

Chapter 3

Enhanced Social Development with Direct Poverty Reduction Measures

I. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Region XI² remains to have the best life expectancy figure among the Regions in Mindanao at 64.7 for male and 69.6 for female (1995-2000 average). However, the Region's life expectancy is still below the national average of 65.6 for male and 70.8 for female (1995-2000 average). Meanwhile, literacy indicators revealed encouraging results as the rate of simple literacy is about 97 percent. This means that only a small group of people in the Region do not know how to read and write. But when it comes to functional literacy, the figures showed that there remain a good number of people in Region XI that lack the necessary reading, writing and arithmetic skills that can help them in their economic activities.

During the last ten years or so, Region XI registered the lowest poverty incidence among the regions in Mindanao. However, poverty incidence has not been reduced significantly over the years. In fact, while there were small reductions in the percentage of poor families, the magnitude of poor families has been continually increasing. The population of the poor grows faster than the rate of alleviating them from poverty condition.

Along with the greater challenge of poverty alleviation is the concern to meet the basic needs of families through an improved delivery of basic social services. This is oftentimes tagged as a safety measure to empower the poor and the vulnerable for self-reliance. The minimum entitlements involve a whole range of services that would include health and nutrition, education, social welfare and protection, and housing.

Achieving the Goal of an Improved Health and Nutrition Status of the Region's Population

The public and private sectors' endeavor to address health and nutrition concerns of the people in the Region have made significant improvements on the health status of the populace over the years. However, the challenge still remains for the health sector to continually effect health gains. Perennial barriers such as physical, financial, and institutional have prevented individuals' access to health facilities or providers and services, not to mention the high cost of drugs and the limited benefit coverage of health insurance.

Access to health services remain wanting

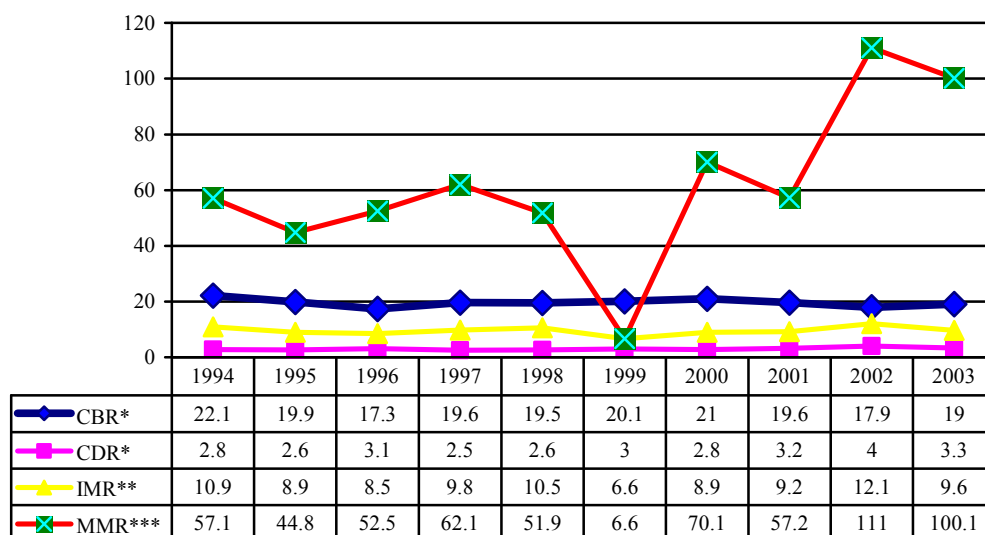
Inadequacy of health services and the state of environmental health contributed to the risk of infant and child (under five years) mortality. The average hospital bed-to-population ratio is 1:962 against the standard of 1:500. The number of health personnel in local public health units is still

² Prior to EO 36

inadequate noting that none of the provinces and city in the Region has met the standard public health physician-to-population ratio of 1:20,000.

Figure 3-1 shows that the crude death rate has increased from 2.8 in 1994 to 3.3 in 2003. Maternal deaths per 100,000 population also increased by almost double, from 57 in 1994 to 100 in 2003. The infant mortality rate, on the other hand, showed a slight decrease from 10.9 per 1,000 livebirths in 1994 to 9.6 in 2003, respectively.

Figure 3-1 Crude Birth Rate, Crude Death Rate, Infant Mortality Rate, and Maternal Mortality Rate Davao Region, 1997-2003



