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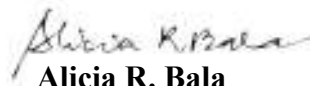
Dear Readers,

As a follow-up to our Anniversary Issue (April-June 2008), we are featuring more social welfare and development (SWD) researches from the DSWD's National Sector Support for the Social Welfare and Development Reform Project (NSS-SWDRP) Consultants. Two SWD reports by Dr. Fernando T. Aldaba highlight the importance of participation by stakeholders in government and NGO's implementation of social protection programs. Related to effective implementation of social protection initiatives is Dr. Celia M. Reyes' assessment of targeting mechanisms used by three of DSWD's anti-poverty programs: *Tindahan Natin*, Self-Employment Assistance *Kaunlaran*, and the Supplemental Feeding Program.

We are also pleased to publish the study of Dr. Domingo B. Nuñez on the age of discernment of Filipino children, upon which some provisions of RA 9344, or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, as well as social welfare interventions were based.

We hope that these articles will inspire our readers to support social protection initiatives by the government and NGOs, as well as legislations that uphold the rights of children.

Thank you and happy reading!



Alicia R. Bala

Undersecretary and Editor-in-Chief

THE ROLE OF MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SECTOR IN THE PHILIPPINES¹

By

Dr. Fernando T. Aldaba

ABSTRACT

The notion of rights-based social protection is not limited to welfare or relief measures. It also encompasses policies for developing human capital and risk prevention. Although changes in social policy in the last decades have resulted in a relatively more educated population and improved health indicators, citizens still find themselves in fragmented and uncertain labor markets and confronted by risks due to man-made and natural disasters. At the macro level, nations must deal with processes outside political decision-making that may trigger volatility in the economy's growth rates and job creation capacity. This requires proactive and remedial social investment measures in order to fortify human and social

capital, strengthen employment-based social security schemes, and build social protection and/or safety nets. This also suggests a country like the Philippines needs to make the transition from implementing segmented social policy packages to a more integrated and comprehensive social protection system. One way of approaching this is to forge a social compact among the major stakeholders in social protection. However, a social covenant aimed at reshaping social protection on the basis of universally recognized rights is not simply a matter of having individuals decide to enforce such rights or of market dynamics. A social pact must be backed up by a society-wide decision to uphold such rights.

I. Defining Stakeholders²

Who Are Stakeholders?

A stakeholder is defined as any person, group or institution that has an interest in a development activity, project or program. The range of stakeholders relevant to consider for analysis varies according to the complexity of the issue or concern. Stakeholders vary in nature, size and capacity. They can be individuals, organizations, or unorganized groups. In most cases, stakeholders fall into one or more of the following broad categories: state actors and institutions, civil society sectors, and market based entities and institutions. Examples include international actors (e.g. donors), national or political actors (e.g.

legislators, governors), public sector line agencies (e.g. DSWD), interest groups (e.g. unions, social workers associations), commercial/private for-profit, nonprofit organizations (NGOs, foundations), civil society members, and users/consumers.

Stakeholders can also be divided into two very broad groups:

- a) Primary stakeholders: those who are ultimately affected by the concern i.e. who expect to benefit from or be adversely affected by the intervention;

¹ Prepared by Fernando T. Aldaba, Ateneo de Manila University Department of Economics for DSWD

² From the World Bank and DFID Project documents

- b) Secondary stakeholders: those with some intermediary role. Key stakeholders are those who can significantly influence the project directly or indirectly.

Both primary and secondary stakeholders may be major stakeholders. Participation of primary stakeholders is essential in projects which are expected to have a direct positive impact on defined groups of people. Stakeholder participation is a process whereby stakeholders - those with rights (and therefore responsibilities) and/or interests - play an active role in decision-making and in the consequent activities which affect them.

II. Primary and Major Stakeholders in Society: A Tri-sector Paradigm³

The most recent broad categorization of stakeholders which many sectors accept is the state-market-civil society distinction. The UNDP calls these three major sectors as the “domains” of governance.

State Actors and Institutions

In democracies, the state is typically composed of an elected government and an executive branch. In the case of the Philippines, we have three major branches of government – the legislative, executive and the judiciary. The state usually has the authority to formulate and implement laws but at the same time has the responsibility to provide services and public goods to its citizens. It also has fiscal authority in that it can exact taxes and duties from its population and also allocate revenues according to its priorities. It also controls the military and armed forces so that it can effectively rule and secure its territory.

Market-based Groups and Institutions

The market typically refers to the economic domain primarily driven by profit-maximizing firms as

economics textbooks would usually describe. The market is also the domain where goods and services are sold by business firms. These enterprises are aggregately called the private sector. The market is also associated with the pricing systems where the forces of supply and demand determines a competitive price for a good or a service. A competitive market supposedly unleashes the entrepreneurial drive⁴ of the citizenry so that economic activities are developed and sustained creating more capital and more employment. However, the market can be driven not only by local business but also by foreign business such as multinational corporations⁵.

Civil Society Actors and Players

Outside the state and the market is the civil society sphere. Civil society is typically defined as the “organized” citizenry. Thus this would refer to various institutions and organizations which are usually driven by values and causes (sometimes inappropriately categorized as non-profit motives) or specific interests. While it is outside the state, civil society, according to the UNDP, is “the part of society that connects individuals with the public realm and the state – a political face of society”. Thus, civil society is comprised by NGOs, POs, academic institutions, faith based groups, media, and socio-civic groups.

“Hybrid Sectors”

One cannot neatly categorize all organizations and institutions according to the three spheres or domains. There are some groups that fall in between two or sometimes even three spheres. Government corporations for example straddle both the market and government spheres. Many business foundations while technically in the civil society sphere are still controlled by their mother corporations.⁶ Trade unions are market organizations but they can also be classified as a civil society group. Cooperatives are both market and civil society. In the case of the Philippines,

³ Borrows heavily from Aldaba (2005)

⁴ Economists call this as “animal spirit”

⁵ Singapore and Hong Kong are countries where foreign businesses drive the economy.

⁶ There are business foundations though that became fully autonomous e.g. Ford Foundation

the National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO) even has a political party and can also be in the realm of the state. Many party list organizations which won seats in government have their roots from civil society organizations particularly the NGOs.

III. The Specific Roles and Interests of the Major Stakeholders in Society

Each sector plays an important role toward the resolution of the issue or the promotion of sustainable human development in general. The public sector provides the framework for economic, political and social rights that are the bases for regulation, the provision of social and physical infrastructure and other public goods, safety nets and national security. Business, on the other hand, is the engine of economic growth and development through investments (physical, human and social) and trade (of goods and services) that create employment and build the foundations for greater prosperity. Civil society provides the foundations of liberty, responsibility and self-expression through social cohesion, the promotion of culture, advocacy for democratic participation and governance and voluntarism in social delivery.

As also discussed in the previous sections, groups in the three spheres differ in their major orientation or driving motivation. While one can say that it is difficult to pin down the main motivations of specific organizations, some academics ventured into categorizing the driving force for the key sectors. For example:

Table 1: Nature and Motivations of Major Sectors

Nature/ Sector	State	Market / Private Sector	Civil Society
Motivation/ Driving Force	Power, Authority and Public Service	Profit Maximization and Entrepreneurial Drive	Common Cause or Shared Value
Public Interest Promoted	Rule of Law; Provision of Social Services	Productive Investments and Employment Generation	Protection of Human Rights, Promotion of Participation, Complementary Social Services

Many can come up with other formulations. Some will even debate the categorization above. However, the crux of the matter is that the interests and motivations of the groups under the three spheres definitely differ. And thus, it is important to recognize this especially when development issues are being discussed and debated or when programs and policies are crafted to benefit the general public. However, it is not entirely true that collaboration is impossible for there may be overlapping interests and motivation. Definitely, specific groups are able to transcend narrow vested interests in favor of a compromise or in the pursuit of public welfare like those mentioned above. Within each broad categories are diverse groups and institutions which may also differ in specific orientations and activities. For example, civil society could refer to different types of non-government and voluntary organizations but also include corporate foundations or professional groupings.

IV. Major Attributes to Consider in Stakeholder Analysis

Four major attributes are the stakeholders' position on the reform issue or program to be implemented, the level of influence (power and authority) they hold, the level of interest they have in the specific reform or acquiring benefits of a program, and the group/coalition/network to which they belong or can reasonably be associated with. These attributes are important to consider when implementing policy or bureaucratic reforms. These attributes can be identified through various data collection methods, including interviews with country experts knowledgeable about stakeholders or with the actual stakeholders directly.

The level of influence depends on the quantity and type of resources and power the stakeholder can marshal to promote its position on the reform or push the implementation of a program. The level of interest is the priority and importance the stakeholder attaches to the reform or program area. Broadly, these attributes signal the capability of the stakeholder to block or promote reform/program, join with others to form a coalition of support or opposition, and lead the direction/discussion of the reform/program. Stakeholder analysis should

provide a detailed understanding of the political, economic, and social impact of reform on interested groups, the hierarchy of authority and power among different groups and the actual perceptions of the reform among different groups, all of which are important for reform advocates to consider.

V. Stakeholders' Responses to Major Social Risks

The following matrix shows how the household, public, private and civil society sectors respond to

various social risks. Note that even without government intervention, it is still possible for households and communities to adequately respond to major social risks as long as they have assets, resources and capacity to do so. If there is a feasible market, private sector institutions can also provide services to individuals and communities. However, when the market is not present especially when the individuals involved are marginalized or disadvantaged, then government provision of services will be essential.

Table 2: Stakeholder Responses to Social Risks

RISK ASSESSMENT	RISK REDUCTION RESPONSES		
Types of Social Risks to the Poor	Household or Informal Mechanisms	Public Sector Intervention	Private and Civil Society Sector Mechanisms
Lifecycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman as family welfare providers • Extended family, community support • Hygiene, preventive health • Asset/savings depletion • Debt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health nutrition policy/ services • Social insurance policy: mandatory insurance for illness, disability, life, old age; microinsurance • Social assistance • Child protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of health services • Health disability, life insurance, and reinsurance • Microinsurance • Old-age annuities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of health services • Health, disability, life insurance, and reinsurance • Microinsurance • Old-age annuities
Economic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of source of livelihood (i.e., crop failure, cattle disease) • Unemployment • Low income • Changes in prices of basic needs • Economic crisis and/or transition of basic needs • Economic crisis and/or transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversified sources of livelihood • Private transfers/extended family support, child labor • Depletion of assets/savings • Reduced consumption of basic goods • Debt • Migration assets/savings • Reduced consumption of basic goods • Debt • Migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound macroeconomic and sector policies to promote economic opportunities • Particularly, regional and rural development policies, including microinsurance • Labor market policies • Education and training • Social funds development policies, including microinsurance • Labor market policies • Education and training • Social funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment generating private sector investment • Agricultural/livestock insurance, reinsurance, microinsurance • Banking services to the poor, microfinance • Providing training • Banking services to the poor, microfinance • Providing training
Environmental <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought • Flood, rains • Earthquake • Landslides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration • Community action for resource management • Private transfers/ extended family support, child labor • Depletion of assets/savings • Reduced consumption of basic goods • Debt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental policy and infrastructure investment • Catastrophe prevention, mitigation programs including insurance against natural disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural, livestock catastrophe insurance and reinsurance
Social/Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion, losing social status/capital • Extortion, corruption • Crime, domestic violence, social anomie • Political instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining community networks (reciprocal gifts, arranging marriages, religious networks) • Community pressure • Women's groups • Migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting good governance, anti-discriminatory policies, and anticorruption practices • Public information campaign • Providing security and equal access to justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs and CBOs • Good corporate governance securing fair employment opportunities and provision of services regardless of race, gender, age, social status, or political affiliation

Legend: CBO = Community based organization, HIV/AIDS = Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, NGO = Nongovernmental Organization.

VI. Comparative Advantage of Various Stakeholders

ADB (2001) provides us with the specific advantages and disadvantages related to which kind of stakeholder responds to the various social risks. It must be highlighted that each category may have differing strengths and weakness in responding to social risks whether in the form of prevention, mitigation, relief or rehabilitation. In the matrix below,

a mixed delivery mode is favored as the advantages of each sector should be maximized in such a system. However, some important considerations for such a mixed system to work include smooth coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, effective national-local linkages and resource mobilization across sectors and at all levels. Social protection like poverty reduction is an issue where multi-stakeholder partnerships might be a more effective response for the benefit of communities.

Table 3: Advantages and Disadvantages of Stakeholder Mechanisms

MECHANISM	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Public-Based (i) Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally responsible and mandated for vulnerable groups within local community • Lower program delivery costs due to proximity • Able to implement programs using existing infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to pool larger area risks (e.g., agricultural) • Poorer regions suffer from lower revenue base and therefore smaller spending base • Untrained and inexperienced staff in policy design, development, monitoring and evaluation
Public-Based (ii) Central Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National consistency and equity in program access and delivery • Opportunities for redistribution mechanisms from wealthier regions to poorer regions • Able to monitor, evaluate, and compare cost-effectiveness of programs from national perspective • Coordination at national level across sectors (e.g., health, education, housing, labor, and finance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less knowledgeable of local circumstances and needs • Takes longer to implement programs • Risk of limited efficiency and governance problems
Market-Based Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient • Ideal to serve middle and upper income groups – commercial insurance and pension funds, training, job placement agencies, institutional care for the disabled and elderly • Sustainability • Political insulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not serving low income groups given high transaction costs and low returns • Insurance premiums and service costs are not affordable to the poor • As government normally guarantees minimum incomes/benefits, if companies become financially insolvent the state may have to provide financial support
NGOs / Charitable Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower costs • Near vulnerable groups, programs offered based on household and community needs • Quick and flexible in implementation • Use participatory approaches with vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent nationally therefore questionable regarding issues of equity • Sporadic funding and discontinuous programs, affecting the overall effectivity of their interventions • Limited efficiency and uncoordinated delivery • No consistent evaluation, monitoring, audits, or accountability
Mixed Delivery System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use strengths of each provider, may be a best option given a mixed system spreads both the risks and opportunities for success • Provide common, consistent set of national social protection policies combined with flexible local programs to meet local needs • Enables some form of redistribution to occur to balance poorest and wealthiest regions in countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be more costly to maintain involvement of all providers • Can create competition rather than cooperation between service providers.

