

Reaching the Urban Poor

The Philippine Experience



Department of Health
Republic of the Philippines



World Health
Organization

Western Pacific Region

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Message

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Malacañang Palace



GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

I would like to congratulate the **World Health Organization** (WHO) for coming out with this book, “Reaching the Urban Poor: The Philippine Experience,” that highlights the initial results of the “Reaching the Urban Poor” strategy of WHO and the Department of Health (DOH) in line with the efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The Philippine government is focused on creating a society where everyone enjoys adequate shelter and food security, a healthy and safe environment, a productive, sustained and freely chosen employment and full and equal participation in sustainable development. We recognize the central role health plays in poverty alleviation.

As urbanization has lured more people to the metropolis, it has increased the challenges for adequate access to basic social services.

Since the start of my government, we vowed to strengthen coordination and monitoring for the speedy implementation of government programs and policies for the urban poor. Specific efforts were focused in helping increase the opportunity of the urban poor to access land, housing and basic services.

Much has been done. But we have to do much more. Eradicating poverty continues to be our biggest challenge. Thus, under our Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 2004-2010 we aim to fight poverty by building prosperity for the greater number of the Filipino people.

The DOH has done a great job of conceptualizing and implementing a concrete

strategy that is proving to benefit urban poor communities in Metro Manila, increasing their access to basic life-saving interventions and at the same time helping strengthen our public health system.

I thank the WHO for standing beside the Philippine government in this challenging endeavor of improving the lives of our countrymen.

Our intermediate goal is to reduce the incidence of poverty by half and to meet all the MDG commitments by 2015. Poverty alleviation is our overarching goal, a goal that we will continue to focus on in the remaining years of our team.

I encourage all national and local government agencies to initiate and support similar initiatives that will help build a better future for our Filipino children and their families.





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MS NILEEMA NOBLE
United Nations Resident Coordinator

publication entitled “*Reaching the Urban Poor: the Philippine Experience*” that highlights the initial results of the Reaching Every District (RED) strategy of the Department of Health and the World Health Organization, which is in line with the efforts of the United Nations family in the Philippines to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

In September 2000, 189 member-states of the UN - including the Philippines - committed to the ideals that rich and poor countries alike should work together to achieve peace and security, respect human rights, promote good governance and strive for development, with particular attention on the needs of the poor, vulnerable and children of the world through the Millennium Declaration.

Since 2000, the Philippines has made great strides toward attaining the MDGs for gender equality, reducing child mortality and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Serious challenges and threats remain at the community level, and are more blatantly experienced in highly urbanized areas, for meeting the targets on maternal health, access to reproductive health services, nutrition, primary education and environmental sustainability in the country. There also remain glaring disparities that persist across regions and severe MDG funding constraints. However, the country has shown great commitment to overcoming these hurdles to achieve the Goals by 2015.