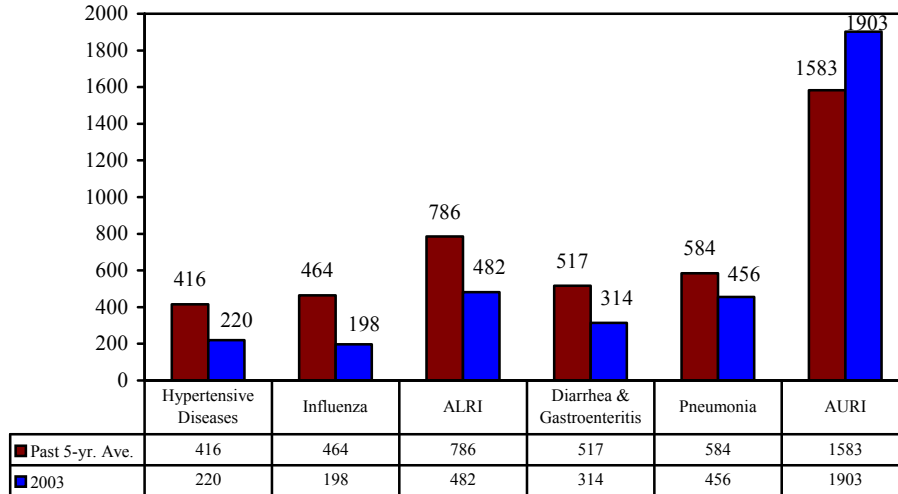
Source: DOH XI –RFO 2003 Annual Report

* Per 1,000 population ** per 1,000 live births *** per 100,000 live births

Threat from emerging and resurgent diseases

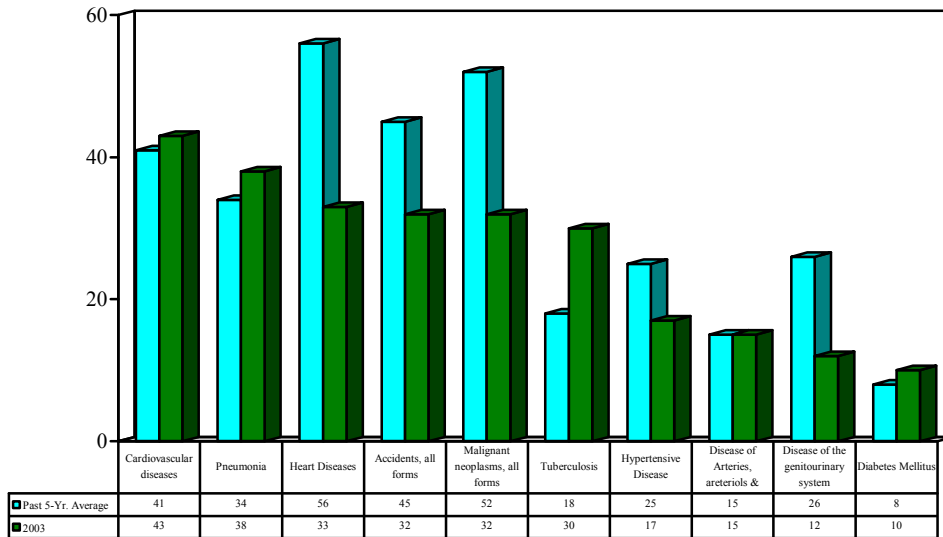
Infectious diseases like respiratory infections, pneumonia, diarrhea, influenza and TB continue to be the leading causes of morbidity (Figure 3-2). Side by side with these infectious diseases is the emergence of degenerative diseases as among the major causes of death (Figure 3-3). These are cerebrovascular diseases, heart diseases, pneumonia, and malignant neoplasm. Morbidity owing to TB still remains high especially in Davao City at 325 per 100,000 population. A more intensive campaign on the treatment approach known as Directly Observed Therapy Short Course (DOTS) is needed to enable TB patients, especially with PhilHealth membership, avail of free medicines and services from providers accredited with PHIC. DOTS improves treatment compliance because a TB patient has a treatment partner who sees to it that the patient takes his medicines regularly. The sudden outbreak scare of SARS is also a concern in the health sector.

**Figure 3-2 Morbidity, Leading Causes
Rate per 100,000 Population**



Source of data: DOH XI 2003 Annual Report

**Figure 3-3 Mortality, Leading Causes
Rate per 100,000 Population**



Source of data: DOH XI 2003 Annual Report

High cost of hospitalization

Access to medical health services became more difficult due to high cost of hospitalization. The costs do not include medicines and medical services alone but also transport and accommodation for the patient’s relatives and other caregivers accompanying him/her.

The year 2000 estimates indicate that the Region's poverty incidence is 31.5 percent. As such, substantial portion of the Region's population continue to rely heavily on public health services. With very limited resources, the government has been perennially ill-equipped to meet the health demands of the public.

Persistence of malnutrition among children

Recent results of the National Nutrition Survey show that protein-energy malnutrition among children continues to persist. This has been manifested through the prevalence of underweight³, stunting⁴, and wasting⁵ among children. Although there is a slight nutritional improvement with the decline in stunting in the Region, the increasing proportion of acutely malnourished remains a grave concern. The Municipality of Don Marcelino in Davao del Sur had the highest prevalence rate of acute malnutrition with 11 percent in 2002. This has worsened to 11.1 percent in the first semester of 2003. However, the latest report places the Municipality of Talaingod in Davao del Norte at the highest rank of malnutrition prevalence rate with 11.8 percent. Corollary to having the highest malnutrition prevalence, the two municipalities mentioned are also the Region's poorest.

Achieving the Goal of an Educated, Skilled, and Committed Davao Region Populace

Development workers often equate poverty with the level of the educational well-being of the people. Many experts theorize that the long-term, sustainable solution to the problem of poverty is still education, and education for all.

Improving the educational well-being of the Davao Region's population has gained some significant strides, at least during the last five years. The latest simple literacy figures showed that only about three of every 100 persons in the Davao Region are unable to read and write. However, functional literacy figure remains at a stumpy 84 percent as of year 2000.

While opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship are becoming wide and available for people in the Region, many could not take advantage of such opportunities as they lack the necessary knowledge, skills, and training.

Past investments for education and manpower development have reaped gains but much more remains to be achieved. The delivery of education services needs to be improved and investment for manpower development and training should be augmented to allow more people greater access to a wide array of livelihood opportunities.

Access and equity to education remain wanting

- In Basic Education

One of the principal reasons why a significant number of people in the Davao Region remained functionally illiterate is the fact that there remain a number of school-age children not in school. In year 2000, only about 89.5 percent of the children in the region aged 6-12 years old were enrolled in school. Participation rate in the secondary level was also low at 66.9 percent.

³ A child is considered underweight if his/her weight is less than that of normal children of the same age.

⁴ A child is considered stunted if his/her height is less than that of normal children of the same age.

⁵ A child is considered wasted if his/her weight is less than that of normal children of the same height.

The other problem in achieving the goals of improving the educational well-being of the people in the Davao Region is the high drop out rate in schools. At the elementary level, the survival rate is only 62.1 percent or about four of every ten children enrolled in the elementary did not reach Grade Six. In high school, about three out of ten did not reach fourth year. The survival rate in the secondary level is only about 69.8 percent.

