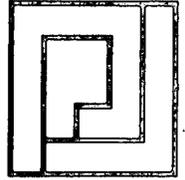


# THE PHILIPPINES



Country statement prepared for the International Conference on Population, Mexico City, August 1984.

## INTRODUCTION

The Philippines, an archipelago of some 7,107 islands with a total land area of 300,000 square kilometers, has three major island groups: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. In 1980, Luzon contained more than half of the country's population (54.2 percent), with the remainder split between the islands of the Visayas and Mindanao. Luzon also possesses the major share of the total land area (47 percent); Visayas claims less than a fifth (19 percent) while Mindanao holds over a third (34 percent).

Administratively, the country is sub-divided into 13 regions, 73 provinces, 60 cities, 1,848 municipalities, 21 municipal districts, and 41,114 *barangays* (villages). The *barangay* is the smallest unit of government in the country. The city of Manila is the national capital and the permanent seat of the national government.

The latest census in May 1980 enumerated a population of 48.1 million, making the Philippines the 8th largest population in Asia and 17th in the world. If the total population were distributed equally over the total land surface, there would be 160 persons

inhabiting each square kilometer of land, on the average. About eight in 10 Filipinos are Catholics. An estimated one in every 20 are Moslems, most of them residing in Mindanao. There are two official languages: Pilipino and English.

## DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

The eighth population census of the Philippines was conducted on May 1, 1980. The population grew more than sixfold from 1903 to 1980 (see Table 1). The rise in number occurred steadily since 1903, reaching an average intercensal growth rate of 2.22 percent between 1918 and 1939, declining during World War II, but soaring to a level of 3.06 percent in the period 1948-1960. While the average annual intercensal growth rate remains high, the data indicate a declining post-World War II trend, from 3.06 percent in 1948-1960 to 2.71 percent in 1975-1980.

The population age structure has changed (albeit slightly) over the years. The median age of the population manifested a steady decrease from 20.2 years in 1903 to 16.9

**Table 1. Enumerated Population, Intercensal Annual Growth Rate and Percentage Distribution in Broad Age Groups, Philippines: 1903-1980**

Year	Population	Intercensal Annual Growth Rate (%)	Under 15 years	Percent 15-64 years	65 years and over	Median Age (Years)
1903	7,635,426		39.5	57.2	3.3	20.2
1918	10,314,310	1.92	44.2	53.4	2.4	18.5
1939	16,000,303	2.22	43.1	53.5	3.4	18.3
1948	19,234,182	1.91	44.2	52.7	3.1	17.7
1960	27,087,685	3.06	45.7	51.6	2.7	17.1
1970	36,684,486	3.01	45.7	51.5	2.8	16.9
1975	42,070,660	2.78	43.9	53.3	2.8	17.6
1980	48,098,460	2.71	42.0	54.6	3.4	18.6

Source: Bureau of the Census and Statistics and National Census and Statistics Office Census Reports, various years.

**Table 2. Estimated Vital Rates, Philippines: 1960-1975**

Year	Crude Birth Rate (per 1,000)	Crude Death Rate (per 1,000)	Rate of Natural Increase (percent)	Total Fertility Rate (children per woman)	Total Marital Fertility Rate (children per married woman)
1960	46.0	13.7	3.2	6.46	—
1965	44.5	12.6	3.2	6.30	9.67
1970	39.2	10.2	2.9	5.89	9.63
1975	34.8	9.3	2.6	5.19	8.70

Source: Concepcion, M. B., "Changing Fertility in the Philippines: When, How, Why" in Mauldin, P. (ed.) forthcoming.

years in 1970, but ascended to 18.6 years in 1980 reflecting increases in the population 15 years and over and the age group of 65 years and over. It appears that the effects of a decelerating population growth rate since 1970 were being manifested in the age structure of 1980.

The country's population growth rate is a result of the interplay between decreasing mortality and the still high but slowly declining fertility. Table 2 presents estimates of the country's vital rates over the 1960-1975 period. The crude birth

rate (CBR) declined by a third, from 46.0 births per 1,000 in 1960 to 34.8 births per 1,000 in 1975. During the same period, the crude death rate (CDR) dropped by nearly one-half from a level of 13.7 deaths per 1,000 in 1960 to 9.3 deaths per 1,000 in 1975. The total fertility rate (TFR) decreased by 1.3 children (6.46 to 5.19) over the 15-year period. However, the fertility rate of married women (TMFR) remained stable over the period 1963-1967 and 1968-1972, but declined by 11 percent in the next five-year period.