Source: ADB (2001)

VII. Towards a Social Compact on Social Protection⁷

As discussed in many social protection literature, the notion of rights-based social protection is not limited to welfare or relief measures. It also encompasses policies for the development of human capital and risk prevention. Although changes in social policy in the last decades have resulted in a relatively more educated population and improved health indicators, citizens still find themselves in fragmented and uncertain labor markets and confronted by risks due to man-made and natural disasters. At the macro level, nations must deal with processes outside political decision-making that may trigger volatility in the economy's growth rates and job creation capacity. In this context, social policies must help society overcome its vulnerabilities and mitigate the factors that create insecurity under different sorts of circumstances, which will have varying impacts on individual members of society depending on their capacities and how vulnerable their positions are. This requires a proactive and remedial social investment measures in order to fortify human and social capital, strengthen employment-based social security schemes, and build social protection and/or safety nets.

This also suggests a country like the Philippines needs to make the transition from implementing segmented social policy packages to a more integrated and comprehensive social protection system. A social protection system is more than an institutional structure; it should also be viewed as a political agreement that enables society to lay the foundations for building and regulating its way of life. This kind of system determines which rights apply to all, how they are protected and how they are rendered viable. This involves institutions, standards, programs and resources. One way of approaching this is to forge a social compact among the major stakeholders in social protection. However, a social covenant aimed at reshaping social protection on the basis of universally recognized rights is not simply a matter of having individuals decide to enforce such rights or of market dynamics. A social pact must be backed

up by a society-wide decision to uphold such rights. A social agreement or covenant must therefore include a common vision of the type of society that the State and all stakeholders aspire to achieve in terms of protecting its citizens from the vagaries of the social. This is necessary for two reasons. First, the sheer scale of such a task requires a broad national consensus in order to implement the necessary social reforms (institutional innovations, determination of resource levels and allocation, and the definition of how the principle of solidarity is to be expressed in actual transfers). Second, long-lasting policies and institutions are needed whose time horizons extend beyond the terms of individual administrations.

A social pact must try to reach consensus regarding the following elements:

- A minimum threshold of social protection to which all members of society are to have access simply by virtue of their citizenship; this threshold should be set at a realistic level, however, in terms of the society's stage of development and viable levels of intersectoral redistribution and transfers.
- The rate at which this basic minimum is to be increased, together with the process of doing so. Consideration must also be given to attaining a feasible level of resource redistribution, but efforts should also be made to expand the supply of available resources through economic growth.
- Tangible manifestations of collective sharing and solidarity through established mechanisms to carry out transfers between and among members of Philippine society and regulatory procedures to guarantee the effective use of these solidarity-based mechanisms.
- A progressive social expenditure and taxation system that clearly defines the intended use of any increases in spending or taxes, which should be directed towards social investments that will clearly benefit the most vulnerable groups.

⁷ Gathered from the experience of Latin American countries in implementing integrated social protection programs

A SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT REGION 7: CENTRAL VISAYAS*

By

Dr. Fernando T. Aldaba

ABSTRACT

The social welfare and development report on Region 7 covers the provinces of Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor. It assesses the impact of major social risks to the region, cites

the government's response to these risks, and analyzes the value of stakeholder participation in government's interventions.

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Land and Demography

Region 7 or the Central Visayas Region covers the provinces of Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor. It is situated in the center of the country, lying between the major islands of Luzon and Mindanao. It has a total land area of 14,951 square kilometers. Negros Oriental accounts the largest share of the land (36%), followed by Cebu (34%), Bohol (28%) and Siquijor (2%). There are 12 cities and 120 municipalities in the region. First class cities (7) constitute only 5% of the total number of cities/municipalities while 4th class (26) and 5th class (65) municipalities hold the larger share of 20% and 49% respectively. There are currently 15 congressional districts in the region.

Province	Land Area (sq. km)
Cebu	5,088.00
Bohol	4,117.3
Negros Oriental	5,402.27
Siquijor	343.50
Total	14,951.07

Central Visayas is the fifth most populous region in the country. The population is distributed unevenly among its provinces. Cebu accounted

for the biggest share with 59% of the total population, followed by Negros Oriental with 20%, Bohol with 19% and Siquijor with 2%. The region has a population density of 381 persons per square kilometer as of 2000 although congestion is a major concern in Metro Cebu with increasing urbanization.

**Table 1: Latest Population of Individuals
Dissaggregated by Sex and Age Group¹**

Age Group	Population by Age Group			Share per Age Group (%)	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
0 - 2	142,670	133,480	276,150	5%	5%
3 - 5	185,323	212,708	398,031	7%	7%
6 - 12	459,946	358,228	818,174	16%	12%
13 - 17	414,538	218,846	633,384	15%	8%
18 - 24	343,529	350,475	694,004	12%	12%
25 - 59	1,121,000	1,440,539	2,561,539	40%	50%
60+	136,365	183,417	319,782	5%	6%
TOTAL POPULATION	2,803,371	2,897,693	5,701,064	49%	51%

Source: *Regional Social Welfare Situationer 2006*

In terms of families, the region hosts 1,104,990 with 59% residing in Cebu. Most families also are found in the rural areas (57%).

* Prepared by Aldaba (April 2008) for the DSWD National Sector Support for Social Welfare and Development Reform Project (NSS-SWDRP)

Table 2: Total Number of Families Per Province²

Province	Urban	Rural	Total	% Share
Cebu	293,615	358,863	652,478	59%
Bohol	84,073	126,109	210,182	19%
Negros Oriental	89,973	134,960	224,933	20%
Siquijor	6,437	10,960	17,397	2%
TOTAL	474,098	630,892	1,104,990	

Source – NSCB (2000 census)

Regional Economy

Economic structure

The industry and service sectors, particularly trade and manufacturing dominate the region's economy. Cebu province accounts for 80% of the region's economic output while remaining 20% from the rest of the provinces. Agriculture accounted for the bulk of total employment at 42% followed by trade and manufacturing (39%) and industry (19%).

Current performance

The regional economy the year 2007 with a better performance in the first quarter compared to the same period last year. Agriculture, shipping, construction, tourism and IT-enabled industries led the growth sectors. The region's export industry was highly affected by the continued appreciation of the peso. The agriculture sector registered double-digit increase in production, bolstered by better crop and fishery production during the quarter. The improved performance of the shipping industry boosted the region's transportation sector. An outstanding performance by the tourism sector fuelled to the expansion in the region's transportation industry.

Key events like the ASEAN leaders meeting, the Sinulog festival in Cebu City and the Chinese New Year celebration buoyed the tourism sector where visitor arrivals increased by 24% from last year's level. Other growth drivers of the regional economy in the first quarter were the construction and ICT-enabled industries. These two industries contributed significantly to the region's economic growth in 2006, generating employment and huge investments in the region.

As compared to the whole economy, Region 7 is performing just as well as the other regions and very near the country's average for 2006 (See Table 3).

Table 3: Economic Performance Per Province³

REGION / YEAR		04-05	05-06
PHILIPPINES		4.9	5.4
NCR	METRO MANILA	7.4	6.8
CAR	CORDILLERA	0.7	3.5
I	ILOCOS	5.2	6.2
II	CAGAYAN VALLEY	(4.3)	7.2
III	CENTRAL LUZON	2.7	4.8
IVA	CALABARZON	2.6	4.6
IVB	MIMAROPA	6.4	2.3
V	BICOL	5.0	2.6
VI	WESTERN VISAYAS	4.9	4.9
VII	CENTRAL VISAYAS	6.0	5.0
VIII	EASTERN VISAYAS	3.1	4.9
IX	ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA	6.9	2.1
X	NORTHERN MINDANAO	4.4	6.8
XI	DAVAO REGION	4.1	4.4
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	2.3	6.7
ARMM	MUSLIM MINDANAO	3.7	4.1
XIII	CARAGA	3.9	4.9

Source and Notes: National Statistical Coordination Board

1. GDP series not linked with previous years due to revisions in some sectors.
2. Regional levels may not add up to National levels due to rounding
3. Data posted are as of July 2007.

In terms of per capita Gross Regional Domestic Product, the region performed better from 2005, registering a value of PhP13,931 from PhP13,544.

Poverty Incidence

Income levels are still inadequate for the majority of the population and income distribution remains highly inequitable. Gap between rich and poor has widened. However, the region shows much improvement in poverty reduction from 2000 to 2003, with poverty incidence among families dropping from 31.5% to 23.7% (DSWD 2007). Around 286,478 families live below the poverty threshold.

Table 4: Poverty Incidence Among Families Per Region¹

Provinces	Poverty Incidence Among Families (%)			Magnitude of Poor Families		
	Estimates (%)			Estimates		
	2003 Final	2000 Revised	Inc/ Dec	2003 Final	2000 Revised	Inc/ Dec (%)
Philippines	24.4	27.5	-3.1			
Region VII	23.6	31.5	-8	286,478	348,154	-17.7
Cebu	17.1	26.2	-9	125,346	170,929	-26.7
Bohol	29.2	50.2	-20.9	65,953	105,470	-37.5
Negros Oriental	37.1	29.7	7.4	89,654	66,788	34.2
Siquijor	30.9	28.6	2.4	5,525	4,967	11.2

II. MAJOR SOCIAL RISKS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSES IN THE REGION

A. Unemployment and Underemployment in the Labor Market

Unemployment in Central Visayas dropped from last year's figures, despite fears that a strong peso would cause job cuts in an economy greatly dependent on exports. Underemployment—the number of persons who desired additional hours of work—also dropped. Central Visayas' 11.3% underemployment rate is the second lowest among the country's 17 regions. It also reflected a significant improvement from last year, when underemployment in Region 7 hit 17.8% as of October. About 5.9% of Region 7's labor force was jobless as of October 2007, compared to 7.5% in the same period last year, according to the government's latest Labor Force Statistics report. Nationwide, unemployment also dropped to 6.3%, from 7.3%. Using the government's definition, the unemployed include all persons who are 15 years old and over who are currently available for work but cannot find any. "Among the regions, only the National Capital Region (NCR) recorded a double-digit unemployment rate of 10.6%, which is also the highest among the regions," said Administrator Carmelita Ericeta, in a report released by the National Statistics Office.

Reasons for Unemployment and Underemployment

Population growth. The working age population (aged 15-64) of the region is estimated to increase from 3.7 million in 2004 to 4.3 million in 2010. Maintaining the unemployment rate to single-digit level of 6-7% means the need to generate a total of 861,000-943,000 new jobs for the entire period of 2004-2010.

Labor quality. There is a low absorption of labor force participants in the region due mainly to the poor quality of graduates in both formal and non-formal education manifested by the low passing rate in licensure and skills and trade exams.

Labor mismatch. The existing supply of skilled and professional labor does not match current demand. College graduates cannot find jobs as their courses are not needed by searching firms.

Brain and care drain. Higher wages and better working conditions abroad has led to the continued exodus of human capital which are also critically demanded within the country. Overseas employment processed by POEA-Cebu increased by an average of 7% annually from 1995 to 2003 reaching a total of 13,000 workers processed for overseas employment in 2003. Most alarming is the exit of health workers particularly nurses and doctors.

Inadequate labor market information and high search costs. There is difficulty in searching for work because of lack of information on openings. Also, sometimes the problem is the need to spend for transportation to apply for work, i.e. geographical immobility.

Current Government Responses/ Program responses¹

Employment facilitation, enterprise creation and productivity improvement. Line agencies and inter-agency committees implement labor-related programs to help fulfill the MTPDP thrusts of employment generation, enterprise creation, skills certification, and productivity improvement. TESDA undertakes various technical and vocational skills training and their graduates are given financial assistance to set up their own businesses. DA and DOST provide technical assistance and also become technology guarantors to funding sources, in lieu of business track record to encourage enterprise creation and job generation. DILG on the other hand promote community-based enterprises through Bayanihan centers. DOLE assists in employment facilitation through the Labor Market Information (LMI) system and the Trabaho Mo-Itxet Mo (SMS) scheme. It also involved in providing skills training, employment counseling and career guidance at the LGU level.

Programs on industry-academe and labor-management linkages. Industry-academe and labor-management linkages are fostered and improved to address issues on labor quality and skills certification. Accreditation and standard setting for schools and universities is seen as key towards improving labor quality. Transparency in job skills standards and requirements including salary scales will also be increased through intensive information dissemination. Promotion of labor-intensive

industries is an important priority. Inter-agency collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnerships are also promoted to manage labor migration issues.

Market-oriented manpower planning and forecasting. Collaborative market-oriented manpower planning and forecasting is undertaken by government, academe and the private sector to respond strategically to labor demand and supply situations in both the internal and external labor markets. Over the medium term, the following are the potential and/or preferred areas in the region for domestic and overseas employment: IT and IT-Enable Services - office operations in accounting, software development, and technical support; health - nursing, care-giving, therapists; nautical and marine engineering; Education and Training - special education, english as a second language, science and math; Tourism; Agribusiness; Mining; Shipbuilding; Automotive and Electronics; Fashion and Garments Design and Technology; Furniture and Home Furnishings Design and Technology; and Ceramics Technology

Role of the LGUs in job matching and employment generation. Local governments are the lead agencies for employment facilitation and

generation. Activities undertaken by LGUs include the conduct of job fairs and job matching through the PESOs. LGUs also implement capability building and technical assistance programs to job applicants to increase their chances in the job market. LGUs also identify and assist key sectors in their local economies that generate employment.

B. Health Problems and Concerns

Crude birth rate per 1000 in the region is 21.07 while crude death rate is 4.30. Among the provinces, Siquijor has the highest CDR with 6.89 while among the cities, it is Dumaguete City. Maternal mortality rate is .57 per 1000 live births while infant mortality rate is 10.23 per 1000 live births. Among the provinces, Bohol has the highest IMR with 15.75 while among the cities, it is Danao City with 33.33. The top killer diseases in the region include pneumonia, neoplasms, heart diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, hypertensive disease, respiratory tuberculosis, septicaemia, renal diseases and chronic lower respiratory diseases. (Center for Health Development, Region 7, 2005)

About 30% of weighed children through DOH programs were found to be malnourished (See Table 5).