The transition rate from primary to intermediate grades is only about 96 percent. This means that for every ten children who finished grade four, only six were able to enroll in grade five. This situation contributes to the children's inability to be functionally literate.

One of the important factors contributing to the low performance in basic education is the challenge faced in terms of school facilities provision. Currently, the number of public elementary schools in the Davao Region is 1,556 while the private elementary school is 124. However, from the total number of public schools, 116 are incomplete primary schools and 24 are incomplete intermediate schools. Furthermore, as of School Year (SY) 2002-2003, 18 barangays in the Region are still without schools. Ten of these are in Davao del Sur, six are in Compostela Valley, and two are in Davao del Norte.

The situation appears to be better compared to what the figures in other regions show. Despite that, however, the challenge to build more schools stands and should be a top priority especially in school-less barangays. While there may be a small number of barangays without a school, the situation in terms of the number of classrooms shows a different condition. As of SY 2002-2003, the computed school-to-school shortage of classrooms in the elementary level was 1,042. Given the projected increase in enrolment and the rate of construction of new classrooms, the expected shortage for SY 2004-2005 will total to 1,375 classrooms.

At the high school level, the classroom needs stand at 2,058 for SY 2004-2005. However, only 80 classrooms were allocated for the year. At present, the classroom to student ratio in the secondary level is computed at 1:69. Such overcrowding in classrooms contributes to the increase in drop-out among high school students, including the shifting of classes which adversely affects the students' internalization of lessons, as well as strains the working hours of teachers.

Along with the challenge to build more schools and classrooms is the need to equip the schools with desks and armchairs⁶. For CY 2004, the elementary schools need 156,158 sets of furniture, while the secondary schools are short of 112,584 sets of furniture.

Shortage of teachers is another contributory factor to the continuing problem of low access rate to basic education. Recent figures show that the teacher shortage at the elementary level is 2,854 while at the secondary level, it is 1,855. Despite these inadequacies, the allocation for the Region for CY 2004 was only 105 teachers for elementary and 72 teachers for secondary. Although the regional aggregate shows an ideal situation, the deficiency in the number of teachers on a school-to-school inventory proves to be a problem still as teacher to student ratios at the elementary and high school levels are 1:38 and 1:41, respectively.

The ratio of textbooks to students is far from ideal. At the elementary level, a complete set of textbooks is shared by three students. The situation at the secondary level is worse where a complete set of textbook is shared by five students. Needless to say that such condition is detrimental to achieving the goal of improved access to and quality to basic education.

⁶ The total needs for desks and armchairs as of SY 2002-2003 is computed to reach at least 258,114.

The sufficiency in school facilities such as buildings, furnitures, and textbooks, among others, is necessary to cope with the increase in school-going population due to population growth. With an average growth rate of 2.3 percent per annum, the Region's school going population in basic education is expected to reach 1.26 million by 2010 with the elementary level increasing by as much as 104 thousand pupils per year while secondary level by as much as 55 thousand students per year. Among the provinces/cities, Table 3-1 shows that Davao City has the highest increase in school-going population by 2010.

**Table 3-1 Projected School-Going Population in Basic Education
Davao Region, 2004 and 2010**

LEVEL	2004	2010	PROJECTED INCREASE
Elementary Level			
Compostela Valley	120,835	137,770	16,935
Davao City	207,895	248,816	40,921
Davao del Norte	147,241	169,306	22,065
Davao del Sur	154,668	172,447	17,779
Davao Oriental	89,070	95,849	6,779
Davao Region	719,709	824,187	104,478
Secondary Level			
Compostela Valley	60,862	69,391	8,530
Davao City	116,056	138,900	22,844
Davao del Norte	78,388	90,135	11,747
Davao del Sur	78,857	87,922	9,064
Davao Oriental	44,736	48,140	3,405
Davao Region	378,898	434,488	55,589

Source of data: NSO

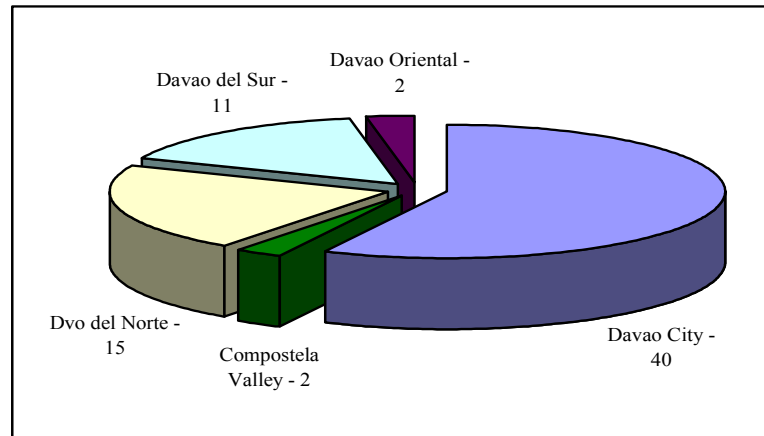
- In Higher Education

There are a total of seventy institutions in the Davao Region offering higher education. Of this number, however, only four are government-owned Higher Education Institution (HEIs). The HEIs are mostly located in Davao City. Out of the total seventy institutions, forty are also located in Davao City, 15 HEIs in Davao del Norte, and 11 in Davao del Sur. Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental each has two HEIs (Figure 3-4).

There are some external campuses of state colleges in other regions located in some municipalities of Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley but their enrolment remains very low.

Relatedly, the province of Compostela Valley is the only province in the Davao Region that has no state college. Such disparity in terms of the number of HEIs in a province or city is also reflected in terms of enrolment. The total number of HEI enrollees in Academic Year 2002-2003 is 99,665. Of the total enrolment, 52,989 or 53 percent of the total are female. The male students represent 47 percent or a total of 46,676. Davao City registered the highest enrolment with at least 73 percent of the total HEI enrolment. The enrolment in Compostela Valley is the lowest with a total enrolment of only 1,714 or about 1.7 percent of the total enrollees.