It should be stated that the decline in total fertility over the 1960-1970 period is traceable to age structure changes and increases in age at marriage, whereas that over the 1970-1975 period is due to decreasing marital fertility. While there is no irrefutable evidence that the decline was caused by the national family planning program, the timing and magnitude of program efforts and outputs suggest that the program was responsible for part of this decline.

#### **WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION**

The following paragraphs describe the Philippine position relative to the various recommendations for the further implementation of the World Population Plan of Action proposed for adoption during the 1984 International Conference on Population.

##### **A. *Socio-economic Development and Population***

The fundamental goals of the updated Philippine Development Plan, 1984-1987, consist of attaining: (1) sustainable economic growth; (2) equitable distribution of the fruits of development; and (3) total human development.

The underlying strategies and policies will be realized to put greater stress on self-reliance. This approach aims to give priority to the development of domestic resources and the capacity for pursuing economic growth and other goals on a more sustainable basis.

Accordingly, development programs anchored in the primary sector

— agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and minerals — will be given the highest priority. An agri-based development and modernization strategy demands less foreign inputs, addresses the needs of the greater majority of the population, and can generate livelihood, exports, and savings in the fastest and most efficient way.

To minimize the urban-rural welfare differentials, rural hinterlands shall be given priority in the delivery of population and social services in support of the balanced agro-industrial development strategy under a unified outreach structure.

##### **B. *Development of Population Policies***

The Commission on Population has established a strategy that should make it possible to reach a net reproduction rate of unity by the year 2000, namely, to address all sectors of the total population as target clientele. Specific action-oriented programs and projects are being provided with emphasis on the needs and concerns of the different groups, namely: pre-schoolers, youth, pre-marriage groups, married couples of reproductive age, program influentials and program professionals.

The national population program will concentrate on:

1. improving coordination and linkages with partner and participating agencies through a network of public and private community-based organizations;

2. building the capability of local government and community organizations to plan and manage the pop-

ulation program at their level with the aim of promoting self-reliance;

3. developing community capability to finance contraceptive costs as well as other family planning services, nutrition, primary health care, and day-care centers;

4. upgrading the quality of natural family planning practice;

5. continuing the promotion of effective program methods;

6. developing a population data bank and information network to provide the necessary information for planning, decision-making and policy formulation for population; and

7. upgrading and sustaining the technical and management capability of population program workers.

The difficulties of integrating population and development can be traced to inadequate scientific knowledge concerning the relationships between population and development; the limited appreciation of the potential impact of socio-economic policies, plans and programs on population variables; and the uncertain institutional responsibility for advocating and overseeing further integration of population in development concerns.

However, as a result of the 1978 review of the Philippine population program, the thrust is now towards long-term planning to ensure a more significant and perceptible demographic impact of development programs and policies. Also, there is increasing attention paid to regional development and spatial distribution in the country. The updated 1984-87 Philippine Development Plan states more

clearly the interaction between population and development.

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the central policy and planning agency of the government, takes charge of formulating and coordinating the broader aspects of population policy and integrating population with socioeconomic plans and policies. The NEDA is currently implementing a project known as the Population/Development Planning and Research Project (PDPR) with financial support from UNFPA. This project promotes and facilitates the integration of the population dimension in the planning process. It does this by maintaining linkages and instituting collaborative mechanisms with the different NEDA regional offices and sectoral ministries. It also trains government planners in ways of integrating population concerns into the development plan. PDPR promotes the use of population and development research for planning purposes and policy formulation.

### *C. Population Goals and Policies*

#### **1. Population growth**

Since the 1974 World Population Conference at Bucharest, the Philippines has adhered to the recommendations of the Plan of Action. The 1984-87 Development Plan indicates that the average annual population growth rate is expected to fall from the intercensal rate of 2.8 percent in 1970-1975 to an estimated 2.2 percent by 1987.

## **2. Mortality**

Crude death rates are anticipated to decline from a level of 8.7 deaths per thousand in 1980 to 7.6 deaths per thousand in 1987. The resulting increase in life expectancy at birth will be 2.1 years (from 61.6 years in 1980 to 63.7 years in 1987). Infant mortality is projected to diminish to 54 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1987 from a level of 59 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1983.

## **3. Reproduction, the family and the status of women**

In the realm of fertility, the crude birth rate is foreseen to drop from an estimated level of 34 births per 1,000 population in 1980 to about 31 births per 1,000 in 1987. The goal of the national population program is to achieve a net reproduction rate of unity by the year 2000. To help achieve this goal, the number of protected couples will be increased from a contraceptive prevalence rate of 34 percent in 1983, 41 percent in 1987, to 50 percent in the year 1993. Follow-up of current contraceptive users will be improved and the use of more effective methods promoted. Motivational activities through more efficient and expanded information, education and communication campaigns will be intensified in high fertility areas such as Mindanao, Western Visayas and Eastern Visayas. Moreover, attempts will be made to reduce the proportion of women marrying below the age of 20.

