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 ISSUE EDITOR: Roderick Toledo

Youth survey uncovers many disturbing trends.

Young, Filipino, and without hope

By Louie-An M. Pilapil

PopDev Media Service

Our youth, Jose Rizal's fair hope of our motherland, harbor a general feeling of hopelessness.

This is among the disturbing findings of the latest Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS3) by the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI). YAFS3 recently surveyed 20,000 young Filipinos aged 15 to 27 nationwide.

Contrary to common belief, the youth are not carefree but are sensitive and deeply affected by social realities. "It means that they are also feeling the uncertain economic and political situation in the country and this may have repercussions on their behavior, particularly those related to sexuality," said Dr. Elizabeth Ventura, YAFS3 project team member and chair of the UP College of Social Sciences and Philosophy.

"It's like a syndrome. Because of hopelessness, they turn to risky behavior," said Dr. Corazon Raymundo, YAFS3 project coordinator. "They turn to peers and find exciting things to do. They replace with risky behavior the more positive things that they're supposed to do but

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could not do.” Many adolescents had to stop going to school because of poverty and therefore are more prone to exhibit risky behavior. Sad to say, there are more out-of-school youth now than ever before. The primary school completion rate has fallen from 72.1 percent in 1996-97 to 69.3 percent in 1999-2000. The secondary school completion rate fell from 48.4 percent in 1995-96 to 47.6 percent in 1996-97 and then to 46.4 percent in 1999-2000.

Dr. Raymundo noted that a higher incidence of smoking, drinking and drug-taking has been observed and that sex has become a release for many young people. YAFS3 reports that “46 percent of about 16,000 youth representing the country’s 15 to 24 population have tried smoking. This represents an eight percent increase from the 1994 level of 38 percent. Moreover, there is a drastic increase in youth’s consumption of alcoholic beverages and use of illegal drugs. In 1994, a little over half of Filipinos 15 to 24 admitted to have tried drinking alcohol. This increased to 70 percent in 2002. Drug use among adolescents and young adults almost doubled from six percent who admitted using any form of illegal drugs in 1994 to 11 percent in 2002. About 18 percent of 15 to 24-year olds in 1994 had experienced premarital sex. The corresponding figure for 2002 is 23 percent.”

It is also very common for early premarital sex experiences to be unprotected and could therefore result in unplanned pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

“Why do they get into these kinds of things? If you look around, you see that factors around them have contributed (to this condition). If the parents separate, if they lack parental supervision, if their connection to the school system is loose because of the big number of students,” they are left to their own devices. “The institutions that are supposed to keep the values intact are slowly losing their grip on the youth. Where do our young people get their cue?”

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The cheapest forms of entertainment are watching television and going to the movies. The spread of the Internet has also given them a medium where they can access information and images easily, most of the time without parental supervision.

“If you make an inventory or content analysis of what are shown in media, they are not the wholesome kind of sex practices or behavior. Teenagers also always conceal the fact that they watch pornographic materials. These are readily available and very accessible,” Raymundo narrated. “This is probably why the youth form a negative concept about sex. They know sex is normal but the way they would practice it is not within the normal range of how sex should be perceived or practiced.” Media often stylize sex and violent sexual behavior in movies and music videos. They make roughness look appealing. Despite greater gender sensitivity, women are still often portrayed as sexual objects as evidenced by the scantily clad dancers and bold stars on daytime and prime time TV.

It is clear that media contribute to negative perceptions about sex. What then is the root of this negative energy that emanates from the young? What could have made them predict a dim future for themselves?

“I think they’re being realistic. Now with the economic downturn, terrorism, peer problems, peace and order problems, rape, incest...when they see that their parents are unemployed and fight all the time,” said Raymundo, “(the youth) then turn to drugs. There is no reason for young people, especially, those in the C, D, E economic bracket, to see good things.” Poverty, social and family problems rob the youth of hope.

Despite all the skepticism and negative behavior shown by many of the young nowadays, there is no need to aggravate it by barking up the wrong tree.

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“Being a social scientist, I observe that (these sexual attitudes and behavior) are the new wave. If we put the blame on the youth, I don’t think we’ll get anywhere,” Raymundo emphasized.