**Figure 3-4 Distribution of Higher Education Institutions by Area
Davao Region, SY 2001-2002**



Source of data: CHED XI 2002 Annual Report

Growing demand for competent workforce

Despite the growing demand for skilled workers especially in foreign nations, there is still low or little interest from among the populace. This is because of the society's perception that blue collar jobs are low paying and inferior in status compared to white collar jobs. Because of this, global opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship that abound in Davao Region are not captured by a good percentage of the workforce.

Job mismatch is another challenge in the promotion of technical and vocational (tech-voc) education. Most enrollees in tech-voc education prefer taking information and communications technology related courses despite the availability of other blue collar job opportunities for mechanics and the like both in the country and other parts of the world. This has resulted to skills and work experiences of jobseekers not meeting the requirements of the employers. Thus, there are many jobseekers who have difficulty finding jobs while at the same time, there are vacancies that are hard to fill up. Such dilemma has continued to persist not only for higher education graduates but also for tech-voc graduates.

Achieving the Goal of an Improved Quality of Life of the Poor and the Vulnerable

Improving the quality of life of the poor and the vulnerable is one of the long-standing desires of the people of the Davao Region. While recent initiatives slowly moved towards the achievement of such goal, the task is far from over. Improving the well-being of the vulnerable remains a top priority issue that has to be addressed with more resolve.

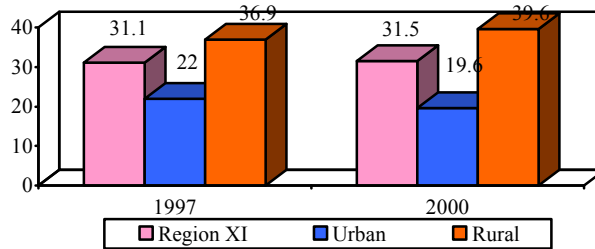
High Incidence of Poverty

Poverty connotes a deprivation in relation to a social standard, or the lack of the minimum entitlements of households in society which the government must seek to provide, either directly or indirectly⁷.

⁷ As defined in the National Strategy to Fight Poverty by the UN Joint Consultative Group on Policy

Based on the FIES 2000, 31.5 percent of the families in the Region are not able to meet the food and other minimum entitlements⁸. Labor statistics also shows that of the 89.6 percent of the employed sector, 17.8 percent are underemployed⁹. This goes to show that the poor are neither lazy nor jobless but underemployed. Poverty is not so much the lack of jobs per se, but the lack of jobs that provide sufficient income or wage.

**Figure 3-5 Poverty Incidence (Families)
Davao Region, 1997 and 2000**



Source: FIES 1997, 2000

In the case of Region XI, poverty incidence is higher in the rural area at 39.6 percent compared to the urban area which is at 19.6 percent. These figures confirm the theory that poverty is a rural phenomenon. The definition of rural is itself poverty. Rural setting is primarily considered the absence or inadequacy of growth indicators. Rural is impoverished because it does not manifest the character of progress. If we compare FIES 1997 and 2000, a decrease of 10.9 percent in the poverty incidence in the urban areas is noted while an increase of 7.32 percent in the rural areas occurred.

Nearly two-thirds of the rural poor are dependent on agriculture for employment and income. Income from agriculture, however, is very unstable because of its seasonality and their dependence on the landlords. Where the distribution of land is highly unequal, poverty will be hard to alleviate. Highly inequitable distribution of land breeds social tension and political unrest, thereby inhibiting economic growth. It also limits the ability of the poor to invest in human capital formation and in productivity-enhancing techniques. Given imperfections in markets, especially in rural areas, access to land better enables households to easy production and consumption.

Over the years, income inequality is increasing as the gap widens between those in work and those not in work especially for the women. Women are confronted by a legacy of structures of inequality which are reinforced by misperceptions that produced a seemingly unending cycle that slows down the pace of their own personal development, which demotes them largely to the reproductive and domestic area. A greater number of women are not included in the labor force, which shows the disparity between the sexes. Since women play multiple roles in terms of livelihood and caring for the family, they are bound to miss opportunities for employment and access to other basic services.

⁸ FIES 2000 (inclusive of Sarangani and South Cotabato)

⁹ Regional Labor Situationer, April 2003 Round, DOLE XI

Limited access to basic services of the vulnerable group

Vulnerability has been defined as a high probability of exposure to different grades of risks and a reduced capacity for protection from their negative results. This refers to the external circumstances that expose people to shocks and risks and it also looks at vulnerability from the internal perspective of the people, experienced as defenselessness, insecurity, and lack of adequate means to cope with risk.

While it is true that much development took place in the previous years, there remains a group of people who have not yet been able to avail of increased opportunities and basic services, they are known as the vulnerable groups categorized as:

**Figure 3-6 Labor Force by Sex
Davao Region, 2002**



Source: NSO XI

- The Older Persons

Most of the older persons¹⁰ are able-bodied elderly which means that they can still care for themselves, while the others are senile, disabled or bed-ridden. Due to poverty, older persons are regarded as useless and burden to the families because they no longer contribute to the economic and productive activities. Many of them are abandoned and neglected which resulted to self-pity, frustration, and depression.

- The Persons with Disabilities

Another group that needs attention is the persons with disabilities (PWDs¹¹). Even though they suffer from restriction, or different abilities, as a result of mental, physical, or sensory impairment, to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being, they still have rights and deserve to be respected.

The most common types of disability in the Region are low vision, partial blindness, and paralysis of one or both legs. More often than not, the reasons for disability are the lack of maternal and child health care, genetics, and lack of education and information on proper nutrition and other health information.

¹⁰ Five percent of the region's population is composed of older persons 60 years old and above.

