

## 2nd Progress Report on the MDG launched

The NEDA and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) launched the Philippine Second Progress Report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) last June 16 at the Manila Hotel.

Among the guests present were President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo; Vice President Noli de Castro; former President Fidel V. Ramos; Department of Health Secretary Francisco Duque; Social Watch Director Leonor Briones; and Congressman Nereus Acosta.

Also at the launching were United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative Deborah Landey and Food and Agriculture Organization Representative Ramesh Jain.



President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Secretary Romulo Neri and UNDP Resident Coordinator Deborah Landey during the Millennium Project Report launch.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and NEDA Director General Romulo Neri presented the MDGs' status and trends and said the Philippine remains on track to achieving the MDGs. "There is a high probability of meeting the target of reducing poverty by half in 2015," he averred.

Secretary Neri also expressed confidence that the number of hungry Filipinos will be halved in the next 10 years. Under the MDGs, the government has committed

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## NEDA solicits children's books for regional CKCs

The NEDA Knowledge Center of the Development Information Staff (DIS), in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), solicited donations of textbooks, reference books and other educational materials for children aged 5 to 12 years. This Book Donation activity held early this year is part two of a project that began in October 2004.

For 2005, the sole donor is Unang Lingap Kapwa Philippines of the Children International Philippines. The group's commitment is to donate each quarter 300 textbooks on math, science and English.

Recipients of the donations are Children's Knowledge Centers (CKCs) in 24 provinces across the country. For the first quarter, books and education materials were given to the CKCs of Masbate, Aurora, Quezon and Isabela while for the second quarter, recipients included CKCs of Antique, Sultan Kudarat and Sulu.

DIS coordinates with the UNICEF and the donor. The UNICEF is in charge of delivering the donations to the recipients. ■

# 2nd Progress Report on the Millennium Development Goals The Philippines: On Track

(Part 1 of 2)

The Philippines has made significant strides toward the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Challenges, however remain. The Second Report on the MDGs launched recently by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) shows that the Philippines will likely achieve the targets on reducing poverty by half in 2015, child mortality, and the incidence of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS and improving dietary requirements, gender equality in education and access to safe drinking water. The country, however, still faces challenges in closing the gaps for maternal health, access to reproductive health services, nutrition and primary education.

The report revealed that many of the targets will mostly be achieved at the national level. There are wide disparities across regions, however, with some regions having difficulty of achieving some targets compared with others.

## GOAL 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

**Target 1:** Halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015. As of 2003, 30.4 percent of Filipinos were considered income poor compared to 33 percent of Filipinos in 2000. According to Secretary Socioeconomic Planning Romulo Neri, if the annual rate of decline (-1.24%) is compared with the annual rate of decline to reach the target (-.65%), then there is a high probability of halving the poverty incidence in 2011.

The Report said income poor families are those earning below per capita poverty threshold of P12,267 in 2003. Earnings rose across all regions except for Metro Manila, CALABARZON and Northern Mindanao. The poverty situation in 2003 revealed the wide disparities in poverty incidence across regions. The ARMM and Regions XIII and IX were the poorest regions due, among others, to the peace and order situation.

**Target 2:** Halve the proportion of the population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption and halve the proportion of underweight children (under five years old). According to the Report, the quality and quantity of absolute food intake of Filipino households generally improved. The proportion of Filipino households with per capita dietary intake lower than 100 percent dietary

energy requirement decreased from 69.4 percent in 1993 to 56.9 percent in 2003, or an annual rate of reduction of 1.23 percent. To meet the MDG target of 34.7 percent by 2015, this needs to be reduced by 1.85 percent every year.

The prevalence of underweight preschool children also declined from 30.6 percent in 2001 to 27.6 percent in 2003. Eleven out of the 17 regions had prevalence rates higher than the national level of 27.6 percent. In 2001-2004, the National Nutrition Council (NNC) formulated the Action for Nutrition Improvement or ANI to improve nutritional status of children aside from the implementation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN).

## GOAL 2: Achieve universal primary education

**Target 3:** Achieve universal access to primary education by 2015. The Report said the participation rate at the elementary level, based on the school-age population of 6-11 years, registered at 90.05 percent in school year (SY) 2002-2003. Across regions, the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) had the highest participation rate of 91.37 percent while the lowest was the National Capital Region (NCR), with 77.15 percent.