Table 5: Incidence of Malnourished Children in Region 7⁶

PROVINCES/ CITIES	ESTIMATED NUMBER	TOTAL WEIGHED	3 rd Degree	2 nd Degree	1 st Degree	Normal
			Number	Number	Number	Number
Provinces:						
Bohol	178,253	164,855	440	6,624	36,640	116,562
Cebu	332,255	225,458	2,179	19,752	69,802	117,212
Negros Or.	151,675	139,410	976	7,652	33,574	92,030
Siquijor	18,233	10,581	20	540	2,235	5,941
TOTAL	1,059,134	846,296	4,274	39,535	171,017	591,587

Source – DOH 7, 2004

High cost of essential drugs and medicines. Medicines usually constitute about 40 to 50% of annual health expenditures of Filipino households. Yet essential and life saving medicines are out of reach for most of the population. To date, the cost of medicines in the country remains high and is even higher by 40 to 70% than those in other countries. This is also very true in Region 7.

Inequity of access to health services. Most poor Filipinos do not have access to medical

professionals and facilities. This is due to their lower incomes and also because of the lack of such services in their location.

Current Government Responses:⁷

Lowering costs of essential drugs and medicines. This was implemented through the GMA 50 (Gamot na Mabisa Abot Kaya) program which has two strategies namely: Parallel Drug Importation (PDI) and Botika ng Barangay. The latter though has been more acceptable among the local governments.

Enrolment of indigent beneficiaries in the health insurance program. The National Health Insurance Act of 1995 or RA 7875 was enacted with the goal of providing Filipinos with financial access to quality, acceptable and integrated health care. It envisions universal coverage of all Filipinos by 2010. The three major components are: (1) the regular hospitalization program (in-patient) and out-patient benefits; (2) special out-patient benefits administered and delivered by LGUs through the health centers and (3) the “Medicare Para sa Masa” Program or the indigent program. The latter is an attempt to enroll more poor and marginalized families and individuals to the health insurance program so that they can avail themselves of medicare benefits.

Various nutrition programs like Food for School Programs and Anti-Hunger Mitigation programs. These are implemented through the day care centers and through the public school systems.

C. Shelter and Housing⁸

According to the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) 2004-2010, housing need in the country is estimated to reach a total of 3.75 million units by 2010. Demand for new houses, for the said period, is 2.6 million of the total while housing backlog accounts for almost a million. In terms of geographical location, more than half of the total housing need (56%) is in Southern Tagalog, Metropolitan Manila, and Central Luzon, 21% in the Visayas and the remaining 23% in Mindanao.

Around 17.7% of the total number of families in Central Visayas resides in houses made of light/substandard materials (i.e. cogon, nipa, salvaged or makeshift). From these families, 33,136 were informal settlers living in makeshift dwellings located in dangerous areas e.g. along river banks and under bridges. Land tenure is also a major issue for these informal settlers. 38.4% of the families (inclusive of informal settlers) in the lowest 40% income group do not own the land they occupy.

The housing problem is exacerbated by the high cost of land and limited area of land in urban areas for socialized housing (2002 Annual Poverty Income Survey). The slow implementation of government housing programs and projects especially at the local government level is also a major constraint. Some of the LGUs in the region have not identified sites for socialized housing. Based on Table 6, the housing

Table 6: Total Housing Need (2005-2010)⁹

Region	Total Need
Philippines	3,756,072
NCR	496,928
CAR	40,416
I	156,626
II	111,094
III	461,368
IV	828,248
V	173,855
VI	226,455
VII	290,616
VIII	115,252
IX	135,717
X	117,668
XI	263,952
XII	111,847
ARMM	147,574
CARAGA	78,456

Source: HUDCC in the MTPDP

need of the region may reach 290,616 units by the end of 2010.

Current Government Responses¹⁰

Key housing programs and projects. These are the housing programs and projects of key agencies for the poor and informal settlers: the Resettlement, Slum Upgrading, Medium-Rise Housing and other Socialized Housing Programs of the National Housing Authority, and the Community-Mortgage Program (CMP) of the National Home and Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC). Programs that affect the demand and supply of housing, e.g. the Retail Guarantee program of the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) and regulatory policies of the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) are also important responses by the government. Under the Asset Reform Program, idle lands owned by the government are developed as sites for socialized housing and distributed to qualified beneficiaries. HUDCC in coordination with DILG monitors the implementation of the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) in terms of the development of socialized housing by the LGUs.

Strengthened capacity and coordination of key agencies to implement housing programs and deliver related services. Better coordination of agencies involved in housing and land development will be given focused attention. The government will also implement ways to minimize red tape in the processing of application for housing development in various agencies like DAR, DENR and HUDCC.

Enhance the capacities of LGUs to develop and implement housing programs. Key housing agencies will also assist LGUs in housing and land development and in the preparation and compliance of technical requirements of housing projects. Local housing boards which plan, formulate policies and implement local housing projects will be strengthened. It will identify resettlement/relocation sites and areas for socialized housing to respond to the needs of the underprivileged and homeless (i.e., informal settlers, indigenous communities). The Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLRB) shall work with LGUs and the RDC7-Infrastructure Committee to review standards for housing and ensure their strict implementation. Zoning ordinances shall also be reviewed in the light of the new Regional Physical Framework Plan.

Promote and develop new housing technologies that can provide quality housing at least cost. The NHA with HUDCC will promote the production and use of low-cost housing materials and new inexpensive technologies in housing construction. This involves the accreditation of innovative technologies and materials and housing models to help reduce the cost of housing.

Encourage greater private sector involvement in the provision of housing services. Collaboration with the private sector and non-government organizations will be forged in the provision of housing services to answer the people's need for decent shelter. This includes groups like SHDA, CREBA, the Gawad Kalinga of the Couples for Christ and HABITAT.

D. Peace and Order¹¹

Threats to the relatively stable peace and order situation in the region continue. Total crime volume increased from 7,774 incidents in 1999 to 12,076 in 2003 as reported by the Philippine National Police (PNP). Many of the crimes were drug-related and 10% of barangays have serious problems on illegal drugs use. Law enforcement operations are inadequate as shown by gaps in the handling of evidence, slow response to calls for assistance, and a low crime solution efficiency rates. Crime solution efficiency decreased to 77% in 2003 from 83% in 1999. A major reason could be resource constraints for police enforcement. Vehicles and information relay systems are either outmoded or insufficient in

some LGUs. The current police to population ratio is 1:1,007 which is below the standard of 1:500.

There is also the inefficiency in the correctional system compromising efforts to rehabilitate criminals and transform offenders into useful citizens. This can be due to the lack of skilled professional correctional workers, fragmented supervision of correctional institutions and functions, and congested jails. The latter is partly caused by the slow disposition and resolution of cases by the judiciary. As of 2002 a total of 14,062 cases were pending in the regional trial courts and 28,653 cases were pending in the municipal trial courts. This delay is also because of the shortage of prosecutors and investigators and the lack of coordination among the law enforcement agencies, judiciary and reform institutions.

The number of insurgents decreased from 743 in 2001 to 474 insurgents in 2003 but the number of insurgency related incidents increased from 215 incidents in 1999 to 1,972 in 2003.

Current Government Responses

Improvement of facilities of law enforcement agencies and reform institutions. Adequate resources shall be provided to key agencies to acquire the equipment and facilities to improve mobility, communication and firepower in law enforcement. The Regional development Council (RDC) will advocate for the sustained implementation of the PNP modernization program i.e. the rehabilitation the crime laboratory, the acquisition of modern equipment for analyzing evidences, and the computerization of PNP systems. The Parole and Probation Administration and the Bureau of Jail Management & Penology (BJMP) shall work together to improve the jails and correctional facilities and the conditions inside the jails. By strengthening its Jail Decongestion Program, the Parole and Probation hopes to address the problem of overcrowding in the jails and improve the living conditions of inmates.

Enhance quality of police, military, correctional and judicial personnel. Professionalization of the military, police and other related institutions will improve the public image of law enforcement agencies, facilitate the eradication of corrupt practices, and restore the integrity of law enforcement agencies. Career development and skills training/seminars for military, police, correctional workers, and customs and immigration

personnel shall be conducted regularly. More People's Law Enforcement Boards (PLEBs), independent of LGUs, shall be organized to ensure a well disciplined force.

Promote community participation. Volunteerism and community participation in law enforcement will also be promoted to complement the limited manpower resources of public law enforcement agencies. Regular education and advocacy campaigns will be conducted by PNP to encourage the public to voluntarily participate in activities of civilian defense groups. Links with the Citizen Police Auxiliary Group (CPAG), which is composed of civic and NGO communication groups, to help in information gathering and dissemination will be strengthened. The DILG will also conduct regular trainings to enhance the skills of the Barangay Tanods to help in law enforcement at the barangay level. The LGUs, PNP, academe and media will also intensify information and education campaign on illegal drugs.

The DILG will advocate for the activation/ reactivation of the Barangay Peace and Order Councils (BPOCs). The DILG will also promote Patrol 117, which aims to enable communities to actively engage in barangay-based emergency and rescue operations, crime prevention and law enforcement. The PNP and the DILG will also promote collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the public through the strengthening of the Barangay Information Network (BIN).

Speed up disposition and resolution of cases. Recruitment of prosecutors/investigators by the Office of the Regional State Prosecutor (RSP) will be undertaken to address the gap in prosecutor/investigator to case ratio and thus speed up the administration of justice. Out of court settlements will also be encouraged by intensifying the use of conciliation and mediation methods to settle conflicts and enhancing the skills of Lupong Tagapamayapa members in conciliation and mediation.

Strengthen programs in highly impoverished areas. The RDC and the DILG will push for increased visibility and presence of local and national government officials and workers in remote barangays. This will show to the residents that they are not neglected. Gabay sa Mamamayan Aksyon Centers will be operationalized in all LGUS to serve

as barangay-based information resource and service center for government programs. The AFP and the PNP will advocate for the institutionalization of area coordinating centers in the municipalities to monitor and coordinate efforts related to security and other local emergencies. The AFP will also continue peace talks between the government and local insurgent groups.

Strengthen legal framework to fight criminality and insurgency. The RDC will advocate for the enactment of the Police Service Law. The proposed law will include provisions on the working hours, recruitment procedures, promotion and assignment of policemen as well as the procedures in the separation from service of rogue policemen. The existing Civil Service Law is inadequate to meet the requirements and demands of the police service, thus the Police Service Law was proposed.

E. Water and Sanitation¹²

There has been rapid improvement in the number of the regional population served with safe drinking water for the last decade. Data from the Center for Health Development of Region 7 reveal that 83.29% of the total households had access to potable water supply in 2005. Of the four provinces, Negros Oriental had the lowest coverage (64.42%).

There are 3 types of water supply systems in the region. Level I water resources are deep wells, shallow wells, covered/improved dug wells, open dug wells, rainwater collectors and developed springs. These are common in rural barangays, majority of which are publicly-owned. In 2005, about 30.33% of the 370,000 households depended on Level 1 water supply facilities nationwide.

Most of the Level II (communal faucet) water system sources in the region are springs and dug wells. The water supply facilities themselves were put up by DPWH, LWUA, DILG or the local government units. Regionwide, there are 270 operating bodies providing Level II water systems. Only about 19.6% of the served population though are dependent on Level II facilities for their water needs in 2005.

Level III (individual household connection) systems are usually established by LWUA-assisted water districts and local government units. Presently there are 227 service providers of Level III water systems in the region. In 2005, about a third of the households with access to safe water got their water from Level III facilities.

There are also 16 water districts in the region: two in Bohol, seven in Cebu, six in Negros Oriental and one in Siquijor. Among these water districts, the Metro Cebu Water District (MCWD) is the largest. In the franchise area of MCWD, supply of water is low as the water district is only able to meet less than half of the demand. Demand for sewerage and sanitation services is expected to increase especially in the metropolitan areas. Meanwhile, the DOH and DILG will continue to assist LGUs in providing basic sanitation services.

As of 2003, 68,591 hectares (representing 41.73% of potential irrigable area) in the region have been irrigated. Among the four provinces, Bohol has the largest area of agricultural land under irrigation (14,951 hectares out of 40,800 hectares total potential irrigable area, or 56.64%). In terms of the proportion of irrigated area to total potential irrigable areas, however, Siquijor ranks first with 69.38% of its potential irrigable area irrigated.

The water resources sector currently faces the following challenges:

1. There is no single government agency in charge of formulating and recommending policies regarding water management in the region.
2. Due to increased demand brought about by rapid population growth and an increase in the number of industries and commercial establishments, there is rampant and unregulated extraction of underground water resources especially in urban areas.
3. Drainage, sewerage, and flood control facilities, especially in the metropolitan areas, need improvement.
4. Existing irrigation systems need rehabilitation, improvement and proper maintenance in order to sustain agricultural productivity and increase farm output.

Current Government Responses

Pursue the institutionalization of an agency/unit that will formulate and recommend policies regarding water management in the region. The agency shall perform the following functions: (a) impose levy on private, commercial and industrial water wells to facilitate monitoring and regulation of ground water extraction, and (b) advocate environmental protection to all sectors of society.

Provide sufficient water for domestic and industrial purposes. An integrated and holistic approach (using the Integrated Water Resource Management or IWRM principle) will be adopted in the management and development of water, land and related resources (see Chapter 8: Environment and Natural Resources for a discussion on the IWRM). The development of new water sources outside of the over-pumped areas in Metro Cebu and the tapping of surface water will be pursued to address the lack of water supply in Cebu.

Provide/rehabilitate flood control and drainage facilities in flood/sediment prone areas. This shall be undertaken through the following: (a) keeping optimum conveyance capacities of river channels, drainage canals and *esteros* through river bank protection, dredging/de-silting, observance of river easements, and efficient maintenance in coordination with LGUs, and (b) adopting flood management measures, (i.e., forecasting, warning and monitoring systems, evacuation plans, hazard mapping, zoning and land use plans) in lieu of flood control techniques.

