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# What RP needs to do to achieve poverty goal by 2015

By Karen Flores, abs-cbnNEWS.com

Posted at 08/12/2010 1:51 AM | Updated as of 08/12/2010 1:51 AM

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MANILA, Philippines – It's been 10 years since member-states of the United Nations (UN), including the Philippines, pledged to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of 8 targets anchored on eradicating poverty.

Data gathered by the UN showed, however, that 2 goals are least likely to be met by the Philippines -- primary education for all and improved access to maternal health.

This as poverty incidence continues to rise, together with the country's population. In 2006, 33% of Filipinos were below the poverty line, up from 30% in 2003.

With only 5 years left to 2015, the Philippines scrambles to meet the minimum targets.

"We should already be at the tail-end of achieving our goals, but that's not the case. The biggest challenge here now is reducing poverty by 50%," said Jacqueline Badcock, resident coordinator of the UN.

All hope is not lost, however. If the Philippines plays its cards right, Badcock said the country can still reach the MDGs on time.

The government should not be tasked to do all the work, she said. Citing the spirit of bayanihan (communal unity), Badcock encouraged all Filipinos to do their part as government watchdogs and MDG advocates.

"In the spirit of bayanihan, let's stand up and take action. Let's make poverty history," she said.

#### **Make MDGs personal**

For Leonor Magtolis-Briones, lead convenor of Social Watch Philippines, knowing the real situation of the people is vital in achieving – or even going beyond – the MDGs by 2015.

This, she said, can be done by breaking down statistics and looking at the poverty situation in a closer, more personal level.

Briones noted that while only 33% of Filipinos are living in poverty according to government data, almost all people living in certain areas in Mindanao are poor.

"There are still many places in the Philippines that can't be reached by the usual modes of transport. Some don't even have a notion of government, the MDGs, or even the national budget. We should let them know that they're taxpayers, that they have a stake in our country," she said.

She continued, "We should go beyond national figures and see the real face of poverty. We need the help of the media, the cooperation of local government officials, everyone. We shouldn't lose hope."

By "localizing" the MDGs, Briones said people can be more engaged in achieving these targets and steering the country toward progress.

"MDGs are not for showing off to the UN. It's not just for display. This is for us, for the Filipino people."

#### **Taking it to the 'streets'**

For Jaime Garchitorena, founding member of youth group Young Public Servants, MDGs are nothing more than the Mga Dapat Gawin, or things that need to be done.

"MDGs are the basic goods and services that must be delivered by the government, that's why they got elected to office," he said.

Unfortunately, however, Garchitorena noted that most people don't know what the MDGs are. So he made an effort to make it relevant to them -- through a website.

He put up the MyStreet Portal where state agencies, non-government organizations and ordinary individuals can interact, compare data about different MDGs, and find ways to help curb poverty in the country.

Topics covered in MyStreet, which is set to be launched next month, include education, health, infrastructure, environment, poverty, recreation and crime, among others.

"There's no comprehensive database right now about the MDGs, so people don't know about them. People want to participate, but they don't know how," Garchitorena observed.

He continued, "MyStreet generates and verifies visible data that people can always go back to. It encourages participation in a local scale."

#### **P.Noy's battle plan**

Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), said that the Aquino administration recognizes the limits of national statistics, as noted by Briones.

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## 9 comments

### Comprehensive Actions

by benried on Fri, 08/13/2010 - 10:26

The new government has started an anti-corruption drive with a very known slogan. Population education and eradication of rebel terrorists and insurgents should make a positive impact.

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### Control population growth.

by gusmako on Fri, 08/13/2010 - 09:16

The population of this country is now almost 100 million. We have one of the highest birth rates in the world. When the current president's mother was in office not too long ago, the population was about half. It is unbelievable that nobody in government is addressing this enormous problem. Everybody in this country sees the poverty, the traffic, the filth and garbage, the congested waterways, the slums and shanties, the malnourished and uneducated children yet nobody is connecting these problems to the fact that the uncontrolled population growth is a major contributor. We need to wake up and face this problem before it is too late. This country is one of the most densely packed countries in the world. Our major cities are so crowded with people. Are we going to wait until we are packed like sardines in this country before we act?

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by HaroldK on Fri, 08/13/2010 - 15:39

It's more the growth rate that's the problem rather than the large population in and of itself. The number of Filipinos is increasing too fast, while the economy is unable to produce enough jobs and taxes to feed, clothe, and shelter them and give them access to clean water, electricity, education, and healthcare. Other East Asian countries have done relatively well while having more densely populated territories than the Philippines. Metro Manila only has about 13 million people, smaller than Bangkok or Jakarta and considerably smaller than Tokyo or Shanghai.

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### MyStreet Portal

by HaroldK on Fri, 08/13/2010 - 07:14

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When the MyStreet Portal launches, can ABS-CBN publish an update report including a link to the site? I'm interested in seeing what it has to offer. As written about here, it seems very comprehensive, even if I suspect many of the people who it is supposed to help do not have easy access to the Internet.

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### EASY

by pinoy27 on Thu, 08/12/2010 - 22:58

Use your heads and common sense than emotions in choosing leaders, lawmakers and in everyday life. Humility is good but we need to be proud once in a while. Forget the palusot creed and the habit of making a wrong thing into a noble accomplishment. Most of all be a good citizen by respecting the rule of law. DISIPLINA IS THE BEST for everybody.

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### Dream Philippines

by Josephine Acost... on Thu, 08/12/2010 - 20:45

The Dream Philippines Vision is simple:

food on every table  
father and mother with job or business  
all children in school, walang maiiwan  
infrastructure like roads, schools,clinics in every baranggay and region  
good governance with "human due diligence" and accountability

low cost transportation  
accessible information/communication towards a "Deliberative Democracy" or discourse  
democracy

Mabuhay, Philippines

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by HaroldK on Fri, 08/13/2010 - 07:16

A noble dream, but how to get there is the problem.

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### Population Management

by alikabok357 on Thu, 08/12/2010 - 17:38

Why not include population management in one of the strategies to reduce poverty. Our population growth rate is way too high for the economy to sustain. It's about time to go against the church for pragmatic reasons. Our national survival is at stake in the very near future.

alikaok357

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### Kung walang Kurap walang mahirap

by geethreeg3 on Thu, 08/12/2010 - 15:40

I dont expect the goal to be achieved dahil sa kagagawan ni Gloria at mga alipores niyang kurap e lalong lumaganap ang kahirapan. Bawasan niyo na lang po ang kurapsyon eventually mababawasan din po ang mahihirap.

God Bless the Philippines and the new Administration.

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