling, etc. This is essential in the delivery of knowledge products to beef up CPBRD's staff capabilities to make macroeconomic forecasts, determine the impact of fiscal and economic policies on the macro-economy and individual sectors, and obtain constituents' perspectives on the delivery of services by their representatives in Congress.

The CPBRD shall engage the services of statistical experts to formulate its own macroeconomic models and other polling techniques that will aid Congress' in its legislative oversight functions. The staff will undergo training to update their capabilities in the use of these tools. Funding from House of Representatives, donor agencies and other research institutions shall be solicited to carry out this program.

2. SYSTEMS AND STANDARDS PROGRAM

Rationale

- 2.1. At the core of a well-functioning organization is a set of systems and standards. The CPBRD recognizes that at present, there is lack of clear standards by which employee performance may be evaluated. Also, there is unclear delineation of responsibilities among staff and officers which results to inefficiencies, confusion and at times friction. And while tracking mechanisms exist, these must be documented and officially disseminated to serve as guidelines by which work is to be distributed and accomplished.
- 2.2. On the positive side, the CPBRD prides itself of being able to accumulate time-series data and information which must be properly managed to maximize its utilization (e.g. easy access, routine processing, quality control).
- 2.3. The CPBRD welcomes the adoption of strategic performance management by the government as an opportunity to improve systems, procedures and standards—in line with its bid to become a nationally and internationally-recognized research institution.

❑ Program Brief

2.4. The Program for Systems and Standards is divided into two sub-programs, each one covering specific areas of improvement:

2.4.1. **Performance Management** deals with staff performance – i.e. what outputs are expected of a supervisor, technical staff, administrative staff and the like. Formulated standards will in turn be used for the semestral performance rating prescribed by the House of Representatives and the Civil Service Commission. The benchmarks will also serve as reference for selection and recruitment of new personnel.

Exemplary performance will be recognized by giving either monetary or non-monetary rewards. Non-monetary incentives may include priority for scholarship nomination, opportunities for travel, consideration for promotion, and the like.

2.4.2. **Operations Management** takes into account a seamless flow of work from start to finish. The initiatives of the Office of the Speaker (Special Order No. 10-12) creating an ad-hoc Operations Audit Committee will be used to jump-start the process of workflow documentation and eventual preparation of a Manual of Operations.

The system of document tracking and monitoring of assignments which is currently used by the Office of the Director General will be replicated and/or tailor-fitted to suit the needs of other CPBRD units. More importantly, a quality assurance mechanism will be put in place to ensure that research outputs and service delivery conform to set standards (e.g. objectivity, accuracy and timeliness of data, comprehensiveness). Working relationships and delineation of functions among other HREP departments or offices will be covered under another sub-program (Networking)

The system of data collection, processing, storage and retrieval shall be improved through the use of advanced technology, preferably at least cost to the government, with a comprehensive management information system as an end-product. For this purpose, emerging software that are offered free of charge (e.g. Dropbox) will be tapped. The CPBRD will also take advantage of partner institutions that can provide ICT-related training courses pro bono. The necessary ICT hardware support will be covered by another sub-program (Infrastructure Development). Issues and concerns that have surfaced so far include: one, insufficient computer units two, slow/no internet connection, three, limited budgetary allocation for communications to be used for purchase of broadband sticks, and four, sustainability/maintenance of the CPBRD website.

3. CPBRD RESTRUCTURING PROGRAM

❑ Rationale

3.1. From an adjunct of the Committee on Economic Affairs (then known as Congressional Economic Planning Service or CEPS), the Congressional Policy and Budget Research

Department (CPBRD) has grown into a full-fledged department. The department’s menu of services include evaluation of policy/legislative proposals, preparation of briefing materials, clarification of certain socio-economic issues, publication of research outputs, conduct of knowledge-sharing activities, participation in technical working group/public forums and the like.

- 3.2. Fast and incessant changes in the external environment (e.g. globalization of trade and commerce, regional integration for economic and political considerations, and rapid advances in information technology) have re-shaped the expectations and demands from the CPBRD. In particular, the Special Projects Service has evolved into a full-scale policy research group which tackles issues relating to the delivery of pro-poor services, countryside development, and environmental protection. Meanwhile, special projects are handled by the three policy desks under the supervision of the Executive Director.
- 3.3. Based on the plantilla, the CPBRD is supposed to have 47 personnel composed of: five (5) directors, 28 technical staff and 14 administrative staff. However, the workload is shared among 39 personnel only because four (4) employees are detailed to other offices and five (5) are considered vacant. Worse, nominations for promotion and regularization of contractual employees have not been acted upon during the last three years which cause demoralization among the rank.