It is essential that government and the private sector work together to forge a strong population and reproductive health program geared towards responding to the needs of the youth. Parents, teachers and spiritual leaders should work together to create a better environment and strengthen the resolve of today’s youth and give them hope for a brighter tomorrow. Despite hardships, our youth should realize that the strongest thing that sustains humankind is hope. —

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As women's incomes increase, so does their range of options.

Micro-credit bears big fruits

By Raymond Lim Toledo

PopDev Media Service

“As women get empowered, as their economic situations improve, they discover their capacity to make choices, instead of being bound by poverty that gives them no options.”

Living proof of this, says Bukidnon Rep. Neric Acosta, is BULIG, a micro-credit cooperative in Bukidnon that grew from 25 women-members and less than P100,000 in 1988 to 6,500 women-members and P54 million in 2003.

BULIG’s empowerment of women is so tangible, its co-founder Acosta says, “You can almost touch and see the rise in their self-confidence and self-esteem, the increase in their dynamism, as they discover their power to generate income on their own, to decide on their own, and improve the lives of their families.”

BULIG is the Cebuano word for “mutual help” and is the acronym for “Barangay Unified Livelihood Investment through Grameen (Banking).” Grameen banking is development banking for the poorest of the poor pioneered by the world-famous Grameen Bank of Bangladesh.

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It differs from traditional commercial banking in two basic ways: first, while the target-borrowers of commercial banks are the rich—on the assumption that they pose less credit risk—Grameen banking has the poor as its target market; and second, while commercial banks always require collateral, Grameen banking lends business capital without any collateral.

In lieu of collateral, small cooperatives are organized, wherein all members become equally responsible for each member's loan. As a result, there is constant peer pressure on each borrower to pay on time. Another major incentive for prompt repayment is once a loan is fully paid, the borrower is given access to a higher loan amount.

So far, BULIG's results have been very encouraging, with nearly 100 percent on-time loan repayment.

With access to micro-credit, BULIG's women-members, who are mostly wives of poor farmers, have started and sustained small businesses like *sari-sari* stores, backyard poultry, piggery, and other livelihood projects.

BULIG was founded by Rep. Acosta and his mother, Socorro, who is also currently mayor of Manolo Fortich town, as the flagship project of "Bukidnon Integrated Network of Home Industries, Inc." whose acronym BINHI is also the Cebuano word for "seed." It is active in all eight municipalities -- Baungon, Kalilangan, Libona, Malitbog, Manolo Fortich, Pangantukan, Sumilao and Talacag -- covered by the first district of Bukidnon.

Before he started his first term (1998 –2001) in Congress, Rep. Acosta devoted three years to being executive director of BULIG. Even now that he is in his second term as congressman, however, he continues to give top priority to supporting BULIG, which he considers his most significant contribution so far to population and human development work.

He reflects: "The BULIG experience exemplifies the holistic approach we should take regarding population and human development. You cannot address demographic issues outside

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the context of human development issues such as economic and political empowerment. Nor can you ignore demographic issues such as too rapid birth rates when you tackle economic and political empowerment. Further, the principle that human development is the expansion of people's choices should also be reflected in freedom of choice for the citizenry on the family planning method they are most comfortable with, given their respective faiths and value systems.”

Having been subjected to not a small amount of controversy himself, Rep. Acosta notes: “I am fully aware of the theological doctrines and sensitivities involved in this controversy. However, I am not a theologian. I am a policymaker. It is my job to look five, 10, 20 years down the road at the likely effects of our present policies, and advocate what I see will be of greatest good to our nation.

“I have been subjected to nearly every form of harassment because of my advocacy of freedom of choice. As a liberal democrat, as a human being, I cannot agree to any curtailment of basic human rights, such as freedom of thought, of speech, of faith, of choice.”

He calls for constant reality checks. “We must see reality for what it is. For example, I completely understand the church position that it is against the promotion of contraceptives or artificial family planning methods because it could encourage promiscuity, premarital and extra-marital sex, which would violate the religious principle that only married couples should engage in sex, primarily for the purpose of procreation. Which means that if you cannot afford to have a big family, you should abstain from sex during your wife's fertile period. You are not supposed to have sex simply for the pleasure of it. Such a situation, wherein only married couples have sex, wherein husbands and wives stay 100 percent faithful to each other, would of course be ideal. It would prevent a lot of broken homes, social and personal problems. But what is the reality?

