

Regional Electronic Access to Communication and Health in Eastern Visayas (REACH-EV) (2007-present)

In the aftermath of the February 2006 Guinsaugon Landslide in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte in Eastern Visayas where more than 2000 individuals were buried alive, UNESCO provided a modest US\$ 50,000 emergency grant for the e-disaster management project for Eastern Visayas now referred to as the Regional Electronic Access to Communication and Health in Eastern Visayas (REACH-EV). Eastern Visayas, which is composed of six provinces, is not only among the poorest in the country, it is also a disaster-prone region.

REACH-EV was formally inaugurated on 26 March 2007. It serves as electronic databank on health emergency and disaster management information in Eastern Visayas. It is a one-stop shop that provides basic data services such as web browsing, e-mail and SMS, and serves as a databank on hazards and disasters in the region. It facilitates electronic exchange among the six provinces and the different municipalities in the region. REACH-EV also serves as a library for information materials on various formats on health emergencies and disasters. The 80 sq.m center built from the modest grant serves as venue for ICT learning for health workers and community members. It is located at Government Center, Palo Leyte.

Also ongoing, albeit on a limited scale is content development on health concerns during emergency and disaster situations using public domain information. The focus of the initial content development activities is Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) since this issue cuts across and impact on the other cluster content areas, *i.e.* Nutrition and Public Health.