Establish management models for urban sewerage and sanitation services. This shall be pursued through the following: (a) letting LGUs establish sanitation units, or (b) contracting out management of sanitation systems to water districts or other agencies (private sector, NGO or community-based organizations) if the water district is not capable, and (c) providing irrigation systems, rehabilitating and improving existing facilities, and constructing communal irrigation and small water impounding projects.

III. MAJOR VULNERABLE SECTORS AND RISKS THEY CONFRONT

*Social Welfare Situation Overview*¹³

Around 70% of the total children covered by Operation *Timbang* belong to normal weight bracket. Day care service participation rate is only 29% among children ages 3-5 years old. However, advocacy has been initiated already down to municipal and barangay level to prescribe day care/pre-school curriculum before enrollment to Grade 1. Day care services have penetrated the region with 98% coverage. More than 50% are incidence of sexual abuse among female Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP). Incidence on CNSP also includes children in conflict with the law (CICL).

There are 382,421 out-of-school youths in the region which need intervention. This constitutes 29% of the total youth population ages 15-30 years old. The most prevalent offenses committed among youth offenders are rape and illegal use of prohibited substance.

A very high incidence of unskilled women comprises 53% of the total women population in the region. This 865,607 unskilled women can contribute to economic growth if they will be enhanced with trainings otherwise they will remain as potential victims of abuses and violence in the society. Widespread among Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances (WEDC) is the incidence of physical abuse/maltreated/battered with 51.9% share followed by sexual abuse with 22.1% share of this year.

The most common disability among Persons with Disability (PWD) is visual impairment, followed by hearing/speech impairment and orthopedically handicapped. The number of PWDs ages 25 years old and above is higher compared to other ages. Neglected/abandoned cases are the most common among PWDs that need special attention. The same is also the case with Older Persons. Only 13% of the PWDs are skilled and employed while 43% are skilled but unemployed and 44% are unskilled.

Families under traditional arrangement still dominate with 52% share of the total families in the region, followed by families with OFW parent/s with 26% and solo parents with 10%. Domestic violence is rampant among families' cases. There

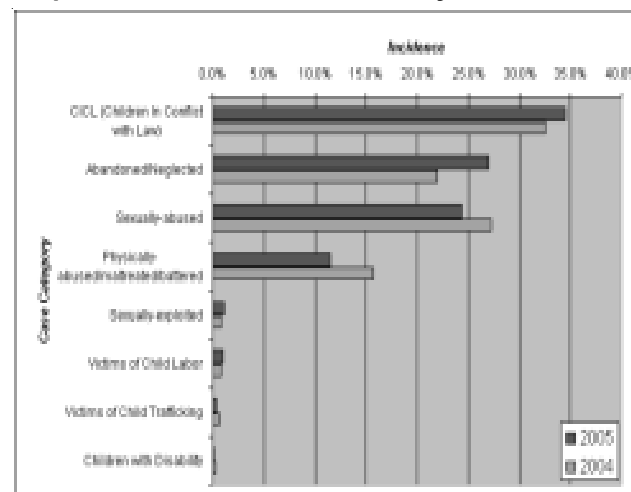
were 88,643 families identified living in areas with no access to basic services and having peace and order problem situations.

Aside from DSWD there are 148 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) delivering social welfare and development services in the region. Cebu City accounts for 53% share of the total number of NGOs, while the rest are distributed unevenly in the provinces.

A. Children and Youth¹⁴

About 42% of the region's population (2.28 million) are children (2000 Census of Population). Many of these children face vulnerability in various situations e.g. hazardous and exploitative labor, children in the streets, CICL, victims of sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation, and victims of family violence and neglect.

Table 7: Trend of Incidence of Children in Need of Special Protection, Central Visayas, 2004-2005



Large number of working children. The Survey on Children, jointly conducted by the International Labor Organization and the National Statistics Office (NSO) in 2000, show that about 388,000 children have worked in various economic activities in the region. About 44% toil under hazardous working conditions as laborers and unskilled workers. A big percentage of working children are engaged in what is termed as child labor – those children below 15 years old working without parental supervision, or those below 18 years old engaged in hazardous work. Child labor can be traced to a variety of reasons including poverty and inaccessibility to quality schooling. Children

are forced to work at an early age to meet the needs of their family.

Increasing incidence of child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Child trafficking is an important concern in the region as one of the provinces, Cebu is a major transit point and destination of these children. Many of these children who are attracted to the cities become victims of commercial sexual exploitation. They are vulnerable to STDs and possibly HIV-AIDS. They might also suffer from psychological and emotional trauma brought about by the experience.

NGOs in partnership with some private shipping lines have established Children's Welfare Desks to prevent child trafficking. There is a need to increase the number of participating shipping lines and sustain surveillance and monitoring operations to combat child trafficking in the region.

High incidence of violence against children. In 2003, the region had 678 reported cases of violence against children. Incidences of maltreatment and physical abuse ranked high with 388 cases, followed by rape with a total of 240 cases. The Home for Girls of the DSWD is a special facility that responds to concerns of abused girl-children. However, there is also a need to provide rehabilitation and intervention services for perpetrators of violence against children.

Increasing cases of children in contact with the law. Youth offenders or CICLs totaled 297 in 2003. Most of the region's jails have separate detention cells for juvenile offenders. The Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth provides various services to juvenile offenders with suspended sentences in the region. At the city level, only one institution exists that provides various services to juvenile offenders and this is the Cebu City Operation Second Chance.

Slow reduction in malnutrition and wide provincial/local disparities. Health-wise, children belonging to poor families are more vulnerable to illnesses. While there is moderate progress as regards child health situation in the region, communicable diseases such as pneumonia remained the number one cause of deaths among infants and children in the region. Disparities in

the health situation at the provincial and local levels also persist. The programs and activities to be implemented to reduce these disparities will help achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals on child health and nutrition.

Absence of reliable data on children in conflict areas. A number of barangays in Bohol, Negros Oriental and Cebu are conflict areas. Conflict areas are areas infiltrated by the armed insurgent elements. Children are not spared of the difficulties of living in these areas. The absence of adequate and reliable data prevents the formation of a clear picture of the state of children in these areas.

The discussions above indicate that most of the situations the child is exposed to are brought about by poverty. Poverty reduction programs are therefore vigorously being implemented in municipalities in the region with high poverty incidences (See Chapter 16 of the *KALAH I Initiatives*). These KALAH I Initiatives are expected to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction.

Current Government Responses

Improve existing preventive, developmental and rehabilitative intervention programs for children especially those in difficult situations.

The programs that will be strengthened include the Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS) program and the Early Childhood Development Project (ECD) which are already in place in most areas in the region. Other rehabilitative programs which are implemented by regional and local institutions and centers will also be strengthened.

The Regional Child Labor Program Committee - *Sagip Batang Manggagawa*-Quick Action Team (RCLP SBM-QAT), a committee composed of representatives from various regional line agencies and NGOs, conducts rescue and recovery operations but its activities are often limited by lack of resources.

NGOs in partnership with some private shipping lines have established Children's Welfare Desks to prevent child trafficking. There is a need to increase

the number of participating shipping lines and sustain surveillance and monitoring operations to combat child trafficking in the region.

Implement rehabilitation and intervention programs for perpetrators of violence against children

Services will also be provided to perpetrators of violence against children and to potential abusers to help them overcome the habit.

Involve private sector in the protection and promotion of children's rights and in the provision of health and nutrition services.

This involves interfacing the programs of the private sector with existing government or other NGO programs to expand the reach and improve the quality of services to children.

Promote and institutionalize mechanisms to create an enabling and child-friendly environment in the region

The activities include the conduct of advocacy on children's rights, and mainstreaming these rights to the local development plans. Mechanisms will also be put in place to monitor and enforce compliance as well as penalize violators of children's rights.

B. Women¹⁵

Increasing incidence of physical abuse and violence against women. The PNP crime statistics for 2003 to 2004 reveal a rising incidence of physical abuse and violence against women. The DSWD likewise reported an increasing pattern of women abuse and battering from 1998 to 2003. The agency attended to 2,148 physically abused, maltreated and battered women despite the lack of facilities to properly address specific physical and psychological needs of battered and abused women. Thus far, the region has only two crisis centers, one in Bohol and another one in Cebu City. Incidences of trafficking of women and children to Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Saipan, Middle East and Italy by way of Cebu's ports have been recorded by NGOs such as ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes).

Access to reproductive health. Improving women's access to reproductive health services remains a concern in the region. Data shows that in general,

the health status of women has improved over the last few years. Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), for one, decreased from 158 maternal deaths per 100,000 livebirths in 1998 to only 57 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 2005. The DOH may reach its target of 39 per 100,000 live births in 2010.

While there was an improvement in coverage of tetanus toxoid (TT2) immunization in 2003, this was minimal. The percentage of women with three or more prenatal visits also showed a downward trend, from 57.1% in 2001 to 55.5% in 2003. Maternal malnutrition is prevalent in the region and is a major contributor to high rates of infant and maternal mortality. Developing fetuses, women before and during pregnancy and while breast feeding, and children up to 3 years old are among the most vulnerable to malnutrition.

Teenage pregnancy is also increasing in the region, in both rural and urban areas. Most teenage pregnancies occur between ages 15 and 17. The fetal mortality rate for teen-age pregnancies is 1.2 to 1.6 times higher than those of mothers 24-34 years old. There is also a greater risk of premature births, low birth weight, in-born defects, mental retardation and blindness in teen-age pregnancies.

The total fertility rate in 2002 was 3.4 children per woman, one child more than the desired number preferred by women in the region. Contraceptive users among married women 15-49 years declined from 51.1% in 1998 to 49% in 2002 (NDHS). The proportion of married women 15-49 years old not currently using any method increased from about 48% in 1998 to 53% in 2002. More unmet family planning needs increase the risk of unwanted pregnancies and their attendant complications, particularly among the 15-19 age group. There was a 20% unmet need in contraception where roughly two million women wanted contraception but could not get it for various reasons.

40,000 illegal abortions were done every year due to lack of access to quality family planning service. Majority of abortions are resorted to by married women above 30 years old who are on their fourth, fifth and sixth pregnancies. The most common reasons why women did not avail of family planning services were the lack of accessible and adequate health facilities, the fear of the side effects of contraception, and the risk that might arise at childbirth and pregnancy.

Overall, health services should include: a) adequate nutrition, specifically micronutrients (iron) to fight anemia, b) care of pregnant women (safe motherhood), c) responsible parenthood counseling, family planning services and breastfeeding, d) prevention of abortions and managing its complications, e) preventing all types of infection including STDs (e.g HIV/AIDS) and f) prevention and treatment of cancer and degenerative diseases.

Low economic opportunities for women. The UNDP Report (2003 and 2004) showed that women in the Philippines earned less than the men. In the region, disadvantaged women in the labor force, agrarian and fisheries communities, informal sectors and urban slum communities have low access to social services and to opportunities to livelihood and income generation. Likewise, their availment of training programs for skills, livelihood and entrepreneurial development is low.

Current Government Responses

Institutionalize crisis centers in all provinces. Every province is planned to have at least one crisis center. These centers are expected to provide the following services: legal and medical aid, counseling, and temporary shelter to rape victims. At present, only Bohol and Cebu have crisis centers. DSWD and DILG will advocate for the establishment of crisis centers in Negros Oriental and Siquijor. The center is also expected to provide correctional and rehabilitative services to perpetrators of violence/abusers.

Establish functional monitoring and surveillance mechanisms. Inter-agency committees on women and children shall be strengthened to help address the concern on the trafficking of women, involuntary prostitution and violence against women. Private businesses and NGOs shall be involved in the formulation of mechanisms to monitor women trafficking, involuntary prostitution and violence against women.

Intensify advocacy for quality reproductive health (RH) services for women, men and adolescents. DOH and POPCOM will cooperate with the LGUs, NGOs and other private sector groups in intensifying advocacy, information education and counseling activities on reproductive health to all sectors. Coordinative efforts with other entities, organizations and volunteer workers will ensure availability of RH services to people living in remote barangays.

Increase investment in health, nutrition and reproductive health. This involves the pooling of resources of concerned agencies to implement health, nutrition and population programs. LGUs will be encouraged to increase appropriations for the continued implementation of the incentive and awards system to recognize exemplary performances in the delivery of services to the people. The strategy of convergence and integrated approach in the delivery of services shall be carried out in far-flung areas. Reproductive health services, and disease prevention and control programs and projects that target risk groups shall be implemented. The *Halad sa Katawhan*-Free Clinic, a regional KALAHI strategy in health service delivery shall also continue to be undertaken in remote and conflict areas of the region. Advocacy on the increase of benefits under the National Health Insurance Program shall be undertaken by DOH, PhilHealth, and the LGUs.

Increase access of women to livelihood skills training, entrepreneurship development and credit facilities. Skills training as well as technical and financial assistance shall be extended to women by TESDA, DSWD and the KALAHI program. The trainings are expected to empower women for microenterprise management and broaden their opportunities for livelihood and income generation. DOLE shall also organize women in the labor force and help strengthen their activities to sustain employment. The monitoring of women's local councils shall be undertaken by DILG, DSWD, LGUs, NGOs/POs to help strengthen local institutions.

Provide Alternative Learning Skills. The Department of Education, together with the LGUs, will provide disadvantaged women with opportunities for relevant learning through the Basic Literacy Programs. DSWD, DepEd and TESDA will work together to provide service subcontracting of non-formal education (NFE) in order to enhance public-private partnership in the delivery of education services.

C. Elderly and Persons with Disability¹⁶

The Tables 8 to 10 show the incidence of disability among the populace in region 7.

Most of the unskilled PWDs are ages 60 years old and above.

Table 8: Number of Disabled Persons by type of disability by Age Group and Sex disaggregation

Type of Disability	AGE GROUP											
	0 - 5		6 - 12		13 - 17		18 - 24		25 - 59		60 & Above	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Orthopedically Handicapped	4	5	8	5	7	13	38	14	107	46	41	24
Hearing/Speech Impaired	23	17	22	13	20	20	26	22	63	59	97	79
Visually Impaired	8	10	17	15	17	26	19	18	106	76	152	97
Mentally Challenged	0	0	5	4	3	9	12	12	35	19	17	14
Cleft Palate	9	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Others	16	17	78	57	70	54	69	40	146	140	118	109
TOTAL	60	51	132	95	118	123	164	106	458	340	425	323

Source: *DSWD 7 & LGU Situationer, 2005*

Incidence of disability is most high in the population ages 25 years old and above. Only 13% of the

PWDs are skilled and employed, 43% are skilled but unemployed and 44% are unskilled.