¹¹ 2000 Census on Population shows that there are 53,450 PWDs in Region XI. More than half of them (66%) are from age group 30 and above

- The Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances

Another group in need of attention is the WEDCs. In 2002, DSWD XI served 268 WEDCs which showed a decrease from the previous years with 277 for CY 2001 and 403¹ for CY 2000. Of the 268 cases, 63 percent were emotionally distressed as a result of the abuses they received. More often than not, poverty is the root cause why these women are either emotionally disturbed or abused (sexually and physically). Living in poverty and other stressful events create an atmosphere of violence. The inability to perform expected marital roles, the difference in cultural norms and attitudes, weak family values, and low education attainment are just a few of the many reasons why women are abused.

It is important to recognize that women and men are equal partners in development. It is just right that women become conscious of their rights and fulfill their roles not as subordinates but equal partners of men.

- The Indigenous People¹² (IPs)

Most of the provinces in the Davao Region have IPs, though no actual data as to its population has been generated as of the moment. Recent initiatives have been directed toward the welfare of the IPs, however, a lot of work is yet to be done for them to have a better quality of life. The IPs are highly vulnerable and with the lowest socio-economic status in the society. Their vulnerability is on their being landless and exploited. They are disadvantaged when it comes to their educational status, health, and access to employment opportunities because of their seclusion in areas that are hard to reach. Over the years, they have not been involved in decision making processes especially when it concerns their own development, making them all more vulnerable.

- The Children

Children are often found among the most vulnerable in the Region. Inadequate supervision and care of children, changing values and socio-economic pressures, including poverty, are also reflected in the rising incidence of juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, and other social ills involving children. (See Table 3-2).

More and more children in the region are subjected to abuse and exploitation. Even with the intensified advocacy on child rights in the region, the occurrence of child abuse and trafficking and the presence of the neglected, abandoned, and street children still remain to be a concern.

¹² Refers to a group of people identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing bonds of language, customs, traditions, and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions, but who may have been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral domains.

**Table 3-2 Children Needing Special Protection
Davao Region, CY 2002**

CATEGORY OF CASES	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1. Abandoned	60	50	110
2. Neglected	72	79	151
3. Sexually Abused			
- Rape	0	62	62
- Incest	0	30	30
- Acts of Lasciviousness	3	15	18
4. Victims of Prostitution	0	6	6
5. Physically Abused	12	28	40
6. Children in Conflict w/ Law	444	49	493
7. Victims of Armed Conflict	9	3	12
8. Victims of Child Labor	4	11	15
9. Victims of Child Trafficking	1	7	8
10. Street Children	8	6	14
TOTAL	613	346	959

Source: DSWD XI

Achieving the Goal of an Enhanced Shelter Security

Shelter is one of man’s basic needs but the increasing housing requirement in the Region as a result of backlog and future needs proves that housing or shelter is becoming less accessible to households. Thus, housing has become an opportunity rather than a right.

**Table 3-3 Indicators of Housing Situation
Davao Region, 1990¹³**

Tenure Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48 percent of households occupy their lots for free with consent • 11 percent of households occupy their units for free with consent
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2001-2003, only 10,658 housing units were constructed, constituting only 30.64 percent of the 34,790 units targeted to be constructed during the 2001-2003 plan period
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 percent of households need socialized housing; 21 percent in urban areas and 56 percent in rural areas
Informal Settlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 7.5 percent, Region XI has the highest percentage of informal settlers in the urban area
Type of Dwelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 percent of occupied housing units are made of strong materials • 28 percent of the occupied housing units in the region have a floor area of 10-19 square meters, considered to be below the housing standard.
Basic services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 percent of households do not have lighting yet • 3 in every 10 households are using unsafe water for consumption

¹³ 1990 Census on Population and Housing was used as no complete official results on Housing Census yet as of the writing of this Plan. Data are results of NRO XI computation taken from SEER

Proliferation of informal settlements

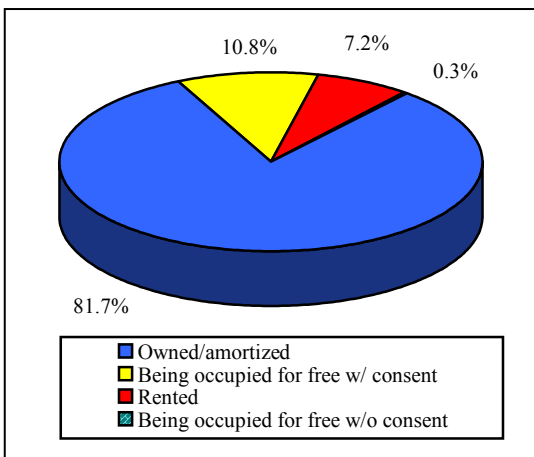
Security of tenure is one of the most coveted goals of any household. Based on the 1990 Census on Population and Housing, the housing backlog¹⁴ of Region XI is about 380,000 units¹⁵. The future housing demand is projected to reach about 1.2 million units by 2010¹⁶.

As of year 1990, more than half of the households do not have the security of tenure in the units that they are occupying. Of the total housing units in the Region, about 40 percent are made of unacceptable materials. On top of these, Region XI has the highest number of urban informal settlers in the country at 7.5 percent. This is due to the restrictive cost of housing, especially for poor families leaving them no viable option for them but either to rent or, at worse, to squat.

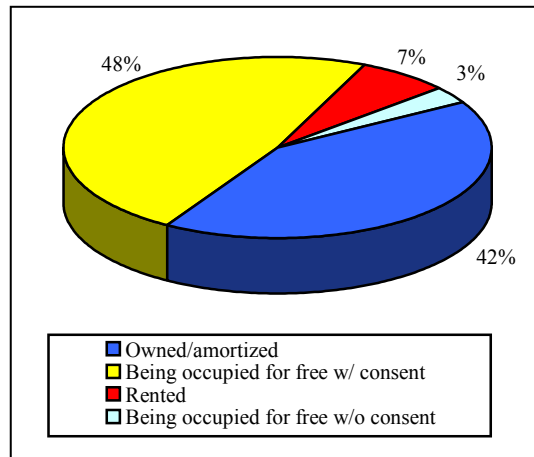
Another indicator showing the proliferation of informal settlers is the number of housings occupying units for free either with or without consent. The 1990 Census on Population and Housing provides that at least 48 percent of lots occupied for housing were used for free with consent and 10 percent were either rented or occupied without consent from the owners. Eleven percent of occupied housing units, on the other hand, were used for free with consent, while 7 percent are renting. All these households can be categorized as those without security of tenure while some are classified as informal settlers (those occupying for free without consent).