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“The reality is that even the church is confronted with the problem of maintaining celibacy among its ranks, as indicated by the recent rash of scandals. If priests and nuns who have undergone years of theological education and spiritual strengthening find it difficult to control their God-given natural sexual urges as human beings, what more ordinary people, especially the millions who are too poor to finish even high school, let alone college? The situation is made worse by mass media and popular culture that promote extremely perverse values. So this is reality—millions engaging in premarital and extra-marital sex every day. Also, millions of married couples having sex during the wife’s fertile period—even if they already have more children than they can support. If we do not make contraceptives easily available to them, they will still have sex, with greater chances of their irresponsible acts resulting in the tragic reality of unwanted pregnancies.

Rep. Acosta defines his bottom line: “We must be responsible for every Filipino born – especially when you’re a policymaker. We cannot turn a blind eye to millions of Filipino babies being born to impoverished parents who are totally unprepared to provide for the basic needs of their children for food, shelter, education, clothing, health care, etc. These children will grow up retarded, malnourished, uneducated, unemployed. In turn, they will give birth to more Filipinos who will suffer even more miserable fates. We must find ways to stop this vicious and criminal cycle.”

BULIG helps show the way for a sustained effort that gives women the ability to break this cycle and choose what is best for their family, including their desired number of children. —

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"Our mission is to save lives."

The art of peddling the condom

By Louise Mallari

PopDev Media Service

How does one sell a product with an unsavory reputation?

“It takes guts, a lot of creative thinking, and a noble purpose,” said Benny Llapitan, Jr., marketing director of DKT Philippines, Inc., distributor of Trust condoms and oral contraceptives.

“First and foremost, we look at our mission,” Llapitan said. “The basis of it all is our mission. The mission is the delivery of affordable contraceptive products to those who need them most. Our mission is to save lives.”

Studies reveal that the word “condom” has a negative connotation, according to Llapitan. He said the word is always associated with “illicit sex.” DKT had to find a way to make the condom lose its negative image and thought of the brand name “Trust.” It was the perfect label. “Trust, the brand itself, has a very positive ring to it,” he said.

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“When we encounter irritants or challenges, we consider these part of the game. It would not be exciting if they weren’t there. Although it probably would make our lives easier if they weren’t there.”

Among the obstacles to condom use is the machismo of Filipino men who think that “skin to skin” sex is better, and other misconceptions like condoms break easily, are carriers of the AIDS virus, etc. Other considerations are, as Llapitan puts it, “the questions and irritations derived from the Catholic Church and other ‘morally upright’ Filipinos who would rather be ‘morally upright’ than have a better life.”

The Philippines is a predominantly Catholic country and the Church wields considerable influence over how Filipinos think and act. The opposition to modern contraceptive methods posed by the Church has prompted organizations and distributors like DKT to employ creative and out-of-the-box ideas to promote condom use especially among the youth.

To begin with, the condom does not seem to be a preferred form of contraception. Studies show low condom usage although it is also the only effective barrier to the spread of sexually transmitted infections. In a study among men aged 14-45 conducted by the De La Salle University in 2000, 70 percent of the respondents said they did not use condoms. Behavioral surveillance studies conducted by the Department of Health in the same year also showed that condom use was low.

But DKT has made a lot of headway. The social marketing company’s efforts have been successful in promoting proper and consistent condom use through intensive media campaigns and low-cost pricing.

Funds from a bilateral agreement between the governments of the Philippines and Germany help shoulder the purchase of the commodity while the cost of advertising and promotions comes from The David and Lucille Packard Foundation. Recently, the US Agency for

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International Development (USAID) extended additional marketing support to DKT for the promotion of new contraceptive products (a new oral contraceptive pill and an injectable) and condoms for high-risk groups such as truck drivers, dock workers and sex workers.

The strategies seem to be working as DKT celebrated a milestone by reaching the 100 million mark in condom sales three years ago. The non-profit, non-stock organization sold 250,000 condoms in 1990 and hopes to reach the 200 million mark by 2005.

“Last year, we sold a total of 29 million condoms. Sales increased by about 500 percent since we started operations in 1990,” Llapitan reported.

