



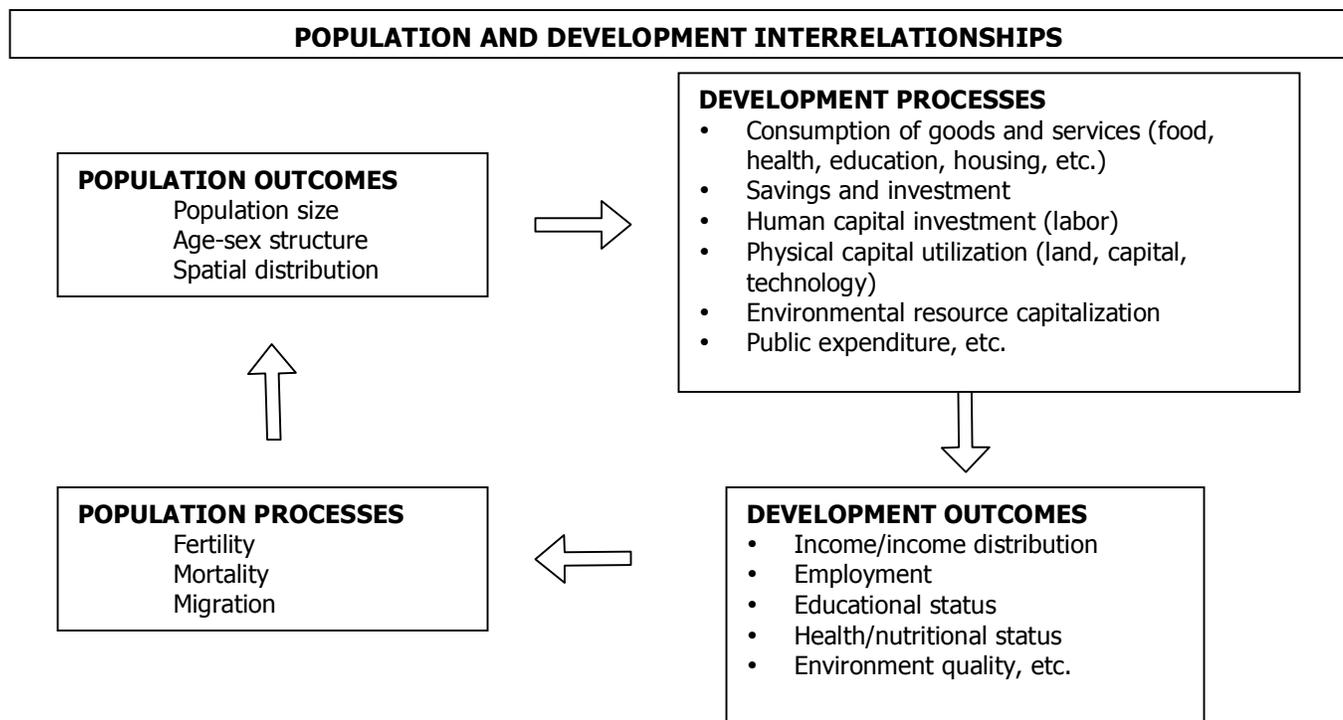
# POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT PRIMER

**Population** is the number of people at any given place, at a particular time. The size of a population is determined by a confluence of three processes: **fertility** (births), **mortality** (deaths), and **migration** (people moving in and out of a community). A population is an aggregate or combined set of individuals with varied characteristics. **Age** and **sex** are the two primary characteristics of a population.

## **Why adopt a population and development perspective?**

Population dynamics influence all aspects of human, social, and economic development. As such, working on population issues is an important step towards achieving sustainable development and meeting the Millennium Development Goals, a list of benchmarks identified by the United Nations as the basic needs that global society must meet in order to significantly reduce, if not eradicate.

The Philippine Center for Population and Development (PCPD) has adopted a framework that shows the interrelations between the processes and outcomes of population and development.



Fertility, mortality and migration – the three basic population processes – affect a nation or a community’s size, the distribution of the population according to age and sex, and the distribution across its various geographic areas. These, in turn, affect the consumption of goods and services, the utilization of human, physical and environmental resources, and other processes needed to run a community. These development processes lead to concrete outcomes for individual members of a population, such as employment and income, educational attainment, health and overall quality of life – all of which will affect a person’s response regarding the three population processes.