Cohort survival at the elementary level improved from 67.21 percent in SY 2000-2001 to 69.84 percent in SY 2002-2003. The completion rate rose slightly from 66.13 percent to 66.85; and the dropout rate. From 7.67 percent to 7.34 percent. The ARMM had the lowest cohort survival and completion rates at 47.49 percent and 42.91 percent, respectively. In contrast, Region I had the highest cohort survival and completion rates of 87.47 percent and 84.09 percent, respectively.

Based on the 2003 Functional Literacy Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS), the simple literacy rate stood at 93.9 percent, one of the highest in Southeast Asia.

## GOAL 3: Promote gender equality

**Target 4:** Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education not later than 2015. Secretary Neri asserts: "We have already achieved our targets under this goal." He said that the data cover only public schools as data from private schools are not yet available. Disparity is generally minimal across regions at the elementary level

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except in the ARMM, which posted a gender parity index (defined as the ratio of female to male values of an indicator) of 1.10 (93.31% for female against 84.85% for male).

Females have an advantage over males in all three levels of education in areas such as simple literacy rate, participation and cohort survival rate, completion rate and number of graduates in higher education.

Overall, the country's gender-related development index (GDI) based on the UNDP Human Development Report improved from 0.73 in 1998 to 0.751 in 2002. This means that gender inequality in terms of healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living is slowly being reduced.

#### **GOAL 4: Reduce child mortality**

**Target 5:** Reduce children under-five mortality rate by two-thirds by 2015. The report says that there is high probability of achieving the targets for under-five and infant mortality rates. Both have been declining steadily for the past 10 years at an average annual rate faster than the required rate of decline.

Infant and child mortality rates have decreased over the past 10 years from 34 to 29 infant deaths per 1,000 live births and from 54 to 40 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively. However, a concern is the repeated decline in the number of children immunized before they turn a year old. In 2002, about 62 percent of the target population was immunized, lower than the 65 percent immunization rate in 2000. ■

*to be continued*

*2nd Progress Report...continued from page 1*

to reduce extreme hunger to 34.7 by 2015 from the current 56.9 percent.

He said there is a high probability that the Philippines will achieve MDG targets on reducing child mortality and the incidence of tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS, as well as improving gender equality and providing basic amenities like safe drinking water. However, the government and all sectors of society should work harder to achieve targets on improving maternal health, decreasing prevalence of malnutrition; increasing access to reproductive health and; achieving universal primary education.

"We all know the goals are ambitious. But we can make dramatic changes if all sectors of society work together to achieve these goals," he said.

To address the gaps in financing the MDGs, Secretary Neri outlined actions which include revenue generation through tax collection and savings generation; a more coherent and coordinated cooperation from local government units, private sector and civil society; expansion of microfinance services to the poor; and pursuit of projects with high economic impact. ■

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# Situation of Women and Children in the Bicol Region

(last of two parts)

In terms of maternal mortality rate, one Bicolano mother died per 1000 in 2002 and 2003. The leading causes of maternal deaths are hemorrhages, eclampsia and perpetual infections.

More deliveries were attended by trained hilots and medical personnel; 47.23 percent and 47.92 percent of total deliveries were attended by trained hilots in 2002 and 2003, respectively. On the other hand, 46.83 percent and 46.42 percent of total deliveries were attended by Medical Personnel in 2002 and 2003, respectively.

The proportion of women who received Tetanus Toxoid (TT2+) was 70 percent.

**Table 1**  
**Proportion of Women Given TT2+, by province, 2001 and 2003**

Province	2001	2003
Albay	58	64
Camarines Norte	60	57
Camarines Sur	41	83
Catanduanes	47	55
Masbate	47	73
Sorsogon	56	60
Iriga City	52	70
Legazpi City	57	55
Naga City	22	90

Source: DOH V



## Water and Sanitation

There have been an increasing number of households with access to safe water. In 2001, 8 of 10 families have access to safe drinking water while 7 of 10 households have sanitary toilets.



## Education

More children go to school today. However, not all Bicolano children are in school. In SY 2003-2004, majority (92%) of children aged 7-12 are in elementary. Only 55% of children aged 13-16 are enrolled in high school.

There is still a number of children enrolled in elementary and high school who will not reach and finish the highest grade or year level.