The presence of temporary settlements on areas not suitable for habitation such as in danger zones, protected areas, and government or private lands hinder development and can be detrimental to the peoples' safety.

**Figure 3-7
Tenure Status of Housing Units
Davao Region, 1990**



**Figure 3-8
Tenure Status of Lots
Davao Region, 1990**



Source of data: NSO Census on Population and Housing, Region XI, 1990

The number of households occupying unacceptable dwelling and makeshift units has increased. In 2000, there were 292,716 families living in houses made up of bamboo/sawali/cogon/nipa for walls and cogon/nipa/anahaw for the roof. Also, about 10,881

¹⁴ Housing Backlog is the number of dwelling units needed at the beginning of the planning period due to doubled-up households (shared dwellings), displaced units and homeless households.

¹⁵ Per NEDA XI computation

¹⁶ Ibid

families are living in makeshift houses. This is 62 percent higher than the 1990 figure of 6,681 families. On the other hand, only 62 percent of units in the Region are made up of strong construction materials which include galvanized iron, aluminum tile concrete, brick, stone, and asbestos.

**Table 3-4 Occupied Housing Units by Type of Construction Materials
Davao Region, 1990 and 2000**

TOTAL OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS		Type of Construction Material			No Walls/Not Reported
		Strong ^{a/}	Light ^{b/}	Makeshift	
1990	740,079	441,882	291,465	6,681	51
		60%	39%	0.90%	0.10%
2000	805,623	501,829	292,716	10,811	267
		62.3%	36.3%	1.3%	0.03%

a/ strong construction materials include galvanized iron, aluminum, tile, concrete, brick, stone, wood and asbestos

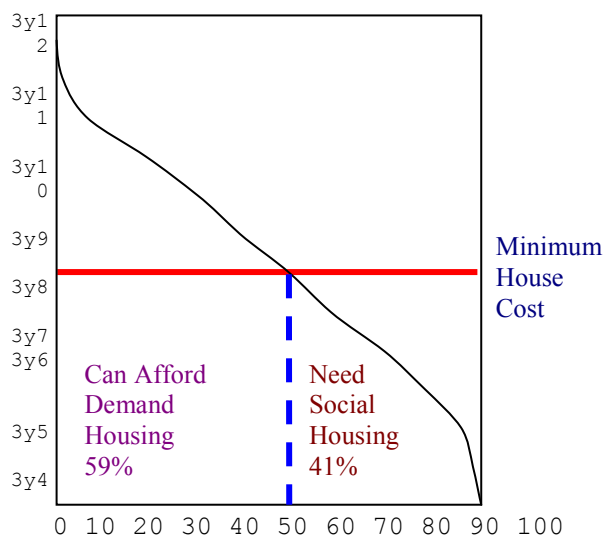
b/ light materials include bamboo, sawali, cogon, nipa and anahaw

Source of data: 1990 Census on Population and Housing and 2000 Results of FIES

Affordability¹⁷ is still the greatest problem faced by every household when it comes to housing acquisition. In Region XI, at least 41 percent of families need socialized housing. This figure represents the segment of the population whose income is not sufficient to meet the minimum housing cost. In urban areas, a little over 21 percent need social housing, while in rural areas, the figure is more than doubled at almost 56 percent.

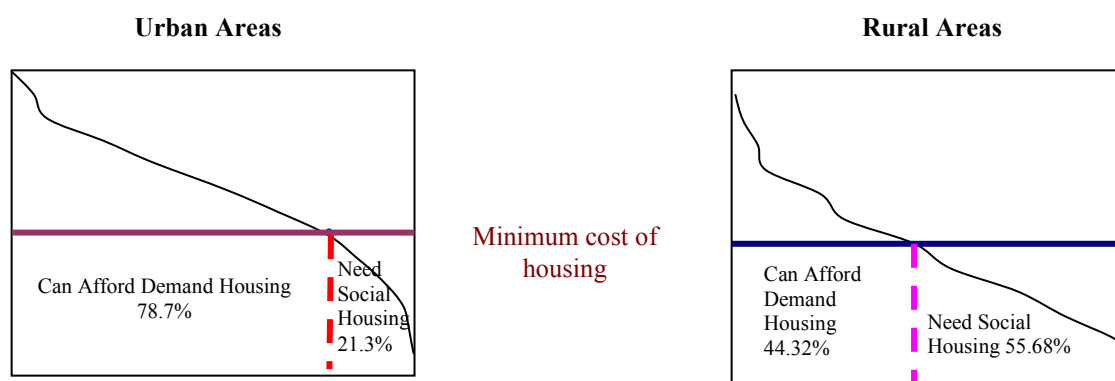
Other than the high cost of land and production inputs, the high price of housing is exacerbated by the few lending windows for low cost housing financing, thus limiting the options of low and middle income households.

**Figure 3-9 Proportion of Households Who Need Socialized Housing
Davao Region, 2000**



¹⁷ Affordability level is household's monthly net income multiplied by 36 months. The result will be compared to the various housing loan packages where one is able to identify which loan package can be availed, what is the interest rate and how many years to pay.

**Figure 3-9.1 Proportion of Households Who Need Socialized Housing
Davao Region, 2000**



Source of data: 2000 FIES

The proliferation of informal settlers is also greatly affected by the inability of the government to fully support housing programs and projects. This situation stemmed mainly from the sector’s very large financial requirement topped with the issue of economies of scale. The government continues to address the problem of the housing sector but these efforts barely succeeded. Though the Region has several programs that provide housing especially for the poor, the proportion of households who do not have the security of shelter and living in makeshift dwellings continue to rise.