Table 9: Reported number of PWDs, by age group, male/female and skilled/unskilled

Age Group	Male			Female			TOTAL		
	With Skills		Unskilled	With Skills		Unskilled	With Skills		Unskilled
	Empl	Unem		Empl	Unem		Empl	Unem	
15 -17	3	6	10	3	6	7	6	12	17
18 - 24	4	8	1	3	11	11	7	19	12
25 - 30	12	8	7	3	9	4	15	17	11
31 - 59	9	30	4	2	38	12	11	68	16
60 & above	2	14	50	4	20	48	6	34	98
TOTAL	30	66	72	15	84	82	45	150	154

Source: *LGU Situationer, 2005*

Problems in Implementation of the Senior Citizens Act and Accessibility Law. The Expanded Senior Citizens Act (RA 9257) and Accessibility Law (B.P. 344) are intended to promote the welfare of the elderly as well as persons with disabilities (PWDs). Yet, they are largely ignored or poorly implemented. Republic Act (R.A.) 9257 granted additional benefits and privileges to senior citizens while Batas Pambansa (B.P.) 344 sought to enhance the mobility of PWDs by requiring certain buildings, institutions, establishments and other public utilities to install facilities and other devices. The non-compliance by drugstores, shipping lines, land transport groups, and airlines of the provision granting discounts to senior citizens was raised to concerned agencies, but they remain unacted.

Non-Functional Office for Senior Citizens Affairs. The establishment of an Office for Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA) or Senior Citizen Centers (SCC), to act as a general information and liaison center for the elderly, was required in every city and municipality. The establishment of OSCAs/SCCs and the strengthening of organizations for the

elderly are intended to enhance the involvement of the elderly in productive and meaningful activities. As of the third quarter of 2004, DILG reported that 97 percent (128) of all municipalities in the region have established OSCAs/SCCs. However, only 71 of these are fully functional, while 60 are semi functional and 1 is non-functional. The elderly therefore continues to have poor access to health and social services as well as opportunities for income generation and special education. Only 58 out of the total 132 LGUs or 44% of the total number of LGUs in the region has Senior Citizen Centers.

Table 10: Number of LGUs with Senior Citizen Centers (SCC) per Province

Province	Number of LGUs with SCC
Cebu	25
Bohol	18
NegrosOr.	13
Siquijor	2
Total	58

Source: *DSWD 7, 2006*

Poor compliance to the provisions of the Accessibility Law. The low compliance to the provisions of the Accessibility Law hampered the movement of the PWDs in the region. This was largely due to poor public awareness of the rights and privileges of PWDs as embodied in R.A. 7277, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons. The lack of information on the rights of PWDs as well as senior citizens has hampered the identification of appropriate interventions for these disadvantaged groups.

Current Government Responses

Fully implement the Senior Citizens Act and Accessibility Law. The full implementation of laws covering the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities and the elderly (R.A. 7432, R.A. 9257 and B.P. 344) will be promoted among LGUs, government agencies and private institutions. Compliance to the Accessibility Law and the Expanded Senior Citizens Act will be monitored by DILG, DSWD and the LGUs. The establishment/ reactivation of the Office for Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA) and the Office for Persons with Disability Affairs (OPDAs) in all municipalities will also be promoted to facilitate the provision of basic services to the elderly and PWDs.

DSWD and the LGUs will embark on a massive registration of PWDs and the development of a database on the elderly to facilitate the identification of interventions. DSWD, the LGUs and private entities will also work for the establishment of day centers in LGUs and the provision of assistive devices, supplemental feeding, psychosocial and productivity improvement interventions. Physical and medical needs of PWDs and the elderly will be provided by the government and private sector.

Provision of Skills Enhancement Training. Skills enhancement trainings for PWDs will be undertaken by DSWD through its Area Vocational Rehabilitation Center (AVRC). The AVRC also responds to the physical needs of PWDs. DOLE will also assist PWDs in finding employment by strengthening the linkage between the public and private sector to generate jobs for skilled PWDs. DSWD and DILG will likewise lead in awarding establishments for best practices and initiatives that are supportive of PWDs and senior citizens.

Provision of Basic Education. The Department of Education in coordination with LGUs will provide personal enhancement and continued learning to PWDs and the elderly through its Basic Literacy Education. NGOs and private institutions will also provide special education (SPED) and appropriate skills training to PWDs in the region.

Provision of Social Protection. DILG will work closely with DSWD and NAPC through the KALAHI program to increase the capability of LGUs to localize and institutionalize the delivery of social protection schemes. The local poverty reduction activities of LGUs are also expected to benefit the PWDs and the elderly.

D. Indigenous Peoples¹⁷

The indigenous peoples (IPs) in the region can be found in Bohol, Cebu and Negros Oriental. These are the Badjaos and Aetas in Cebu and Bohol, the Eskayyas who are found only in Bohol, and the Magahats and the Bukidnons in Negros Oriental.

Due to their small number, the needs and conditions of the IPs have largely been ignored and given low priority. There is a lack of settlement sites for the Aetas in Naga (Cebu) and Loay (Bohol). There is also the problem of the ancestral domain among the Eskayyas of Bohol. In urban centers such as Cebu City, the Badjaos frequent the streets as beggars and mendicants, discarding their skills in fishing and mat weaving. There is a high level of illiteracy among the Badjaos and Aetas, and lack of access to basic social and health services. Furthermore, the absence of a development plan for IPs marginalizes them in the overall development of the region and discounts their important role in nation building.

Current Government Responses

Issuance of Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles and Land Titles. This involves the recognition of the tenurial rights of the IPs. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) shall assist in the delineation of ancestral domain and in facilitating the issuance of certificates of ancestral domain titles (CADT) and land titles (CALT) to these people.

Formulation of the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan.

Financial and technical assistance will be provided to IPs in the formulation and implementation of the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan.

Delivery of Basic Social Services. DILG, NAPC and DSWD will assist LGUs in developing their capabilities to localize and institutionalize the delivery of social services to IPs. This will ensure that the minimum basic needs of IPs as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals are met. TESDA will implement programs for IP women, the youth and elderly to enhance traditional livelihood activities for their socio-economic upliftment. LGUs will work with other government agencies and private groups to identify the needs of IPs such as marketing of their products or agro-technological development. DepEd will provide basic literacy programs to IP families as well as scholarships to poor but deserving children. Health and medical services, potable water and electricity will also be made accessible to IP communities.

Representation in Local Development Councils.

The representation of IPs in local development councils will be promoted to facilitate the resolution of any conflicts pertaining to ancestral domain.

Provision of Livelihood. The NCIP will work with DSWD, the church groups and LGUs to eliminate mendicancy and provide alternative livelihood opportunities to IPs.

IV. KEY PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS IN THE RESPONSE TO SOCIAL RISKS¹

Multi-stakeholder cooperation in the implementation of programs and policies

Since many of the social welfare and protection programs need multi-stakeholder cooperation, effort must be made to reach out to them in terms of constant information dissemination and actual physical contact. Failure to do so may result in implementation problems. For example, in the implementation of the new law for CICL, or the RA 9344, some stakeholders failed to appreciate the new legislation and were reluctant in its implementation.

Regular Submission of Local Social Welfare and Development Reports

There was no regular submission of reports from LGUs to the regional level. There was also no common format being followed in reporting. The national offices of DILG and DSWD must come up with a policy mandating the LGU to submit regular reports to grasp the real picture of all sectors in the locality.

Lack of Sufficient Data for Planning

Since inaccurate data is gathered at the local levels (lack of resources and capacities are major reasons), there are no new concrete programs and policies that really respond to social risks. Vulnerability-risk-gap analysis can only be effective with sufficient data at the local levels.

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ASSESSING THE TARGETING SCHEMES OF DSWD PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

By

Dr. Celia M. Reyes

ABSTRACT

Poverty incidence has been on the downtrend until 2003. There was a reversal in 2006, when poverty incidence among families increased from 24.4% in 2003 to 26.9% in 2006. During the past two decades, the pace of poverty reduction has been very modest. This is partly due to modest economic growth that has been experienced over the same period, as well as the need to improve poverty reduction mechanisms. One of the weaknesses in poverty reduction programs is targeting. There are several approaches to identifying beneficiaries for targeted programs. In the past, government has employed various approaches for its poverty reduction programs. LGUs have been collecting and generating data relating to core local poverty indicators to address their needs for local level planning and budgeting and program implementation. Community-based

monitoring systems and variants of it have been implemented by the LGUs to complement data coming from the Philippine Statistical System. This is an offshoot of the increased demand for information that comes with decentralization. Yet, most official statistics remain to be generated for the national and regional levels only. The availability of data conditions the targeting approaches that have been implemented by the government. The government makes do with whatever information is available at the time. Consequently, some of the schemes have suffered from significant leakages and exclusions.

This paper aims to examine the targeting schemes of key programs and projects of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. In particular, it examines the *Tindahan Natin* Program, *SEA-K* and supplemental feeding program.

Introduction

Poverty incidence has been on the downtrend until 2003. There was a reversal in 2006, when we saw poverty incidence among families increased from 24.4 % in 2003 to 26.9% in 2006. During the past two decades, the pace of poverty reduction has been very modest. While this is partly due to the modest economic growth that has been experienced over the same period, this could also be attributed to the poverty reduction programs that have been implemented. In fact, the reduction in poverty incidence during the period was mainly due to economic growth and not due to redistribution (Reyes, 2004). This indicates that many of our poverty reduction programs have not been very successful in moving the poor out of poverty. Many of our programs were either too short-lived to have significant long-term impacts or they were not implemented properly to achieve intended results.

One of the weaknesses in poverty reduction programs is the targeting. There are several approaches to identifying beneficiaries for targeted programs. In the past, the government has employed various approaches for its poverty reduction programs. The succeeding approaches were meant to address limitations of previous schemes.

During the Aquino Administration, priority for poverty reduction programs was given to the Club 20 provinces. These provinces were selected based on poverty incidence, malnutrition prevalence, isolation, and other factors. However, only 11% of the income poor were in these 20 provinces as reported by Reyes in her 2003 study entitled "The Poverty Fight: Have We Made an Impact?" This is because the poor are distributed not just in a few provinces but are scattered throughout the country.

Recognizing that provincial targeting is not going to be a very effective strategy, the targeting scheme then shifted to 5th and 6th class municipalities during the Ramos Administration. The class of the municipality is determined by the Department of Finance, based on the income of the municipality – the revenues received from imposing local taxes, fees and charges, a portion of the national taxes. The class of the municipality is not based on the income of the households residing in the municipality. A comparison of the poverty rates in the municipalities based on the small area estimates of the NSCB reveal that there is no direct correspondence between the class of municipality and the poverty rates. Thus, prioritizing municipalities based on the class of the municipality would not reflect ranking based on poverty rates.

Geographical targeting became more focused during the Arroyo administration in recognition of the heterogeneity with the provinces and municipalities. Poorest barangays became the priority. While the guidelines called for prioritizing barangays with high poverty incidence, in practice, the so-called poorest barangays were selected on the basis of perceptions since there was really no comprehensive data that would allow for the ranking of barangays based on poverty incidence.

Recognizing that geographical targeting is not going to be an effective scheme in a country where the poor are not concentrated in a few areas, the Estrada administration shifted to household based targeting. The government announced its *Lingap Para Sa Mahirap* Program wherein the 100 poorest households in each province would be given assistance. The local government units (LGUs) were given authority to identify the poorest families in the absence of data that the national government can use. The local officials came up with their list. There were concerns from some households regarding the lists prompting the national government to ask the local governments to validate the list. It proved difficult to do this in the absence of household level data. Thus, by the time there was a change in administration, the *Lingap Para Sa Mahirap* program has not been implemented.

Official poverty statistics were available only at the national and regional levels. Due to growing demand for more disaggregated data, provincial estimates of poverty incidence were released by

NSCB for 2000 and 2003 despite the high coefficients of variation of some of these estimates.

In 2006, estimates of poverty incidence for the municipalities for the year 2000 were generated by NSCB and the World Bank using small area estimation techniques. They have not been officially adopted due to their inconsistencies with the official estimates. More recently, estimates for 2003 have been generated for selected provinces and estimates for 2000 have been revised.

Meanwhile, LGUs have been collecting and generating data relating to the core local poverty indicators to address their needs for local level planning and budgeting and program implementation. Community-based monitoring systems and variants of it have been implemented by the LGUs to complement data coming from the Philippine Statistical System. This is an offshoot of the increased demand for information that comes with decentralization. It is important to note that while the country has given decentralization a big push in 1991 with the passage of the Local Government Code, the Philippine Statistical System has not responded to the change in the structure of government. Hence, most official statistics remain to be generated for the national and regional levels only.

The availability of data conditions the targeting approaches that have been implemented by the government. The government makes do with whatever information is available at the time. Consequently, some of the schemes have suffered from significant leakages and exclusions.

This paper aims to examine the targeting schemes of the key programs and projects of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. In particular, it examines the *Tindahan Natin* Program, *SEA-K* and supplemental feeding program.

I. DSWD Programs and Projects

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) aims to provide social protection and promote the rights and welfare of the poor, vulnerable and the disadvantaged individuals, families and communities that will contribute to poverty alleviation and empowerment through social welfare development policies, programs and projects and services implemented with or through LGUs, non-government

organizations (NGOs), people's organizations (POs), other government organizations (GOs) and other members of civil society.

The DSWD is implementing several programs aimed at reaching their target groups. The national programs include the following (i) KALAHI-CIDSS, (ii) SEA-K Integrated Program, (iii) Food for School Program, (iv) Tindahan Natin Project, (v) Core Shelter Assistance, and Disaster Management Program. In addition, DSWD has center and community based services for persons in especially difficult circumstances and foreign assisted projects. Details of these programs and projects are contained in *Annex 1*. What is apparent from the list is that the DSWD's clientele represent a very large segment of the Philippine population. These programs could be more effective if the targeting schemes can be improved.