It has been observed that among women of different socio-economic

strata, inequality of status may even be more pronounced than between the men and women belonging to the same economic and social level. The women performing the humble, often unpaid, tasks on the farm and in the poorer sections of cities do not enjoy the same status as the well educated and affluent women regardless of the equality granted by law.

In this regard, the 1984-87 Development Plan outlines as a common strategy for the delivery of social services the systematic involvement of women in the political, civic and social responsibilities of their communities. The Plan also advocates greater cooperation among concerned agencies toward improving women's access to educational and employment opportunities.

## **4. Population distribution and internal migration**

The Development Plan emphasizes support to programs aimed at balanced regional development and favorable population distribution such as industrial dispersal, creation of growth centers, development of small- and medium-sized cities, and the implementation of integrated rural development projects to reduce disparities among population groups and regions. The back-to-the-province program will be pursued as an interim measure to reverse the urbanward movement of population. Policies and mechanisms tending to promote disparities between urban and rural incomes will be reviewed and modified to close the urban-rural welfare gap.

## 5. International migration

The overseas employment program was integrated as part of the government strategy for expanding employment opportunities, building up skills and redressing the balance of payments in the latter part of the seventies. For the period 1975-1981, the overseas sector absorbed more workers than any single sector of the economy. Two-thirds of these workers are land-based, the majority of whom are in the construction, utilities and service sectors. The outflow of manpower has had serious consequences and implications for the economy and society among which may be cited: local shortage of selected skilled manpower; unsuccessful aspirants in urban centers dependent on the informal sector for livelihood; impaired growth of a skills pool resulting from rigid selection process in overseas employment; imbalance between growth and development of the modern sector and the number seeking employment in this sector, due to outflow of middle level skills; greater likelihood of family disharmony, marital breakdown and community disruption owing to lengthy separation of couples and their offspring.

Efforts are currently being directed to correct illegal recruitment and abusive unemployment practices, provide more effective protection for migrant workers in both the countries of origin and of destination, and harness remittances properly into more productive endeavors. The Ministry of Labor and Employment conducts regular briefings of prospective

migrant workers to acquaint them with the social, economic and cultural aspects of life in the countries of destination.

### *D. Promotion of Knowledge and Policy*

The Commission on Population places great importance in demographic measurement activities to gauge family planning program progress and its impact on fertility. Exploratory studies which test new or innovative approaches are supported in addition to the evaluation of programs, methods and schemes utilized in the national population program. The Commission will undertake policy research to assess the impact of population-influencing and population-responsive policies and appraise their fitness to particular situations.

### *E. Role of National Government*

The Philippine Government has taken a leadership role in population matters since the establishment of the Commission on Population, an interministerial body chaired by the Minister of Social Services and Development. The Commission, through its Chairman, has direct accountability to the President and the Prime Minister for the national program.

In the Philippine Development Plan for 1984-87, updated in the light of the global and domestic economic crisis, emphasis has been placed on demographic goals as well as on the effect of the development strategy on population.

In pursuing a policy of fertility

reduction, the Philippine Government's non-coercive family planning program provides all legally and medically approved contraceptives to the eligible population and creates the conditions — social and economic — that will allow couples to decide freely to practice family planning.

#### *F. Role of International Cooperation*

From the beginnings of the national population program fourteen years ago, the Philippines has shared with her Asian neighbors her experiences in the field of population education, information, education and communication (IEC), family planning program evaluation, and demographic training. In this regard, the Commission on Population has tapped the resources of the National Economic and Development Authority, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, the Ministry of Social Services and Development, the National Census and Statistics Office, the University of the Philippines, and the Population Center

Foundation, among others.

Deserving special mention is the collaboration among ASEAN member-states in shaping a population program that cuts across national boundaries, ethnic groups and religions. In 1976, the population program heads in the ASEAN region responded to an earlier call issued by their Heads of State to intensify and expand efforts in meeting the challenge of rapid population growth in the region. Nineteen projects in the areas of human resource development, IEC and research, policy and program formulation on population and development interrelationships have been initiated in the member countries with assistance from the UNFPA, FAO and the Government of Australia. In the process, a pool of highly trained expertise has been developed. Moreover, the projects encouraged strong partnerships between program administrators and researchers. The projects have also resulted in a number of policy responses.