## **What does population have to do with:**

**The environment** – The size of a given population directly impacts the environment where the population resides, both in terms of the basic resources that the population needs to survive and the capacity of the environment to replenish itself from continuous use by the population whose needs it supports. A large population depending on the environment for its survival needs will take a bigger toll on that environment compared with a smaller population with the same needs. One must also remember that humans are not the only living creatures in the ecosystem; we co-exist with populations of flora and fauna, and it is necessary to maintain a balanced and healthy environment where all species can thrive. With the impacts of global warming and climate change becoming more prominent in the last decade or so, human populations must learn to adapt accordingly. *Mulat Pinoy’s Kapihan Session on Population and Environment is scheduled on January 16.*

**Government resources** – Policymakers and government officials need to keep constant track of the status of the population to ensure that the government is able to allocate sufficient resources and provide the necessary social services where they are truly needed. For instance, governments responsible for a population with a large proportion of youth under the age of eighteen would need to beef up its primary and secondary education system, as well as ensure the availability and accessibility of maternal and child health services. The elderly, on the other hand, would need a good pension system. The government must also keep accurate accounts of spatial distribution, as this is directly related to the determination of electoral districts and, consequently, legislative representation. Population size per geographic unit also determines the amount of government allocation in terms of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). *Mulat Pinoy's Kapihan Session on Government Resources and Population Dynamics is scheduled on January 23.*

**Housing** – Shelter is one of humankind's basic needs, a refuge from nature's elements. But if there's anything that typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng have taught us, it is that existing structures are not particularly secure, and residential areas ill-planned. Large populations necessarily require more housing, especially in areas of economic growth. But with high market values and uneven economic development, this leads to issues of inadequate housing and informal settling. Having a large population exacerbates these problems. *Mulat Pinoy's Kapihan Session on Population and Housing is scheduled on January 30.*

**Education** – Education plays a crucial role in economic development. A well-educated work force has the potential to catapult a nation into social and economic development. This does not bode well for the Philippines, if the country's deteriorating state of education is any indication. The mean achievement test score at the primary level is 50 percent, ten points below the passing grade of 60. Attrition rates are high both at primary and secondary levels. Only 70 out of every 100 grade 1 enrollees finish primary school, and only 49 of the original 100 enrollees finish secondary school. Every year there are about 2 million 6-year-olds ready to enter grade 1 while those who leave the elementary grades are lower in number, giving rise to the perennial problem of lack of classrooms. Funding is channeled to tertiary institutions, but there are not enough classrooms for the primary grades, which has the highest population. A better understanding of the relationship between population and education would ideally result in a better allocation of resources, and the improvement of the quality of education. *Mulat Pinoy's Kapihan Session on Population and Education is scheduled on February 27.*

**Health** – Population is driven by fertility and mortality, two processes that are directly influenced by health. A high fertility rate means more children. With inadequate living conditions among the poor, this translates to a high infant mortality rate and, for those who survive the early years, nutritionally-deficient children. Key health needs include child immunization and healthcare, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, and family planning. Studies show that the poorest families (those whose incomes are in the lowest 20% of the population) and those with the lowest education are disproportionately exposed to more health risks than the rest of the population. They tend to have the highest infant mortality and maternal mortality rates. *Mulat Pinoy's Kapihan Session on Population and Health is scheduled on March 13.*

**Employment and Labor Force Migration** – At first glance, the relationship between population and employment is a simple correlation: having a large labor-ready workforce means that more people compete for jobs, pulling down average wages. But current statistics clearly show that there is a significant percentage of unemployed among those with a college education, signifying two things: that the skills fostered by the educational system do not meet market demands, and that there are not enough opportunities for the annual influx of new graduates into the labor force.

The lack of local opportunities has led many Filipinos to seek employment abroad instead. Labor migration began in the Philippines as a stopgap measure against unemployment. However, it is now a key government policy. While this provides more jobs than our industries can generate, it comes at a cost. 'Brain drain' is rampant in key sectors like healthcare, infrastructure, and education, and this in turn leads to the shortage and deterioration of such services within our own nation. *Mulat Pinoy's Kapihan Session on Employment and Labor Migration is scheduled on March 27.*

**Population and Religion** - The influence of religion runs deep in the fabric of everyday Filipino life. From mundane concerns such as patronizing a restaurant or food product to inciting resistance against oppressive regimes, Filipinos lean on religion for guidance and support. At the core of every religion is a respect for life and a desire to contribute to the well-being of all—goals shared by popdev advocates as well. So where is the divide? Why the suspicion that popdev equates to being anti-life? Can this misunderstanding be bridged? *The Mulat Pinoy Kapihan on Population and Religion is scheduled on April 17.*



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