1.1. Tindahan Natin

Description of program

Tindahan Natin (TN) aims to provide basic food commodities, specifically rice and noodles, at cheaper prices to the poor. Assistance to program beneficiaries is then in the form of price subsidy. TN outlets are placed in areas identified as vulnerable to food insecurity.

The target areas are 49 provinces with very high vulnerability to food insecurity and hunger in 14 regions and 21 poverty enclaves in the National Capital Region.

DSWD has allocated PhP160 million for this program in 2008 with a target coverage of 6,445 TN outlets and 6,445,000 families.

Targeting scheme

Geographic targeting is employed in the *Tindahan Natin* program. Areas are classified based on degree of food insecurity and vulnerability.

Five clusters of provinces were determined based on 12 indicators: (i) ratio of per capita expenditure to per capita income; (ii) poverty incidence; (iii) median family income; (iv) ratio of food expenditure to total expenditure; (v) ratio of cereal expenditure to total

expenditures; (vi) percentage of households with safe water; (vii) percentage of families with working children, 15-17 years old; (viii) unemployment rate; (ix) elementary cohort survival rate; (x) percentage of underweight children 0-5 years old; (xi) percentage of underweight adults, BMI<18.5 kg/m²; and (xii) percentage of agricultural land under tenancy.

Data for the 12 indicators were obtained from existing data for 1998-2000. Cluster and discriminant analyses led to the grouping of the 77 provinces into 5 clusters: (i) not vulnerable; (ii) less vulnerable; (iii) vulnerable; (iv) very vulnerable; and (v) very, very vulnerable.

In the case of NCR, poverty enclaves as identified by NAPC were included in the target areas for the TN Program.

In the initial stages of the implementation of the program, ID cards were issued to families who were considered to be poor by the LGUs. Families who have income below the food threshold are the target beneficiaries of the program. Only those with these ID cards can purchase from the TN. When the program was scaled up, the ID cards were not issued anymore and anyone can buy from the TN outlets and avail of the price subsidy.

Assessment of targeting scheme

The TN Targeting Team¹ of the DSWD visited the office of the Social Worker in Camarin, Caloocan City and TN outlets in the area to examine the actual targeting mechanisms used by the program implementors on November 15, 2007. Four (4) out of a total of 44 TN operators were interviewed.

While there are guidelines in terms of the provinces to be included in the program, there is more discretion in the choice of actual location and number of TN outlets within the province. The regional office of DSWD determines the number of outlets while the identification of the *Tindahan Natin* Outlet (TNO) is done by regional DSWD (in this case, the DSWD NCR office), the LGU (in this case, Caloocan City) and NFA. Actual criteria used in selecting locations were neither documented nor well-known to all the stakeholders.

The TN operator has to pay for the cost of the structure of the convenience store amounting to PhP45,000, payable to NFA in 7 years. Some operators opt to not buy the structure.

In the case of Camarin, for example, while there is preference for depressed areas, NFA prefers outlets

that are along the road over those that are in interior areas that are not accessible by road. There have been instances when NFA has disapproved applications for TN operations in a particular location because of the location – because it is not along the road, even if located in a depressed area. The reason cited is the difficulty in delivering rice to TN outlets that are far from the roads. This has implications on who are the actual beneficiaries – it is likely that those who are near the store would tend to benefit more from the TN. Given that the amount of rice that the operator can purchase from NFA is limited, it is possible that the poor in the interior areas may not be able to benefit from the program.

Moreover, there is strong preference for SEA-K members to be the operators, presidents of homeowner associations are also preferred operators.

Given the geographic distribution of the TNO across the country as well as the number of beneficiaries served by these stores, Manasan and Cuenca (2007) estimated that the leakage rate is 66%. This means that 66% of the program benefits went to non-poor households.

There were issues regarding some features of the program. In the case of the TN structure, it was not clear how much is the monthly amortization and the mode of payment. There was a case of an individual taking over a TN outlet (TNO), NFA is requiring the current operator to pay the full amount of the structure (PhP45,000) and not the remaining balance (the previous operator has already paid some amount). Moreover, only TNOs with structured convenience store have the privilege to make orders through phone and have them delivered, while others have to go to the NFA outlet to buy rice.

The TN operator can purchase rice from NFA only once a week. The gross profit of TNO per sack of rice is only PhP50 and the delivery charge cost them PhP25. One complaint is that some of the bags of rice weighed less than the prescribed 50 kilos. The interviewees noted that some bags lacked ½ to 2 kilos of rice. The gross profit per sack of rice is only PhP50 or equivalent to about 3 kilos. Thus, the loss of even one kilo of rice is a significant decline in the profits of the TN operator.

Recommendations

There is a need for clearer guidelines on location of sites. While provinces, cities and municipalities are determined beforehand, the actual location of the TNOs within the cities and municipalities are left to the discretion of the

LGUs. It is important to specify the criteria that should be used in choosing the sites and a greater need to monitor that they are implemented.

Geographic targeting works well if poverty rates differ greatly across geographic units, but if poverty rates are similar within the geographic unit. For example, targeting by province would work well if poverty rate differs considerably across provinces but within the provinces, the poverty rates are similar across municipalities and barangays. In the case of the Philippines, the variation in poverty rates is greater within the provinces than across provinces. Thus, geographic targeting is going to lead to large exclusion and leakage rates. Considering the significant heterogeneity within municipalities and cities, such that poverty rates may range from a low of 5% to a high of 80%, then it is better to combine geographic targeting with household-based targeting. This means that TNOs will be located in areas where the poverty rates are high but in addition only eligible households will be able to buy from the TNOs. This will reduce leakage rate.

1.2. Self-Employment Assistance Kaunlaran (SEA-K)

Description of program

The SEA-K program is a capability building program designed to establish sustainable self-managed community-based organization providing the economically active poor with direct access to productive inputs and assistance for micro-enterprise development. It evolved from the Economic Assistance Program (EAP) in the 1970s, to the Self-Employment Assistance - Kaunlaran (SEA-K) in the 1990s. At present, it is an integrated program of all livelihood and livelihood-related projects of the DSWD. There are now two levels of program: (i) SEA-K Level I or the micro-enterprise level which provides capital assistance for micro-enterprises; and (ii) SEA-K Level II or the *Kabayan* level which provides greater amount of capital assistance for micro-enterprise expansion and financing for basic need project such as shelter construction and home improvement.

The SEA-K program aims to improve the capability of the economically active poor to transform their labor resources into income through the creation of micro-enterprises thereby resulting in their socio-economic uplifting above the marginal status.

A budget of PhP43 million has been allocated by DSWD for the program in 2007. No additional funds

have been allocated in 2008; instead, revolving funds will be used in 2008. It aims to provide 27,152 families with Level I and 1,892 families with Level II livelihood assistance. Moreover, it aims to organize 1,086 Level I projects and 47 Level II projects.

Targeting Scheme

The DSWD has formulated a set of criteria to determine who can avail of the SEA-K Program. These are: (i) aged 16 years old and over; (ii) with a monthly income of not more than P6,958 for a family of six; (iii) without access to formal lending institutions; (iv) physically ill; (v) a resident of the community in the last six months and intends to stay for the next two years; (vi) with a positive work attitude; (vii) maintains good relations with family and community; (viii) with a good reputation in his community; and (ix) concerned with the welfare of his community.

The SEA-K selection processes are the following: a) filling-up of intake sheet, b) home visit by the SEA-K worker/CSWDO, c) community assembly, and d) application of means test. Means test (MT) is done at the social preparation phase to determine the economic status of applicants for SEA-K program

Assessment of the program

A visit to SEA-K projects in Camarin and Bagong Silang in Caloocan was done on Nov 21, 2007 by the Targeting sub-team². The sub-team met with the city social welfare and development officer and her staff. In addition, a focus group discussion was held with members of the SEA-K project participating.

The team found that the Proxy Means Test (PMT) is still done in the social preparation phase to determine the economic status of the applications. In the means test, the system of qualification is such that if the points add up to 20 points and below, the client could be considered eligible. However, the PMT is being filled up by the prospective beneficiary rather than by the social worker. It was noted that there were erasures in the forms that were examined and that it was evident that the answers were revised so that the total score would not be more than 20. A further check with other regions indicate that the PMT is no longer used in other provinces. This was validated by some members of the SEA-K Targeting Team during the visit to Caraga Region.

This PMT has been developed more than a decade ago by a consultant and has not been updated since then. The PMT model still includes transistor radio as one of the assets which is no longer a good indicator of income class.

It was also noted that the LGU does not have a database that would facilitate the identification of eligible beneficiaries. Consequently, each time there is a targeted program, the program implementor has to do his own data collection. Data are not inputted into a database for the use of other programs. This has hindered the convergence of poverty reduction efforts.

Recommendations

There is a need to revisit the guidelines of SEA-K, particularly on the targeting scheme and process. Some of the qualitative criteria are difficult to measure. The proxy means test (PMT) model needs to be regularly updated to ensure accuracy of targeting.

1.3. Supplemental feeding (SF) program

Description of Program

The *Malusog na Simula, Yaman ng Bansa*, a center-based supplemental feeding program involves the provision of hot meals and milk to preschool children enrolled in the public day care centers.

In 2007, the budget allocation for this program totaled PhP750 million. In 2008, the budget went up slightly to PhP765.75 million to cover 326,748 day care children.

Targeting Scheme

The targeting scheme for the devolved Social Welfare and Development programs and services can be described as follows:

With regard to target areas, the old scheme indicated that priority shall be given to the most depressed barangays. In determining the target beneficiaries (including for supplemental feeding), the Framework for the Social Welfare Development Planning Process indicated the following: (i) families whose monthly income is PhP3,675 (this corresponds to the 1991 monthly poverty threshold for a family of six; (ii) families with the following characteristics: those who cannot

² The group consisted of Cynthia Lagasca, Marivic Vergara, Melvin Alcober, Loida Villanueva and Teresita Cunanan from PDPB.

afford to have 3 meals daily; those who do not have decent shelter; those who cannot send their children to elementary and secondary school; those who have children suffering from malnutrition; those living in highly disaster prone areas; those who have family members afflicted by health problems; and those who have family members that are disabled.

For the 2007 Supplemental Feeding Program, the target areas were selected to give focus to priority food poor provinces:

- Priority 1 – consists of ten provinces spread in 7 regions including NCR
- Priority 2 – has 20 provinces in 11 regions
- Priority 3 – has 24 provinces in 15 regions

Beneficiaries of the program are the 3-5 year old preschoolers in public day care centers in the National Nutrition Council Board- identified priority provinces.

Assessment of Program

The SF Targeting Team³ visited Barangay Bayanan in Muntinlupa in 2007. They found that the targeting scheme applied in the implementation of supplemental feeding program for the year 2007 was different from the scheme indicated in the Framework for the Social Welfare Development Planning Process for devolved SWD services. Moreover, they noted that Barangay Bayanan was not a depressed barangay as evidenced by big establishments in the locality. All children in the center are included in the program whether malnourished or not. Income of parents was not considered in including children in the program. According to the team, reported family income ranged from PhP5000 to PhP9500 a month. Since the day care center is the distribution point, malnourished children who are not in day care centers were excluded in the program.

The team also reported that there were 398 children provided with supplemental feeding in the day care centers of Bayanan. Out of this number, 37 children were below the normal weight before the supplemental feeding program. At the time of the visit, 16 children remained in below normal status while 26 children improved weight to either normal or above normal status.

Recommendations

This program is an example of geographical targeting – all those children in the public day care centers in the

identified priority areas are beneficiaries of the supplemental feeding program. Thus, even if children are not malnourished or non-poor they are given free supplemental feeding. If there were unlimited resources, this would be alright. Unfortunately, we have limited resources and the resources that went to the non-poor well-nourished children could have gone to poor malnourished children who are not attending day care centers. This is one of the difficulties of center-based interventions. Program implementors feel it is difficult to treat the children differently, even if this leads to considerable leakages. Moreover, if the aim is to address malnutrition, it seriously misses out those who are malnourished and not attending day care. This would imply considerable exclusion. Thus, while center-based programs are easier to administer, they may lead to significant leakages and exclusion.

It is recommended that if the program seeks to address malnutrition, household-based targeting should be employed. Households with malnourished children in poor households should be prioritized. If there is a desire to continue with the center as the distribution point, it is suggested that non-poor well-nourished children be asked to pay for the costs of the feeding program, even partial costs.

II. Concluding remarks

Some of the DSWD programs suffer from weak targeting designs or implementation. It is also apparent that there is lack of convergence among the different programs as evidenced by different ways of identifying beneficiaries for the different programs. While the poor are intended to be the recipients of many programs, the way the identification and selection of the beneficiaries are different across programs. The lack of a comprehensive database at both the central office and regional offices makes it difficult to achieve this convergence.

Three programs, representing the typology of targeted programs, have been examined in detail to illustrate the problems. The case studies presented in this report show that targeting scheme designed for the program may differ from the actual scheme applied to the programs. Moreover, the case studies show that there is no regular review of these targeting schemes and consequently, some need to be updated. Recommendations have been put forward to improve the targeting scheme of different DSWD programs.