One of DKT’s goals is to instill the value of responsibility in Filipinos. Thus, it is at the forefront in promoting the shift from purely public dependence for the delivery of contraceptive commodities to a purely commercial one. “Since the 60s the Philippines has been the recipient of all these grants and aid. It has become a part of our lives. *Wala na tayong ginawa kundi humingi. Nakakalimutan natin ang* responsibility towards ourselves,” Llapitan said. “When we established DKT back in the early 1990s, the main objective was for us to be able to, hopefully, teach the Filipino a little responsibility. *Matanggal naman natin ang* mendicant mentality.”

Another approach used by DKT to promote condoms is the Frenzy Mobile Outreach Team (FMOT), a group of young people who promote responsible sexual behavior through popular media. The team reaches out to people from 18-30 years old, in and out of schools or workplaces as well as in barangay centers in Manila and nearby areas in Luzon. Messages on safe sex practices and adolescent reproductive health are presented in ways that are appealing to young people. Discussions on topics relevant to young people are facilitated and initiated by their peers. Rap music and innovative short films on these subjects will also be produced.

When asked why the latest promotional campaign targets the youth, Llapitan answered: “We responded to a need that we saw. The University of the Philippines came out with the Young

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Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS2). And the study showed that there was a high percentage of youth and young adults who are very sexually active. And yet 70 percent of those young people don't even think of or understand contraception or protection from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. It's a big problem.”

Llapitan added that through education and social marketing young adults can become aware of the options they can take as regards sexual behavior.

Hard work and patience will hopefully make people, especially the young, aware of the choices available to them to protect themselves. With skill and market savvy, a condom will no longer be something we will buy discreetly. — *PopDev Media Service*

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Why we remain poor even as our Asian neighbors get richer...

RP caught in low-level equilibrium trap

By Roderick Toledo

PopDev Media Service

Why have our Asian neighbors consistently progressed while our country has not? Why are they exporting cars and modern appliances while we export domestic helpers?

Even as we look upon our Asian neighbors' economic progress with envy, "we find ourselves in a low-level equilibrium trap, a vicious circle characterized by low rates of economic growth, high rates of population growth and poverty, and low levels of saving and investment that we cannot seem to break and get out of," says Dr. Ernesto M. Pernia, formerly Professor of Economics at the University of the Philippines and currently Lead Economist at the Asian Development Bank.

When we look at our progressive Asian neighbors—China, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Thailand—we see that, without exception, each one has had a clear population policy with a strong family planning program that provides modern contraceptive methods.

This we do not have.

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Of course the lack of a strong population policy is not the only reason for the bind we are in, adds Pernia. It is a combination of factors, including bad governance, inconsistent economic policies, poor physical infrastructure, and low capital investments in education and health. But our lack of a strong population policy is a truly glaring omission on the part of government and Philippine society in general.

Rapid population growth leads to a high dependency burden. In the Philippines, our dependency burden is one is to three or one productive adult having to support three unproductive children and adults. With so many mouths to feed, bodies to clothe, house, keep healthy, and minds to educate, most Filipinos are not able to save much, if any.

Figures for 1999 show that our ratio of savings against gross national product was only 16 percent, whereas Indonesia had 24 percent and Thailand, 32 percent.

A low savings rate translates to low capital formation and therefore low investments in physical infrastructure like roads and bridges, education, health, housing and so on, which in turn translate to a poorly-educated, non-competitive population with low productivity. And the cycle goes on and on, each factor compounding the others, poverty breeding greater poverty.

Our labor productivity has not only stagnated, it has actually declined continuously over the years, from P38,002 in 1981 to P32,882 in 2001. For us to be competitive and to progress, we need a highly educated labor force, not a large but substandard one. The advent of globalization and the unrestricted flow of foreign-made products into our country are certainly making it more difficult for us because we have to compete both locally and internationally.

It is ironic that when we began our population program in 1969, it became the model for other Asian countries to follow. When Thailand launched its program in 1970—modeled after ours—the two countries had very similar high population growth rates. Ours was about 3.1 percent while Thailand's was slightly higher at about 3.2 percent. Now, Thailand has a population

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growth rate of about 1.1 percent versus our 2.3 percent.