Unit	Director	Technical Staff	Admin Support
Office of the Director General	1	0	12
Office of the Executive Director	1	3	2
Economic Policy Research Service	1	10	0
Fiscal Policy Research Service	1	10	0
Special Projects Service	1	5	0
TOTAL	5	28	14

□ Program Brief

- 3.4. To respond to the needs of its clientele - particularly members of Congress and other departments of the House - there has to be some adjustments in the organizational structure of the CPBRD. For one, the number of plantilla positions under the Special Projects Service must be made comparable with those of the Economic Policy Research Service and the Fiscal Policy Research Service. Thus, five (5) technical positions must be created for the unit which will be called “Social and Rural Development Policy Service.”
- 3.5. On the other hand, supervision over Special Projects will be “officially” transferred to the Office of the Executive Director – as what is currently being observed albeit unofficially. Other personnel issues i.e. non-regularization of contractual personnel, deferment of promotion, non-filling up of vacant positions will be addressed through other development programs, specifically Human Resource Development and Systems and Standards Programs.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

❑ Rationale

- 4.1. Over the years, the CPBRD has continually fulfilled its mandate of providing technical assistance to the leadership of the House of Representatives, and Congress members in the formulation and enactment of socio-economic legislation and oversight. This is in spite of the constraints, both internal and external, that it continues to face. Internally, the Office suffers from *scarcity in basic equipment in the area of information communication technology (ICT)*. For instance, forty-two (42) CPBRD personnel have to make most out of nineteen (19) House-issued desktop computers while the three (3) laptops supposedly for use by the Directors already have outdated hardware. Printers and photocopying machines, which are important in disseminating the resource knowledge-outputs of the CPBRD, are also either defective due to their age or suffer from the unavailability of spare parts. Accessing and sharing information online has also been an issue due to the unreliability of the HREP's internet connection.
- 4.2. There is also *inadequate logistical support* in terms of storage facilities for knowledge-based files that include filing cabinets, steel cabinets, and cloud-based or online file storage. Although there are filing and steel cabinets that are currently being used by CPBRD staff, majority of them is already accumulating rust and has become inadequate due to the amount of resource materials acquired over the years. This is also the issue for CPBRD's online storage, primarily through cloud-based service (Dropbox), as its capacity is quickly being used-up thus the need to upgrade into a version that offers bigger storage space.
- 4.3. The location and overall structure of the CPBRD office also poses health risks to staff. During an inspection by personnel of the Quezon City fire department, it remarked that the CPBRD office is a fire hazard location due to the presence of high-tension wires. The danger posed by the latter is further magnified by the onset of leaks in the ceiling of the CPBRD office during the rainy season. Furthermore, plumbing and other related fixtures are also plagued with leaks.
- 4.4. Like other offices in the HRep, the CPBRD must be given its own vehicle for mobility in as much as the Department has an item for driver.

❑ Program Brief

- 4.4. In an effort to address all these constraints, the CPBRD has managed to become creative in sourcing its physical infrastructure resource requirements, especially in the area of ICT, from other knowledge-based and donor institutions such as the World Bank, Philippine Institute for Development Studies, among others. However, the reliance for infrastructure support from external sources should not always be counted upon. In order for the CPBRD to become a nationally, and internationally recognized legislative and policy research institution, it needs to be constantly provided with adequate infrastructure support. For its part, the CPBRD has identified three key components under its Physical Infrastructure Development Program that are considered crucial to the fulfillment of its mission-vision. These are:
 - 4.4.1. **ICT Enhancement Program**—the rapid advances in ICT have made the accessibility of information much easier, and more affordable and secure. As one of the knowledge-brokers in the House of Representatives, the CPBRD seeks to intensify the use of ICT in

all areas of operations. The improvement in ICT also strengthens other core programs of the CPBRD such as Institutional Network/Outreach Program.

4.4.2. **Logistical Support Enhancement Program** seeks to improve the non-IT infrastructure requirements of the CPBRD. The program also reinforces the other programs of the CPBRD namely Human Resource Capability Program, HRep Inter-Office Coordination Program, and Institutional Networking/Outreach Program.