³ Sylvia Red and Marnie Estacio of PDPB

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KALAHI-CIDSS: KKB-Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services: Kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay 	<p>This is a community-driven development project which empowers the poorest barangays and municipalities through participatory planning, implementation and management of local development activities; strengthening of formal and informal institutions to become more inclusive, accountable and effective; and provision of seed fund for community investment programs.</p>	<p>Poorest one-fourth of all municipalities in a target province.</p> <p>All barangays in a municipality are covered.</p>	<p>12 regions (IV-A, IV-B, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, CAR, CARAGA)</p> <p>42 provinces, 183 municipalities, 4,216 barangays</p> <p><i>(As of December, 2007)</i></p>

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-Employment Assistance Kaunlaran (SEA-K) Integrated Program 	<p>A capability building program designed to establish sustainable self-managed community-based organization providing the economically active poor with direct access to productive inputs and assistance for micro-enterprise development</p>	Ultra poor families	Nationwide

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food For School Program (Bigas para sa Mag-aaral at Pamilya) 	<p>A food subsidy program for young learners who belong to poor families.</p>	<p>* All Grade 1 and preschool children enrolled in the 1,605 identified public elementary schools and their families* All 3-4 years old DSWD – supervised pre-school children in 1,982 identified day care centers.</p>	<p>49 provinces categorized as vulnerable, very vulnerable, and very, very vulnerable under the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS)</p>

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tindahan Natin Project (Bigas At Noodles sa Halagang Abot Kaya) 	<p>A national government initiative for job generation, livelihood and food security operated by entrepreneurs, community-based organization, NGOs, LGUs, Brgy. Councils, existing retail/ sari-sari stores and other organizations.</p>	Poor families	Nationwide

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Shelter Assistance Project (CSAP) 	One of the interventions under the Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness Program	Cover conflict-affected and potential conflict areas in Mindanao with special attention to the ARMM.	Nationwide
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster Management 	Provides augmentation assistance to LGUs in times of disaster whenever their resources are inadequate to meet the needs of the affected population.	LGUs affected by calamities with inadequate resources	Nationwide

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Care Service (PD 603, RA 7432, RA 7277) 	<p>An alternative form of family care which provides 24-hour residential group care to children, youth, women, persons with disabilities and older persons in especially difficult circumstances.</p>	<p>Children, youth, women, persons with disability, older persons</p>	<p>Nationwide</p>

ANNEX 1

DSWD Programs			
Program / Project / Strategies	Brief Description	Target Beneficiaries	Coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Residential Care Centers (RA 7277, RA 6425) 	Community-based facilities designed to serve either as processing center, skills and capability center, or action center for individuals and groups in crisis situation e.g. NVRC/AVRCs, Malaya Center	Persons with disability recovered drug dependents high functioning mentally challenged persons	NCR, FO I, VII, IX and XII
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Intervention 	A referral and action center providing immediate assistance to individuals and families in crisis situation.	Individuals and families in crisis situation	Nationwide

ANNEX 2

PROPOSED TARGETING APPROACHES FOR SELECT DSWD PROGRAMS

There are several approaches to identifying eligible beneficiaries for targeted programs. The major three types of targeting are (i) self-targeting, (ii) individual or household based targeting and (iii) geographical.

In self-targeting, the beneficiary decides whether to participate or not in the program. In some cases, this is preferred due to the minimal administrative costs involved. No data needs to be collected on the population since selection will not be done by the program implementor. The challenge here is to design the program such that only the deserving would want to avail of the program. For instance, in the provision of health services, anyone can avail of services in the barangay health center but because of the queue and the long wait involved, the opportunity cost may be so high for the rich so that they would prefer to not avail of the government health services. Another example is in the provision of free or subsidized food. Program implementors may sell inferior goods such that only the poor would be willing to buy them. Unless the program is well-designed, leakages may be high and consequently, lead to high costs for the program.

In household-based targeting, the households are selected based on certain characteristics of the households. These characteristics could be poverty status (whether poor or non-poor), age, gender, etc. The advantage of this approach is that leakages and exclusion can be minimized if implemented properly. But this requires household level information and consequently the administration costs may not be negligible. Proxy Means Test (PMT) can be used to identify eligible household beneficiaries using income to identify the poor.

In geographic targeting, provinces, municipalities or barangays are selected by the program implementor to participate in the program based on certain characteristics of the spatial areas and all households in the selected areas are eligible. These characteristics could be demographic (e.g. population size), economic (e.g. poverty rate) or social (e.g. ethnicity). Information on the geographic units is needed to implement this scheme but the information requirements are much less than for household-based targeting.

As noted in the assessment, improvements could be made by modifying the targeting scheme in the current targeting scheme for the major DSWD programs.

For Tindahan Natin Program, it is recommended that poorest barangays using barangay level poverty rates be used to identify where to locate the TN outlets. In addition, only those households who were classified as poor using the PMT model would be eligible to buy from these stores.

For the SEA-K program, it is recommended that individual based targeting be adopted using the updated PMT model.

The scheme for the feeding program has to be redesigned so that only poor and malnourished children be given free feeding program. This can be done by using household based targeting to identify who are the children who belong to poor households. Only these children would be eligible for the free food. If DSWD or the local government would like to retain that the program be center-based, then it is recommended that the program implementor offer the food at cost to the non-poor and non-malnourished children.

For the KALAHI-CIDSS program, it is suggested that more recent data be used to identify priority areas. For example, more recent estimates of municipal level poverty incidence can be obtained from the recent study of the National Statistical Coordination Board. In addition, CBMS data can also be used to identify priority barangays.

For crisis intervention centers, while the DSWD does not turn away those who seek their assistance, further assistance could be given based on the needs of the client. Again, individual based targeting based on PMT model can be used to determine eligibility for further financial assistance.

For the 4Ps, a PMT model is already being used to identify eligible households.

For the sectoral programs of DSWD which are aimed towards specific groups, eligibility would first be determined by whether they belong to that sector or not. For instance, for programs for persons with disabilities, then the first criterion to be eligible to the programs would be if the person is disabled. The next stage of screening would then require the use of PMT model to determine whether the person is poor or non-poor. Then only the poor would be eligible for the program. For some programs, all those who belong to the sector are eligible beneficiaries. For example, all senior citizens, regardless of their income, are entitled to discounts in restaurants and medicines. For DSWD sectoral programs, where they will be giving financial assistance, it is recommended that PMT be used also to determine eligibility to programs.

PROGRAM	CURRENT TARGETING SCHEME	PROPOSED TARGETING SCHEME
1. Tindahan Natin	Geographic targeting (province / municipal)	Combined geographical (at the barangay level using barangay level poverty rates) and household-based targeting using updated PMT model
2. SEA-K	Individual-based targeting	Individual-based targeting using updated PMT model
3. Supplemental Feeding Program	Geographic targeting/center based targetin	Individual-based targeting using updated PMT model
4. Kalahi-CIDSS	Geographic targeting (municipal)	Geographic targeting using more recent data for poverty rates for municipalities and barangays
5. Crisis Intervention Units	Self-Targeting	Self-Targeting for initial services; use PMT to determine further assistance to be provided
6. Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program	Household based targeting	Household based targeting using the updated PMT Model

A combination of self-targeting and proxy means tests are recommended to be used in selecting beneficiaries for the 4Ps program.

It is highly recommended that beneficiaries of the 4Ps program have to apply for inclusion in the program. This is already a form of self-assessment of eligibility for the program. This is consistent with the objective of minimizing leakages. It is assumed that those who are non-poor will compare the opportunity costs of having to undertake required activities as well as the risk of being exposed versus the benefits from the program. To ensure that the problem of undercoverage as a result of this scheme is minimized, a dissemination strategy should be adopted that would inform the poor that such a program exists. The major challenge in developing targeted programs for these specific sectors or groups is the lack of data on who and where they are. There are recent efforts by local government units to come up with registries for these groups, such as the one for persons with disabilities and senior citizens. DSWD should coordinate with local government units and arrange that they can access these databases.

Review of eligibility is recommended to be done every three years given the cost and time needed to update lists of eligible beneficiaries.

Database for targeting

It is recommended that a database be established to provide the data needed for targeting. It is highly recommended

that data being regularly produced by national government agencies and local government units be used to ensure that the costs of data collection do not outweigh the program benefits. For instance, using the cost in the CCT pilot phase of P200 per household, then the cost would be astounding if there will be a census of households. It would cost about P3.6 billion to interview 18 million households. This would be equivalent to supporting an additional 240,000 households under the Pantawid Familyang Pilipino program for one year. On the other hand, it is not suggested to limit the data collection to preselected areas just to reduce costs because of the exclusion problem that this will result to.

It is highly recommended that the official data coming from NSCB, NSO and other national government agencies be made part of the database. In addition, data coming from CBMS should be included in the database since this is being used by the local government units in the targeting of their own programs. This will ensure convergence of poverty reduction efforts of national agencies and local government units.

In addition, registries of local government units for persons with disabilities, senior citizens and other specific groups also be tapped by DSWD to enrich its data base. Data bases should be established at the central and regional offices of DSWD. They should be updated every time new data from NSCB, NSO, DOH, DEPED and local government units become available.

BEYOND INNOCENCE: A STUDY ON THE AGE OF DISCERNMENT OF FILIPINO CHILDREN*

By

Dr. Domingo B. Nuñez

ABSTRACT

To answer the quest about the age of discernment of Filipino children, this study was conducted in 1996-1997 among 1368 children 7 to 15 years from six regional sites. Utilizing a Kohlberg-inspired Level of Discernment Index

(LDI), results led to the conclusion that among Filipino children, 15 years is the age of discernment at which a child demonstrates with a reasonable degree of consistency the ability to judge accurately what is right and what is wrong.

Introduction

The paramount importance of protecting children's rights and welfare, as provided for in the Philippine Constitution, is clearly operationalized in the participation of the Philippine Government in the ratification of the 1990 Geneva Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Resulting in the formulation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Children (PPAC), an initial report on the implementation of the CRC was presented by the Philippines at the meeting of the United Nations Committee meeting to bring national legislations into full conformity with the convention. One of these was the issue on defining the age of discernment of the child, during which he has adequate knowledge and understanding of unlawful acts. An acceptable level of discernment is said to be demonstrated when "an individual is able to discriminate with a reasonable degree of consistency rightness from wrongness about a moral issue."

Study Framework

The ability to evaluate rightness from wrongness falls within the purview of moral development, the process of adhering to the moral laws of justice,

equality of human rights, and respect for human dignity.

In the absence of a local framework on moral development, this study borrowed Kohlberg's model (1978) of invariant stages measuring the structures or justifications for choosing specific decisions about a given moral issue or dilemma. In spite of a number of criticisms about his work, there is a recognition of the universality of his findings, particularly in defining the levels or stages of moral development. Similar trends have in fact been discovered earlier by Jean Piaget (1965), underscoring the thesis that moral development is very much a function of cognitive capacity.¹

Kohlberg's invariant stages of moral development start from Stage 1 when moral reasoning is based primarily on a reward-punishment orientation. At Stage 2, the individual makes decisions about a moral issue on the aspect of reciprocal benefits he can derive from the process. Kohlberg classified these two stages as pre-conventional level.

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At the conventional level, the individual chooses an act in order to please others, Stage 3. At a later period, his moral judgment becomes more cognizant of the existing rules and regulations to maintain order in the social system, Stage 4.

Moving on to a more abstract level, the individual at Stage 5 reasons about a moral issue based on unwritten laws or the social norms. Hardly achieved by so many is Stage 6, when moral reasoning reflects the dictates of one's conscience, conform with the universal principles of justice, equality and respect for human dignity.

I. What is Discernment?

Discernment is the ability to recognize clearly or perceive mentally, to judge or decide, and/or to discriminate rightness from wrongness about a moral issue (Piaget, 1965; Kohlberg, 1978, in Duska & Whelan, 1975). Discernment has its basis on morality or adherence to rightness. This state is attained through a long process of making ethical discrimination between what is right and what is wrong. A well discerned action is one that is in accordance with existing laws and regulations, meets society's standards, is known to be right and is done for the right reason.

Morality

Morality as defined by Kohlberg (1981, p.64)² is the conformity to or the internalization of the particular standards on rightness or wrongness of a group or culture. It is simply the understanding of rules and following them through one's own choice. This framework affirms the emotivist view of ethics which sees "moral principles as no more than the social norms that hold a society together, because and for as long as the members of that society feel such norms to be right, regard them as conducive to things they approve of and thus agree and assent to them"³.

Kohlberg's definition is opposed to the existentialist philosophy and phenomenological theories that "morality is an individual matter and that everyone's experience of the world is unique and personal; therefore, everyone's reaction to that world must be equally unique and personal."⁴

Conformity to standards of a group initially requires the individual's functional knowledge and understanding of the existing attitudes and practices of the group. Hereafter, if one finds these standards acceptable, then he decides to adopt them. These standards are otherwise known as values.

Standards and values vary across groups and cultures. What may be considered moral in one setting may not be so in another. For instance, a child's arguing with one's parents may be generally acceptable in some societies, but this is distasteful in most Filipino families. In spite of the variations in standards among societies, all groups adhere to something called "morality that has a common form and functional property – that of being good or bad."⁵

To what extent can the norms of a given group influence an individual's discernment or patterns of reasoning? There is much likelihood that one's discernment can very well be a reflection of the requirements of society

Moral Principle

All societies have their own sets of rules and regulations. Only when these rules are universalized do they become principles, as it is with the Ten Commandments.

A moral principle is a "universal mode of choosing which all people want to adopt in all situations."⁶

Moral principle is exemplified further in the concept of justice, which is also the essence of morality.⁷

Justice is the distribution of rights and duties regulated by the properties of equality and reciprocity. This moral principle is not only a rule of action but a reason for action. As a reason for action, justice calls for respect for persons... While there are exceptions to rules, there are no exceptions to principles.

For a person to be able to adopt the moral principles, he must attain a relatively high level of discernment.

Moral Maturity

Moral maturity is knowing the right thing to do and doing it for the right reason. It implies both a respect for rules and a sense of social justice. It operates on three dimensions: cognitive, behavioral, and motivational. At the cognitive dimension, the individual is assumed to have the knowledge of the right thing to do. This should lead him to doing the right thing (behavioral dimension), but he must do it for the right reason (motivational dimension). Moral maturity is expected of more mature minds.⁸

Kohlberg⁹ advances that morally mature people are governed by the principle of justice, rather than by a set of rules. This confirms the argument of Plato that if "a man is guided by the knowledge of the good", he must be morally mature.

The morally mature person is a virtuous man. His acquired patterns of responses (or habits) enable him to repeat certain acts with moral excellence.

Individuals demonstrate differences in moral maturity. These differences can be seen in the reasons given why a thing is right or wrong. These reasons are the very indicators of the levels of stages of Kohlberg's moral maturity.¹⁰ These reasons, likewise, manifest one's level of discernment.