After our population program's successful early years back in the 70s, it was progressively dismantled and it has been downhill for us ever since. Much of the blame can be placed on a nosy Catholic Church hierarchy that interferes on matters in which it is not an authority and a soft State that cannot seem to enforce laws. "Our perennial problem has been a *hard Church* and a *soft State*," notes Dr. Pernia.

We cannot wait for economic development to answer for our people's needs. The argument that we have to develop before we can reduce our population growth is as nonsensical as pushing natural family planning instead of modern contraceptive methods. Look at Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Kerala state in India. Despite their relatively lower per capita incomes (compared to the Philippines), they are exerting efforts and are thus making great strides in their family planning programs.

The failure of government to institute a clear and consistent population policy and push a strong population program is anti-poor, a point that needs to be underscored, according to Dr. Pernia. It is the low-income families who suffer when they are denied access to modern family planning methods. The rich and educated families can easily afford and have access to these methods and are therefore able to regulate their fertility.

Everybody realizes the problem and the solution is simple, really. The President, especially now that she has declared she would not run for office, should not be timid. She should not be held hostage by the Catholic Church anymore. She should just say, "We've got a problem, we've got to address this problem head on" and fund a strong family planning program. And we have to do it double-time or triple-time because we are late in the game. We have been left so far behind. — *PopDev Media Service*

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Poverty strikes down the most helpless among us.

225 Filipino children die every day

By Haydee Parras

PopDev Media Service

Here's the latest bad news. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), about 82,000 Filipino children younger than five years old die every year. This translates to about 225 Filipino children who die every day. Of the 225, about 176 are infants less than a year old.

The main causes of children's deaths are malnutrition and infection. Malnutrition weakens the resistance of children to infection, leaving them vulnerable to leading causes of death like diarrhea, pneumonia, malaria and vaccine-preventable diseases.

To illustrate the nation's infant mortality rate, the local Unicef head once said, "It's like loading up a jumbo jet every day with about 200 Filipino babies and then letting the plane crash."

Further, about 4.1 million out of around 33 million Filipino children (below 18 years old) are working instead of studying. Two million of the working children toil under hazardous conditions.

It is notable that most of the infant deaths come from low-income families.

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The direct relationship between poverty and children's deaths is clear. Children die early because their parents cannot afford to provide them with adequate food, health care, shelter, clean water, and the like. The logic is cruel in its simplicity.

While no one denies the relationship between the income status of parents and the health status of their children, there appears to be official denial of the actual state of Philippine poverty, as though the problem of poverty can be solved by pretending it's not there. For example, according to latest data (year 2000) from the National Statistics Office (NSO), the poverty threshold in the Philippines is P37.84 per person per day. You can be considered poor only when you have less than this amount. Thus, a couple with two children with a combined income of P151.36 per day or P4,540.80 per month is not supposed to be poor.

However, you can ask any Filipino if the basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, electricity, water, transport fare, etc. can be met with P4,540.80 per month. The reality is that it is simply impossible to do so. Perhaps the nation's leaders should prove to the nation that P151.36 per day is enough to meet a family's basic needs by letting their own families survive on such a budget, even for just a few days.

At any rate, even with the window-dressed poverty threshold, official figures indicate that 39.4% of Filipinos are poor, i.e., they are struggling to survive on less than P151.36 per family per day.

As early as 1997, the private research group IBON pegged the minimum daily cost of living for a family of six at P335.21 (at a time when government set the poverty threshold at P146.05). Using this figure, 77.8% of Filipinos fell below the poverty line. Since the cost of living in 2003 is definitely higher than in 1997, and considering the prevailing economic crisis that has greatly increased the unemployment rate, one can only imagine the living conditions of millions of Filipino families.

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Given such a situation where at least 80 per cent of the population cannot afford to meet their minimum basic needs, a high death rate for children comes as no surprise.

What then should be done?

Common sense tells us that if a couple can hardly afford to feed themselves, then it is a highly irresponsible, even criminal, act for them to have children whom they obviously cannot support. Parents who subject a helpless child to slow death because they cannot afford to provide for the child are, in a way, guilty of murder. Further, the vicious cycle of poverty is perpetuated and exacerbated each time impoverished parents give birth to another generation of uneducated, malnourished, impoverished Filipinos who will in turn give birth to another generation of the same.