4.4.3. **Building Improvement Program**—for the short-run, this aims to bring about structural improvements in the 3rd Floor Main Building section of the Batasan Complex, and subsequently, the CPBRD office. For the long-run, the CPBRD will propose for relocation to a building, within the HRep premises, which is more safe and conducive for CPBRD staff.

5. NETWORKING PROGRAM

Rationale

- 5.1. In line with CPBRD's vision to become a nationally- and internationally-recognized institution, the Department has charted specific programs to take advantage of existing opportunities and strengthen its participation in various knowledge-sharing activities.
- 5.2. By 2015, the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) shall have become an economically integrated region. Moreover, the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) continues to position itself as an important platform to engage legislatures toward political and economic cooperation. In preparation for these developments, CPBRD intends to strengthen its participation in international forums and to engage with existing Communities of Practice (CoP) to keep abreast of latest policy issues, thereby providing better services to the Legislature.
- 5.3. CPBRD has the advantage of being a part of a prominent and well-respected institution as the House of Representatives. In fact, this status has become a springboard for the established linkages it presently enjoys with various learning institutions such as the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) and the World Bank. Some of the initiatives undertaken through these relationships are the HREP-Knowledge for Development Center, the SERP-P and the ERBL. PIDS in particular, has also helped augment CPBRD's office resources through their donations of used desktop computers. Donor agencies have also expressed interest to provide assistance to the HREP.
- 5.4. Even as the CPBRD strengthens its linkages with external partners, the Department recognizes that it also has to reinforce its relations with other offices within the HREP. Close inter-office coordination is essential to help ensure that CPBRD's policy work remains grounded on the existing needs of its principals, namely the House Members and the Secretariat. Such coordination is also important in enhancing the operations of CPBRD and the HREP at large.

Program Brief

- 5.5. The Networking Program is framed in accordance with CPBRD's role as a knowledge broker. Through its partnerships with other knowledge institutions, advocacy groups and House committees, CPBRD addresses the demand for research studies and policy recommendations in pursuit of more evidence-based policymaking.
- 5.6. HREP's presence in inter-parliamentary engagements would require synergy of efforts across departments within the whole Institution to meaningfully assist the House leadership in its high-level negotiations. Hence, a permanent inter-office joint secretariat to international bodies (e.g., APPF) has to be created to take on the support functions for this purpose, drawing upon the expertise and resources of different offices within the HREP. A common repository of data would be an essential component of the joint secretariat for the tracking and updating of developments on issues tackled during such engagements.
- 5.7. In the recent years, CPBRD has undertaken several projects with House committees and development partners through its knowledge-sharing forums. In keeping up with this trend, CPBRD intends to explore more avenues for data sharing among offices within the HREP and for more formal mechanisms in its engagement with external partners through its Institutional Networking/ Outreach Sub-Program and the HREP Inter-Office Coordination Sub-Program.
- 5.7.1. ***The Institutional Networking/ Outreach Sub-Program*** focuses on strengthening its relations with development partners external to the HREP. The program seeks to open avenues for knowledge sharing and to eventually formalize these arrangements, thereby enhancing legislative oversight functions.
- 5.7.2. ***The HREP Inter-Office Coordination Sub-Program*** intends to facilitate better coordination among HREP offices, thereby allowing the Secretariat to better contribute to the Legislative Agenda. A seamless interface across departments through established systems and procedures would clarify departmental functions and allow the HREP to more efficiently manage its operations and better address the needs of the House leadership.

In 2011, the Legislative Support Services Strategic Plan was formulated to clarify the functions of different offices within the HREP. There may be a need to revisit the said Plan as an input to the present Strategic Plan to better facilitate better inter-office coordination.

6. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Rationale

- 6.1. A pool of competent staff and officials with adequate and appropriate educational and working experience has been a strategic advantage for the CPBRD. The CPBRD personnel continue to undergo technical and management trainings here and abroad to further broaden their skills and understanding of relevant policy concerns.