Moral Reasoning

Moral reasoning is the process by which an individual comes to adopt society's standards of right and wrong. The process is intimately related to the development of decision-making ability. As a cognitive skill, the way one thinks about moral dilemmas changes as he matures in ways that parallel the changes in his cognitive development (Seamon & Kenrich, 1992, p. 424).

Arbuthnot and Faust (1981) think of moral reasoning as the individual's ability to take the perspective of another person. This suggests that an individual has to consider, if not assume, the

role of another person to enable him to approximate the thinking and feeling of the other person.

Moral reasoning progresses through an invariant sequence of "stages," each is characterized by a consistent way of thinking about moral issues. This process becomes increasingly more complex throughout adolescence and into young adulthood. Contents of moral reasoning are called moral norms. These are the values the person's reasoning about ... Hence, these are the values of the social system... Kohlberg and his associates have developed a set of moral norms which encompass any and all moral statements an individual might make. These norms cover the following: life preservation, life quality, property, truth, affiliation, erotic love and sex, authority, law, contract, civil rights, religion, conscience, and punishment.

The same group of experts had also identified the elements or universal categories of morality which describe how individuals construe the importance or meaning of any of the norms listed earlier. These elements are divided into two major subgroups: (1) elements concerning concrete and situation-bound rules, norms or expectations; and (2) elements which are more abstract, generalized, and internalized situational standards or expectations.

How are the norms and elements of moral reasoning applied? The following situations do illustrate their use. Child A obeys his parents because he is afraid of being punished, as opposed to Child B who obeys his parents in order to please them. Note that both situations deal with the norms of authority, but the two children give priority to different elements, Child A on a concrete and situation-bound rule, e.g., avoiding punishment, and Child B on a more abstract standard, e.g., upholding one's character.

The reasoning of these two children represents two different levels of discernment, as conditioned by the norms and elements they adopted. It is the structure of their reasoning, not the decisions they make, which situates them in different stages.

Moral Judgment

Moral judgment refers to the reasons one has about a moral situation. This means that the quality of moral reasoning an individual displays, speaks clearly of the kind of moral judgment that he exercises. Piaget and Kohlberg agree that moral judgment develops through a series of cognitive reorganizations and transformations called stages. These processes are tied to the ways in which an individual acquires other learnings and are dependent on cognitive development and the stimulation provided by the social environment.¹²

Differences in moral judgment occur. These differences are universal in nature. This is due to the fact that individuals across ages see things from varying perspectives, the latter being a function mainly of cognitive development or the ability of the individual to comprehend a given situation. Munsey¹³ believes that only the higher stages of moral thought have the features of distinctive moral judgment. The same trend can be said in making discernment: there is an increasing level of discernment with increasing age.

Rationality

The notion of rationality according to Hegel¹⁴ is a dialectical process of argument, thesis, and antithesis which lead to the emergence of the individual's analytical understanding of the world. It is man's rationality that makes morality possible. Making moral decisions calls for reasons which have coherence with and consistency to settled moral principles. In this context, rationality becomes analogous to legal rather than scientific evidences. This implies that a behavior which cannot be explained by favorable reason, that cannot invite public agreement, is an immoral behavior. A high level of rationality suggests an equally high level of discernment.

Conscience

Esteban (1985) refers to conscience as the construct by which a human being applies his knowledge of the Moral Law (i.e., understanding of right and wrong, goodness or evil) to concretize

his thoughts, words, and actions. Conscience operates either before or after one has thought of, spoken or committed an act. Before an act, the antecedent conscience enables the individual to "command or forbid, or counsel or permit" the occurrence of the act. After the act has been performed, the consequent conscience either approves of the act or disapproves of it; the former causing joy, the latter causing remorse.

Conscience has a significant role in conforming with moral principles (i.e., distinguishing right from wrong) which are the essence of morality. Conscience becomes evident in the "exercise of one's freedom to reason out a moral issue or situation in the light of the Moral Law" (Esteban, 1985, p. 81). In other words, one's conscience allows him to translate this law into specific thoughts, words, and acts. In the process, conscience reaches a difficult situation of determining the right from wrong. As the individual gains in his discernment capability, it is likely that his conscience can help him make consistent, moral decisions.

Study Purpose

This paper determined the age of discernment of Filipino children, during which one operates beyond innocence and exercises judgment that upholds rightness about a moral issue. It examined possible differentials in discernment as conditioned by the variables region, age, gender, ordinal position, living arrangement, mother's occupation, and religion.

Method

A group of 1368 children ages 7 to 15 years participated in this study. The selection of these participants involved a series of procedures. The initial selection of the regions was done purposively to enable a fair representation of the regions from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. One province from each region was chosen randomly. The capital town or city in this province became the site of the study. A random selection of participating schools followed, from which the child-respondents were randomly picked.

Anchored on Kohlberg's moral development theory, the Level of Discernment Index (LDI) was developed. This instrument went through the usual processes of content review, pilot testing, validation, and testing for reliability.

LDI consists of 13 illustrated story situations or value dilemmas related to personal matters, family concerns, peer choices and relationships, school interests, and community or environmental consciousness. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.67, suggesting an above average level of consistency. The LDI was administered individually with the child-respondents through an interview process. This meant the interviewer or researcher read/explained each illustrated story situation, followed by two questions:

- What will you do? (To identify the child's resolution about the dilemma.)
- Why? (To know the reason for such resolution. It is the answer to this question that was scored.)

The interviewer recorded the child's responses.

Scoring of the responses was based on Kohlberg's six stages of moral development, Table 1.

Table 1: Scoring Guide for Reasons about Chosen Acts or Resolutions

Scores	Reasons for Chosen Act / Behavior
1	To receive reward or avoid punishment
2	To act in a reciprocal manner
3	To please others
4	To abide by rules, regulations and laws
5	To follow socially shared standards
6	To obey the universal ethical principles of justice, equality, and respect for human life and rights

The child is given a score for every story situation. His scores in all the situations under one category (e.g., Personal Matters) are averaged to form his sub-scale score.

The sub-scale scores on the five categories are further averaged to form the global score. The global score of each child is interpreted as follows:

Table 2: Level of Discernment

Global Score	Level of Discernment
1.00 – 1.50	Extremely Low
1.51 – 2.50	Fairly Low
2.51 – 3.50	Average
3.51 – 4.50	Moderately High
4.51 – 5.50	Very High
5.51 – 6.00	Superior

Data Treatment

The collected data were scored by at least three members, applying inter-observer reliability in assigning a score for a given response. Scoring was done as described above. Mean scores were obtained by specific variables. The F-ratio and t-test, where applicable, were computed to test the hypothesis of no significant differences in levels of discernment as to the variables region, age, sex, ordinal position, living arrangement, father's occupation, mother's occupation, type of community, and religion.

Results and Discussion

Based on the data in Table 3, the combined level of discernment of children ages 7 to 15 years generally appears to be on the average, ($x = 3.187$). A closer look at the data reveals that at age 15 years, children are able to demonstrate a moderately high level of discernment ($x = 3.97$).

This is approximately equivalent to Stage 4 of Kohlberg's moral development framework. This is the stage when morality is characterized by "one's obedience to rules and regulations to maintain a system of order in society." The individual considers it his duty to respect rules, social order, and freedom, and gives these primacy over his own rights. He feels accountable for his obligations and responsibilities.

Cross-cultural studies by Kohlberg (1981) have likewise noted similar trends of moral development, particularly among children ages 15 and 16 years. This is close enough to Colby's study (1981) which reported Stage 4 reasoning pattern for individuals ages 13 – 14 years, and that same trend continues with increasing age. In 1972, Keasey disclosed that Stage 4 reasoning had been observed among children age 16 years,

with the boys tending to be a little more advanced than girls. Given the time difference of more than two decades, it is likely that at present, Stage 4 patterns of reasoning would come a little bit earlier at age 15 years.

Variability in discernment according to specific variables is evident significantly in comparing data across regions, ages and mother’s occupations. Other variables subjected into comparisons yielded no significant variations.

Regional variations in levels of discernment are shown in Table 4. what is readily observable is the trend that children in Ilocos Region appear to have relatively lower level of discernment as compared to other regions.

Table 3: Levels of Discernment of Children Across Variables

Variables	Level of Discernment (in Global Mean Score)
REGION	
NCR ^{3.27}	
Ilocos	2.89
Bicol	3.24
Visayas	3.23
N. Mindanao	3.26
S. Mindanao	3.21
AGE IN YEARS	
7	2.67
8	2.94
9	3.08
10	3.18
11	3.19
12	3.24
13	3.11
14	3.27
15	3.97
SEX	
Male	3.15
Female	3.21
TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
Urban	3.20
Rural	3.14
ORDINAL POSITION	
Eldest	3.28
Middle	2.88
Youngest	3.26
Only Child	3.25
LIVING ARRANGEMENT	
Own Parents	3.14
Grandparents	3.21
Others	3.20
MOTHER’S OCCUPATION	
Employed	3.28 – 3.30
Self-employed	3.17 – 3.21
Unemployed	3.07 – 3.06
Deceased	3.22 – 3.18
RELIGION	
R. Catholic	3.20
Protestant	2.77
I.N.C	3.22
Others	3.34
COMBINED	3.18

This is approximately equivalent to Stage 4 of Kohlberg’s moral development framework. This is the stage when morality is characterized by “one’s obedience to rules and regulations to maintain a system of order in society.” The individual considers it his duty to respect rules, social order, and freedom, and gives these primacy over his own rights. He feels accountable for his obligations and responsibilities.

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Variability in discernment according to specific variables is evident significantly in comparing data across regions, ages and mother’s occupations. Other variables subjected into comparisons yielded no significant variations.

Regional variations in levels of discernment are shown in Table 4. what is readily observable is the trend that children in Ilocos Region appear to have relatively lower level of discernment as compared to other regions.

Table 4: T-values on the Differences in Levels of Discernment of Children by Region

Region	NCR	Ilocos	Bicol	Visayas	North Mindanao	South Mindanao
NCR	-	9.50*	.129 ^{ns}	9.99*	.44 ^{ns}	.19 ^{ns}
Ilocos		-	-13.80*	-8.50*	-37.00**	-63.00**
Bicol			-	.33 ^{ns}	-.71 ^{ns}	1.00 ^{ns}
Visayas				-	-.60 ^{ns}	.55 ^{ns}
N. Mindanao					-	11.00*
S. Mindanao						-

** p < .01 * p < .05 ^{ns} not significant

The differentials may have something to do with the ordinal position of the children in the region (mostly middle children) and/or the nature of upbringing the families have. Most of the reasons the Ilocos children have about not committing wrongdoings is their fear of punishment from God,

parents, and elders. It is possible that this practice is highly emphasized in the homes, or active participation of the children in solving moral issues or making decisions may not have been well encouraged in the region.

As found in earlier studies, individuals learn to be moral in much the same way apprentices learn their craft. Children who participate in similar processes as those who come from higher social class, also tend to have higher levels of moral judgment.

On the age variable, paired comparisons were made for every age with other age levels. The negative t-values resulting from the said comparisons among the groups at increasing age levels manifest significantly the differences in levels of discernment in favor of children in the older age groups, Table 5. These clearly indicate that among all the children surveyed, the younger the group the lower is the level of discernment. The older groups tend to exhibit higher levels of discernment, reaching a significant level and becoming prominently different from the other groups at age 15 years.

Table 5: T-Values on the Difference in Levels of Discernment of children by Age

Age	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
7	-	-4.50**	-3.59**	-9.41**	-8.69**	-3.77**	-4.82**	-5.65**	-5.49**
8		-	-1.61 ^{ns}	-7.23**	-9.05**	-2.53**	-3.99**	-3.70**	-3.39**
9			-	-2.20*	-2.95**	-2.74**	-5.26**	-2.52*	-2.70*
10				-	-.09 ^{ns}	-.81 ^{ns}	.52 ^{ns}	.87 ^{ns}	-4.07**
11					-	1.11 ^{ns}	.79 ^{ns}	1.28 ^{ns}	-4.04**
12						-	-1.67 ^{ns}	-.378 ^{ns}	-2.53*
13							-	.639 ^{ns}	-2.71*
14								-	-2.48*
15									-

The above findings are confirmed by the evidences of earlier studies on moral maturity in other societies (e.g., the United States, Mexico, Taiwan). These point out the lower stages in moral development (Stages 1 and 2) of children below age 10 years. Most of the 13 year olds found themselves also in Stage 3.

Going by the criterion of moral maturity defined by Duska and Whelan (1975), the moral maturity of Stage 3 individuals lack autonomy in judgment. This means that children in this level cannot make up their minds for themselves about what is right and

wrong. Rather, their reasonings are essentially governed by factors external to themselves. It appears that this level of discernment has not yet reached the point where the individual thinks critically, subject to his own rational considerations.

This capability to think freely of the law and other external pressures, where one can decide to be rational and consequently decide to abide by them, comes at a much later level. Except for the 15 years old who exhibit this capacity, the subjects 7 to 14 years hardly have levels of discrimination beyond Stage 4, in which decisions are made in accordance with existing laws and regulations. Much less therefore, could the respondents manifest the barely attainable Stage 6 universal ethical principle orientation which is "defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency." These are the universal principles of justice, reciprocity, and equality of human rights, and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Considering the fact that moral thoughts are already evident in making moral judgment at Stage 4, the foregoing data strongly situate discernment at this Stage and ground it at age 15 years. It is at this age, when on the average, Filipino children are able to recognize and discriminate clearly issues requiring moral judgment and therefore finding the reason for action. His reasons are consistent with moral principles. Having attained a judicious level of moral maturity, the average child at this age has a relatively mature mind and acts in accordance with the principles of justice, that is exercising rights and duties which are regulated by equality and reciprocity. After all, justice is the essence of morality, which under any circumstance, maintains a common form and property, that of distinguishing goodness from badness. Expectedly, the child at 15 years knows the right thing to do and does it for the right reason. He can now translate the law of good and bad into specific thoughts and actions. This means that he has developed the will to do what is right.

On the basis of Stage 4 characteristics, studies on moral reasoning of children report that this primarily takes the views of other persons. This is made possible because the child already understands specific norms and practices valued by others. While this is so, the child with superior intellectual capability