

## The Millennium Development Goals in the Philippines

### A Universal Development Framework

Arising from the historic adoption of the Millennium Declaration by 189 countries in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) give voice to the global aspiration to eradicate extreme poverty. The MDGs are eight concrete and interconnected goals, with a corresponding set of measurable targets and indicators. This development framework represents a remarkable global partnership between poor countries that pledge to govern better and invest in human development and rich countries that promise to support them.

In the Philippines, the MDGs have been tightly integrated into national development plans by the Government, and utilized to monitor their implementation. The MDGs have also been broadly adopted by all relevant development organizations, from local government units (LGUs) to civil society organizations (CSOs.) They serve as a common foundation for development, resulting in better alignment of interventions and coordination, allocation, and use of resources.

Yet, despite strong institutional support, overall progress on the MDGs is not encouraging. Interventions for poverty, education, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, and the environment need to be accelerated, while addressing the glaring disparities in rates of progress across regions. It is clear that if success is to be achieved, efforts need to be redoubled; current initiatives in all areas must be scaled-up, greater resources must be mobilized while more efficiently utilizing existing resources, and stronger advocacy and capacity must be developed, especially at the local level.

### Support for the MDGs

In coordination with other UN agencies, UNDP is tasked with advocating for, monitoring and reporting on, and implementing programmatic interventions for the MDGs. With less than four years

remaining, UNDP is spearheading the final push towards the 2015 target with the global MDGs Acceleration Framework. The Framework draws on lessons from UNDP's work world-wide to provide countries with a systematic way of creating action plans targeted at off-track Goals. The Acceleration Framework is a natural evolution of UNDP's work in the Philippines. Over the past decade, UNDP's efforts, in conjunction with the UN's MDG Millennium Campaign, have been essential to the MDGs' prominence in the national development agenda and in raising public awareness. As the Government undertakes the next Philippine Development Plan, UNDP is augmenting existing advocacy and reporting work with localized interventions and greater engagement of non-traditional partners and underserved populations.

**Building and Sharing Knowledge** - As the MDGs scorekeeper for the United Nations system, UNDP supports the publication of National MDG Progress Reports that create awareness and disseminate valuable development data. The 2010 Report highlighted a troubling rise in the number of poor, exacerbated by wide inequities in levels of development across the nation. Nine Provincial Progress Reports, based on data from Community Based Monitoring Systems (CBMS), expanded on the root cause of these disparities, providing analysis and identifying solutions at the provincial level.

Disaggregated, local-level data from the CBMS provide LGUs with information to target interventions where needs and disparities are greatest. UNDP is also supporting the collection of more data, including advocating for a Gender Development Index, and supporting the revision of how national poverty levels are estimated. Working with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the project "Strengthening Indigenous People's Rights and Development (SIPRD)" successfully campaigned and provided training for the inclusion of ethnicity – for the first time – as a stand-alone variable in the 2010 National Census. The resulting data will serve to better define and locate indigenous peoples and communities, enabling targeted interventions for specific needs.

**On the Ground** - UNDP is piloting potentially scalable local interventions to tackle specific development challenges. In



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*UNDP is the UN's Global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 177 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.*

## Success Stories

### Food Security, Community Resiliency

Like many housewives in the poor province of Apayao, Betty Nadnaden had difficulty putting food on the table for her growing family. When fields dried from droughts, rice became not just a staple food for Betty's family – but the only food. Ulam (meat or vegetable dishes) were considered a luxury, and when available, served only in very small portions.

But now, things are better for the people of Abra and Apayao. Betty was one of the 1200 farmers involved in the SAPAT project, which aimed to widen the food base of the poor. After the project, 90% of participants reported increasing their consumption of vegetables, and nearly 40% increased consumption of meat. Betty was one of them. Today, she stands in the midst of the greenery that has become her backyard garden. "My family now eats plenty of vegetables that we raise ourselves. We even sell some of the vegetables to give us additional income. The money we save goes for the education of our children."

*Sapat at Masustansyang Pagkain sa Bawat Tahanan (Sufficient and Nutritious Food in Every Household) was a collaboration between UNDP, the National Anti-Poverty Commission, and the non-profit Farmers Community Development Foundation.*



*Villagers inspecting an established home garden in Conner, Apayao.*

cooperation with the League of Cities of the Philippines, the "MDG Family-based Actions for Children and their Environs in the Slums (MDG-FACES)" project was piloted in 15 city-slums in 2008 – showing that, by focusing on tracking the development of children using the MDGs, it is possible to improve human development at the household level. The methodology developed by MDG-FACES is now being implemented in another 30 cities by the government, and puts a human face to the usually quantitative Goals and indicators. Targeting Goal 1, to "Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger," the "Developing a Model to Enhance Food Security and Nutrition in the Philippines (SAPAT)" project, addressed poverty, hunger, and vulnerability to disasters by expanding the food base. The project, completed in 2010 in collaboration with the National Anti-Poverty Commission and the Farmers Community Development Foundation, was originally piloted in six locations and is now in the process of being replicated in three more provinces.

Working with the Spanish Government-sponsored MDG Achievement Fund, UNDP is implementing two Joint Programmes with other UN agencies, "Enhancing Access to and Provision of Water Services with the Active Participation of the Poor" and "Strengthening the Philippines' Institutional Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change" that address the convergence of poverty, governance, and the environment. These are both targeted at Goal 7, to "Ensure Environmental Sustainability." The "Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI)" project, in partnership with the Department of Interior and Local Government, seeks to access and utilize revenues generated from the environment and natural resources (ENR) to reduce poverty while promoting environmental sustainability. PEI will also improve transparency in the generation and utilization of ENR revenues, as well as encourage participatory local governance.

■ **Engaging Stakeholders, Enlarging Involvement** - Meaningful progress to improve human development requires the involvement of a wide array of actors, and UNDP is targeting civil society organizations, the private sector, and individuals for more integrative approaches to solving challenges. With Social Watch Philippines (SWP), UNDP promoted the MDG-Sensitive Alternative Budget in 2009 that successfully advocated for more resources to achieve the MDGs. The partnership is a successful example of promoting civil society involvement in government budgetary and oversight processes.

UNDP is also engaging the private sector for innovative solutions. Philippine Business for Social Progress has been a key partner in engaging the private sector and reporting on private investments for MDG projects. UNDP is working with Western Union on "Overseas Filipinos Remittances for Development" project. It aims to tap into the close to US\$ 20 billion of annual remittances from overseas Filipinos by creating an effective mechanism for them to collectively invest in the development of their communities while advancing progress towards the MDGs.

## Accelerating to 2015

With less than four years until the 2015 deadline and significant challenges remaining, UNDP is further strengthening support for accelerating progress towards the MDGs. UNDP is continuing to push for the inclusion of underserved populations in decision-making, while also implementing initiatives that can unlock the promise of existing policies and plans. UNDP will continue to pilot innovative solutions and apply lessons learned from the last decade, while strategically strengthening local institutions, and building innovative partnerships and projects to support the Philippines in achieving the MDGs, reducing poverty, and bettering lives.

*To contribute to this initiative, or to find out more about UNDP Philippines' work on the Millennium Development Goals, please visit our website at [www.undp.org.ph/MDGs](http://www.undp.org.ph/MDGs) or contact Ms. Corazon Urquico, MDGs and Poverty Reduction Team Leader, (+63) 901-0229, or at [corazon.urquico@undp.org](mailto:corazon.urquico@undp.org)*

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