- 6.2. However, rapid changes in the global and national landscapes, as well as developments in information and communication technology, have heightened expectations and demands for CPBRD to improve the delivery of technical assistance and services to its primary principals. This is becoming evident as the role of the House of Representatives as a policy institution will become more critical as the country positions itself in line with the ASEAN integration by 2015. In this regard, it will be essential for CPBRD to keep its staff abreast of recent developments and to ensure that they are fully equipped to meet these challenges.
- 6.3. Apart from technical preparedness, the physical and mental health/wellness of the staff is of paramount concern as the increased demand for technical services will impose on them greater physical and mental strain.
- 6.4. The CPBRD staff complement which is presently comprised of 42 personnel is already stretched too thinly to attend to the technical needs of its principals. The office workload is expected to grow even more with the growing number of House members and the major policy concerns are becoming too complex to comprehend. As such, there is an urgent need to beef up the staff complement of the CPBRD by filling-up the (5) vacant positions. Moreover, aggressive recruitment of new employees has been ongoing. However, this has been hindered due to uncertainty of permanent appointments in the House. As a political organization, political interventions in the hiring and detail of staff have also added to the uncertainty of the recruitment program of the office.

❑ Program Brief

- 6.5. The Human Resource Management Program is divided into two sub-programs:
 - 6.5.1. **Retooling**, which takes into account scholarship and training programs, will equip the staff with additional analytical skills and advanced knowledge that they can apply in their technical and administrative work.
The Department shall seek the assistance of donor agencies and other institutional partners for capability building and strengthening the capacity of CPBRD officers and staff. Even administrative personnel needs to attend periodic trainings for improved efficiency in their work.

For mental health and physical wellness of the staff, they will avail of the various programs that are being offered by the Human Resources Department. A teambuilding session will likewise uphold camaraderie to inspire enthusiasm and promote bonding among officials and staff of the office.
 - 6.5.2. **Recruitment**—the credibility of the CPBRD as a public think tank is a positive factor that draws interest among job applicants and technocrats into joining the Office. Likewise, the CPBRD's established network with various knowledge institutions provides a platform for the office to make itself known with a broader audience in order to attract the most qualified applicants.

CPBRD STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2017 LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Long-term Objective: To continually provide new ideas and technical assistance in the legislation and oversight of socioeconomic, fiscal, and institutional reforms.				
STRATEGIES	PROGRAMS	SUB-PROGRAMS	OBJECTIVES	DESIRED OUTPUT
Develop a research agenda and translate this to timely, accurate, in-depth and relevant knowledge products	Research	Research Agenda Formulation	To come up with timely, relevant and valuable research agenda	List of Legislative Proposals for incoming Congresses Knowledge products on identified legislative priorities
		Statistical Tools and Techniques Enhancement Program	To strengthen CPBRD's capabilities to make macroeconomic forecasts and in determining the impact of policies to the economy and individual sectors	CPBRD's macroeconomic model with emphasis on the impact of fiscal policies on the macroeconomy
			Provide logistical, communication and transportation support for more efficient operations.	Knowledge products containing macroeconomic forecasts using CPBRD's model Oversight Report on Public Service Delivery at the Congressional Level
		Establish and maintain linkages with other HREP offices, government agencies, stakeholders and other knowledge institutions	Networking	Institutional Networking/ Outreach Program
HREP Inter-Office Coordination Program	To facilitate coordination and cooperation in the preparation of inputs to the Legislative Agenda and other technical assistance required by House members.			
Intensify use of information and communication technology in all areas of operations	Infrastructure			ICT Enhancement Program
		To improve access and utilization of ICT facilities by CPBRD staff towards more efficient operations	1:1 Computer to staff ratio	
Enhance efficiency of office operations to better address the growing demands of House members	Infrastructure	Building Improvement Program	To provide a more conducive and safe workplace for employees.	Identified areas for improvement in physical working environment are addressed
		Logistical Support Enhancement Program	Provide logistical, communication and transportation support for more efficient operations.	Availability of logistical, communication and transportation facilities for use in official transactions
	Restructuring	CPBRD Restructuring Program	To re-align organizational structure to cope with increasing demands and expectations	Proposed Re-organizational Plan
	Systems and Standards	Operations Management Program	To streamline office operations and clarify the Department's work processes	Manual of Operations Management Information System
Invest in continuous professional development	Human Resource	Retooling	To equip and upgrade skills of staff through scholarship/training programs	No. of scholars graduated No. of trainings attended
			To promote mental and physical wellness by participating in HREP-sponsored activities	No. of wellness programs attended
		Recruitment	To attract and retain more capable staff	No. of qualified employees hired No. of new hires and contractual employees regularized No. of promotions
	Systems and Standards	Performance Management Program	To formulate standards that will serve as basis for performance evaluation and rating.	Performance standards/ benchmarks
			Develop incentive system to reward outstanding performance	Monetary and non-monetary incentive package.