During the plan period, the government’s intervention for the housing sector in the Region was very minimal especially for the marginalized sector. From 1999-2003, only 16,239 units were constructed in the Region. Despite the government’s pronouncement of prioritizing the housing sector during President Arroyo’s administration, much was left to be desired as in year 2001-2003, only 30.6 percent (10,658 units) of the targeted 34,790 units were actually constructed.

Government’s performance through its key housing agencies (KHA) showed very low and almost insignificant strides particularly from 1990-2000. During this decade, the government was able to facilitate the construction of 92,631 housing units or only 21.7 percent of the Region’s housing needs¹⁸. This accomplishment came as a result of direct and indirect assistance¹⁹ of KHAs majority of which came from the direct housing production of the National Housing Authority’s Resettlement Program and Cooperative Housing.

The situation in the housing sector worsened further as government housing programs and projects were terminated one by one so that in year 2000, out of the six programs of NHA XI, only Resettlement Program and Land Tenurial Assistance Program remained, producing only 1,646 units during the year.

¹⁸ Housing needs include backlog and future housing needs.

¹⁹ Direct assistance is direct provision of housing units through subsidized and low-interest rate financial assistance. Indirect housing assistance comes in the form of guarantee or financial assistance that leadsto households to construct their own housing units through phase by phase manner.

The seeming low priority of the LGUs for the housing sector has dampened the sector's growth. Despite the availability of funds under NHA's joint venture programs, most LGUs did not avail of the program because of the counterpart requirements that they are obligated to provide. These counterpart which entail large financial requirement include site development and provision of basic facilities in the identified resettlement areas.

Limited Access to Basic Services and Utilities

The 1990 NSO Census on Population and Housing showed that at least 60 percent of the households in the Region do not have electrical lighting yet. In fact, 95 percent of the households are still using kerosene as fuel for lighting. Majority (80%) of those who are using electricity are found in the urban areas.

At least 31 percent of the Region's households are using unsafe water from undeveloped water sources such as dug wells, springs, lakes, rivers, and rain. These households are largely found in remote rural areas, where Level I, II and III water systems are hard to construct due to topography. This condition causes alarm to a community's health and detrimental to the health of the people in general. For instance, the high proportion of households in Davao del Norte who do not have potable drinking water resulted to high incidence of individuals getting sick due to water-borne diseases.

II. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Improving Health and Nutrition Status of the Region's Population

Targets

- a. Reduced infant mortality rate by 1/3.
- b. Halved the proportion of children suffering from malnutrition.
- c. Lowered maternal mortality rate to 80 per 100,000 livebirths.
- d. Reduced under five mortality rate by half.

Key Strategies

Improved seeking and caring behaviors of stakeholders on health and nutrition through:

- a. Assuring the quality of local health care services

To ensure the continuity of efficient and effective local health care systems, standards of quality like strict compliance of RA 8172 otherwise known as "Asin Law;" encouragement adoption of Mother-Baby Friendly Initiative which in effect observes the Milk Code of the Philippines; enforcement of PD 856 (Code on Sanitation of the Philippines) are set for LGUs to observe. The Health Sector Reform Agenda (HSRA) implementation will be expanded from 5 to 17 LGUs (11 in Davao del Norte with 4 convergence areas; 6 in ComVal Province, with 1 convergence area). Management capacities for public health programs should be strengthened through application of new skills and approaches in implementing national programs through autonomous local health systems as it will, among others, contribute to the successful implementation of these programs particularly their ability to absorb funds. The move to make all local health systems functional should be developed within the purview of the Local Government Code of 1991 to better carry out public health programs and services. Local health systems such as district health systems, hospital

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networking system, and patient referral system should not only depend on the government mechanism but should also tap the private sector to adequately address the health delivery system backlog.

The coverage of *Gamot na Mabisa Abot Kaya (GMA 50)* which provides for low-priced drugs must also be expanded. At present, there are 46 drugs priced at low rates in all “Murang Gamot” Boticas which has benefited a great number of individuals seeking health care and services in the Region. Increasing the number of these low-priced drugs will enable patients burdened with high cost of hospitalization to buy more drugs for the little money they have.

b. Promoting healthy lifestyle

Healthy lifestyle and better health practices and behavior should be promoted. Access to safe water and sanitary toilet facilities should be increased. There is also a need to expand traditional targets to respond to changing demographic and health trends notably the rise in the number of the elderly and the shift of the disease burden toward degenerative diseases.

Poor people’s knowledge of disease prevention and health promoting behavior can be significantly improved by target-group oriented health management procedures and healthy lifestyle practices – proper nutrition, physical activities/exercises, avoidance of smoking and excessive alcohol-drinking, and health-seeking behaviors such as regular blood pressure check-up and pertinent physical check-up when one is at risk. Campaign on the prevention of HIV-AIDS should be intensified.

c. Expanding coverage of health care financing

An increase in the number of indigent enrolment to PHIC by 23 percent (from 45,224 to 55,442) is the Region’s target for the following year. More LGUs will be encouraged to enrol in the PHIC Indigency Program. So far, forty-seven (47) LGUs enrolled in PHIC’s Indigency Program have availed of PHIC capitation fund and fourteen local health units are PHIC-accredited.

The DOTS Program or “Tutok Gamutan” Strategy of the Department of Health in TB prevention and reduction has been given wider information campaign. “Tutok Gamutan” assures regular and uninterrupted supply of anti-TB drugs both in the public and private hospitals, and also in PHIC-accredited DOTS providers. PHIC offers its members TB-DOTS benefit package of ₱4,000.00 per patient seeking medical consultation with a private provider.