The Cohort Survival Rate is highest in Camarines Norte (79.84) while lowest in Masbate (51.71) in the elementary level. In high school, the highest is Albay (79.74) and the lowest is Masbate (64.18).

Out of 10 children who enter Grade 1, only 7 will reach and finish Grade 6.

Out of 10 children who enter First year, only 8 will reach 4th year but only 7 will be able to graduate in high school.

Only 6 of 10 first year students in Masbate will graduate High School while 8 of 10 in Albay.

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On the teacher: pupil/student ratio, there is one teacher for every 32 elementary students and one teacher for every 39 high school students in the region.

Bicolano school children have been registering low achievement levels. The National Achievement Test Average for SY 2002-2003 for elementary pupils was 42.89 percent, way below the desired performance level of 75 percent.



*Day Care Centers*

Of the 3,471 total barangays in Bicol, 3,105 (89%) barangays have Day Care Centers (DDCs).

There have been an increasing number of Day Care Workers (DCW) in the region. DCWs increased by seven percent from 3,562 in 2002 to 3,803 in 2003.

### **Children in Need of Special Protection**

The most common juvenile cases are:

- Theft
- Rape
- Robbery
- Use of prohibited substance

In 2001, 352 children were provided protective services, 280 in 2002 and 150 in 2003.

**Table 2**  
**Number of children provided with protection services**

	2002	2003
Sexually abused	81	71
Neglected	74	20
Children in conflict with the law	56	1
Physically abused/ maltreated /battered	21	23
Victims of child labor	5	no data
Abandoned	5	3

**Table 3**  
**Cases of physical abuse of women**

	2002	2003
Physically abused	46	44
Sexually abused	9	4
Emotionally abused	27	no data
Others	3	9

In the case of women, 48 percent and 77 percent of Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances (WEDC) were physically abused in 2002 and 2003 respectively.

The situation of children in Bicol is not grim. There are bright spots. What is needed is for government and the private sector to pool their efforts and resources to create a child friendly environment, and to instill in our children optimism and hope for a brighter future ahead of them. ■



# CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN REGION XII

(first of two parts)

Every Filipino child has the right to education which government is obliged to provide. And the kind of education that every child receives is dependent on the quality of instruction; appropriate learning materials; and, adequate learning and instructional facilities being provided by both public and private learning institutions. It is also through relevant education that the talents and inherent potentials of every Filipino child are fully developed in order to give him the opportunity to become a productive and an efficient member of the community.

## Right to Information

### Simple Literacy

Simple literacy refers to the ability of a population aged 10-64 years old, to read and write simple message in any language or dialect. In 1994, simple literacy among the population was highest in Cotabato City at 97.66 percent. Also, both male and female literates in Cotabato City were recorded the highest at 98.11

percent and 97.27 percent, respectively. On the other hand, Cotabato Province recorded the lowest simple literacy at about 89.36 percent with male literates at about 89.76 percent and female literates at 88.91 percent.

### Functional Literacy

Functional literacy refers to the ability of the population aged 10-64 years old to perform basic numerical skills. In 1994, highest functional literacy was in Cotabato City where 93.94 percent were found to be functionally literate. This means that ten out of 100 had deficiency in numeracy skills. Cotabato Province had the lowest at 72.76 percent or about 27 out of 100 were functionally illiterate. As recorded, about 92.73 percent of the males and 95 percent of the females in Cotabato City were functionally literate. Lowest functional literacy among the males was registered at 70.53 percent in South Cotabato while female functional literacy was recorded at 76.07 percent in Cotabato Province. ■

(to be continued)

**Table 1**  
**Simple and Functional Literacy by Province and city,**  
**CY 1994, Region XII**

Province/City	Female	Male	Both Sexes
<b>Simple Literacy</b>			
Cotabato Province	88.91	89.76	89.36
South Cotabato	89.46	90.84	90.21
Sultan Kudarat	95.40	95.10	95.94
Cotabato City	97.27	98.11	97.66
General Santos City	96.14	97.24	96.72
<b>Functional Literacy</b>			
Cotabato Province	76.07	79.81	72.76
South Cotabato	76.76	70.53	73.63
Sultan Kudarat	80.67	76.71	78.63
Cotabato City	95.00	92.73	93.94
General Santos City	88.75	75.35	81.74

Source: FLEMMS/NSCB

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