Unfortunately, instead of coming up with a coherent and effective program to help Filipino couples become responsible parents or not have more children than they can support, the nation's leaders in both public and private sectors are paralyzed by endless debates on whether to promote both natural and artificial family planning methods, or to promote only natural methods and exclude all artificial methods (as advocated by the powerful Catholic Church).

Another aspect of the debate is the argument that poverty is the problem, not responsible parenthood, that is, couples will become better-educated, responsible parents once the roots of poverty are properly addressed. Proponents of this viewpoint to the trend in developed countries, where well-educated couples with many career options tend to have only the number of children they can adequately support. This is all well and good, except that it fails to answer the question: Considering that it will take decades or centuries to fully address the structural roots of poverty, what do we do in the meantime? What do we do about the problem of parents having more children than they can adequately support?

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One clear indicator of the state of paralysis is the consistent absence of any mention of the need to promote responsible parenthood in two successive “State of the Nation” (SONA) addresses by the incumbent president before the Philippine Congress.

In the meantime, as the debates continue, as government fails to muster the political will to resolve the controversy, about 225 Filipino children die daily. — *PopDev Media Service*

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"High fertility and slow economic growth slow down people's health improvement."

More people, less health services

By Bernard Supetran
PopDev Media Service

The high population growth rate increases demand for health services and greatly affects the government's capacity to provide them.

This was the overarching theme of a report on the health dimensions of population growth written by Dr. Alejandro Herrin, a faculty member of the University of the Philippines School of Economics and an authority on the issue of population and development. The research forms part of the book *The Ties That Bind: Population and Development in the Philippines*, which was launched recently by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

"High fertility and slow economic growth slow down health status improvement, and poor health status helps slow down economic growth in the long run," Herrin cites in his paper.

Our slow economic growth has prevented the generation of more per capita public sector spending for health. Total health expenditure (in 1985 prices) was P451 per person in 2000. Since this figure is for the whole year, dividing it by 12 means per capita public expenditure per month is only about P37.58!

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Households' share in total health expenses was still 41 percent — which means that the burden on individual families is heavy. And because of the continued high rates of poverty, many families are thus less able to provide for their health needs. The national health insurance system, as of 2000, was absorbing only 7 percent of total health expenditures.

Herrin examines the demographic outlook given low, medium and high fertility scenarios and outlines the health care needs of various age groups. He also points to the need for a restructuring of funding sources, a more empowered role for local health care units and the need to make health care accessible to the poorest sector of the society.

“The country is faced not only with huge geographical disparities in infant mortality rates and nutrient-deficient children but also with inadequate basic health services in terms of environmental sanitation and child health care. For instance, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao had a 71.1 infant mortality rate per 1,000 births, compared to Metro Manila’s 37.6 in 1995,” Herrin says.

Moreover, the report says that the country has higher population growth and mortality rates, and a lower improvement on life expectancy and capital spending on health compared to neighboring Asian nations such as South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

This problem becomes more pronounced among children. In 1998, the country had some 9.2 million underweight children aged 0 to 5 years old. Statistics also show that infant mortality rate would have been significantly lowered in the countryside if vaccines and basic services have been more available.

With a population of 78 million, Filipinos are expected to hit at least 82 million by the year 2005, based on a 2.3 percent annual growth rate. Thus, important reforms in the quality of health service aside from a higher budgetary allocation are needed.

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According to the paper, the Department of Health (DOH) is already addressing this need by formulating the five-point Health Sector Reform Agenda to improve delivery of health care.

These are providing fiscal autonomy to public hospitals so they can collect socialized user fees and reduce their dependence on government subsidy; securing funding for priority public health programs through multi-year budgets; and developing local health systems to ensure effective and efficient delivery of basic services under the devolved system. Furthermore, the DOH is also strengthening the capacity of health regulatory agencies to ensure safe and quality access to affordable health services, and expanding the coverage of the National Health Insurance Program, especially to the poor.

Herrin concludes his report by citing the need for continuity in the programs of the DOH to ensure the success of the reforms being carried out.

The Ties That Bind is published by the AIM Policy Center in cooperation with the Philippine Center for Population and Development, and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Backed by empirical data from independent researches and government agencies, the 132-page book contains comprehensive discourses on important concerns such as food security, mass housing, basic education, government resources and population dynamics and how these affect economic development.

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