Ultimately, these strategies will lead to significant improvement in health status through greater and more effective coverage of national and local public health programs, to increase access to local health services especially by the poor and the disadvantaged, and to reduce financial burden on individual families.

Strategic Outcomes

- a. Increased proportion of births attended to by trained health personnel.
- b. Increased number of Rural/City Health Units that are *Sentrong Sigla* certified and PHIC-accredited.
- c. Increased fully immunized children coverage.
- d. Increased investment per capita on health.

Making the Region's People Proactive Individuals with Adequate Knowledge and Skills, Imbued with a Strong Sense of Mission

Targets

Increased number of functionally literate individuals to 92 percent.

Key Strategies

Improved access to quality education through:

a. Improving resource allocation

With the widening gaps in classrooms, teachers, school furniture, and textbooks, there is a need to increase resources for education. Improving resource allocation also means expeditious procurement, as well as efficient implementation of school programs and projects. The other equally important challenge is to rationalize the allocation of such resources to achieve equity and with greater efficiency.

The other partner of the national government in achieving the goals of education for all is the LGU. The improved administrative and financial capability of the LGUs allowed them to support priority undertakings such as education. Having noted that, it is important that such opportunity be maximized by way of encouraging the LGUs to invest in education more than what the Local Government Code of 1991 provides.

Greater access and equity in higher education should be promoted and private HEIs should be encouraged to expand their operations to areas where there are a very few number of institutions of higher learning. The LGUs, CHED, and private HEIs must work hand in hand so that private HEIs will be established in localities where it is most needed. The CHED must also continue to promote higher education to the populace including information dissemination pertaining to the type of scholarships that it offers to poor but deserving students.

The possibility of establishing a government higher education institution in the province of Compostela Valley should also be considered given the fact that the province is the only area in the region that has no state college.

The challenges of unemployment and underemployment should be purposively resolved by equipping men and women with qualifications enhancing their opportunities to compete in the labor market. Such qualifications should also enable them to explore prospects to start their own business, thus creating jobs for others. This entails broad-based resource mobilization led by the private sector with government setting the directions. Thus, private investments shall gain improved returns being attuned to market priorities. Closer coordination among DepEd, CHED, and TESDA, for their part, as lead education agencies, and among education providers with companies and industry groups, shall result in highly qualified and employable graduates.

b. Enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in school system

Notwithstanding the desire of the government to provide the requirements to achieve the goals of education for all, scarce in its resources would mean that it can only do so much. This is the reason why collaborative effort with the private sector and the civil society has become more urgent and necessary.

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One of the more successful partnerships done in the past with the private sector is the adopt-a-school program. The sponsorship by the private sector could span from building classrooms to providing the school furniture and textbooks. Even the sponsorship for hiring teachers could be explored.

Together with the civil society and the LGUs moving for the educational well-being of the people are the parents themselves. The primary responsibility of the parents is basic. One, send their children to school; and two, let their children stay in school. These responsibilities could be best understood by the parents under the guidance of a strong organization such as the PTCA. A strong PTCA should well be the objective of every school in the Region.

The advocacy for parents to send their children to school should be coupled with an advocacy to give equal opportunities for education to their children regardless of gender. Given such effort, whatever disparity in terms of access between male and female children to pursue basic and advance education may be minimized.

The concern of low interest of the populace on technical-vocational courses require better advocacy to elicit greater interest among the populace to engage in skilled jobs and training. The communities need to appreciate the value and prospects of the labor market and learning prospects. A better fit between available jobs and entrepreneurial prospects, on one hand, and between individual career aspirations and qualifications, has to be ensured. The fast-changing requirements of the labor market must be met by a dynamic, flexible, and competency-adhering tech-voc system.

Achieving the six to ten million job generation target in the next six years is a tall order. This would require establishment or expansion of industries to create employment opportunities. However, this strategy may not immediately take place. An alternative would be entrepreneurship opportunities for the graduates who can be potential entrepreneurs. With this, it is necessary to incorporate subjects on entrepreneurship in all course offerings both in formal and non-formal education levels.

Strategic Outcomes

- a. Increased participation rate in basic education to 90 percent.
- b. Increased NAT results in basic education from 45.15 percent to 53.15 percent.
- c. Eliminated gender disparity in basic education.
- d. Increased participation in tech-voc education.
- e. Increased participation rate in higher education.

Improving the Quality of Life of the Poor and the Vulnerable

Target

Improved status of 13 Minimum Basic Needs Core Indicators

Key Strategies

Improved access to basic services of the poor and the vulnerable groups through:

a. Responsive and integrated services to the poor and vulnerable groups

The strategy of convergence has been tested by time. The involvement of the LGUs, NGAs, NGOs, and POs has been proven to be crucial to improving the lives of the poor and the disadvantaged. The merging of all efforts, the joining together of the programs and projects of the different sectors will fast track the improvement of the situation of the targeted group. This strategy will eliminate duplication of programs and projects and will not entail additional cost in terms of implementation because it is only a matter of redirecting the projects. The most important thing to succeed in this strategy is the proper coordination, cooperation, and communication among all the involved sectors.

For accelerated barangay-focused rehabilitation and development, the KALAHI, under the supervision of the National Anti Poverty Commission, will continue to be mobilized and strengthened in the priority areas. The delivery of core shelter units and immediate livelihood assistance for displaced families, infrastructure, and basic services shall be prioritized.

b. Increasing investments in capacity building

The potential of the populace of the Davao Region must not go unnoticed. The untapped abilities of the individuals that comprise the marginalized sector constitute a chunk of the unproductive segment of the Region.

The improvement of the people's capabilities is one of the most important steps to undertake. skills training and manpower development will help them get hired. This will not only help them get employed, but the fact that they have been trained and have acquired skills; they will now have a feeling of self-worth. The cases of abuses brought about by feelings of helplessness will be reduced.

Poverty has been attributed to unemployment and underemployment. With increased access to livelihood opportunities, people will be able to shift from being employed to becoming employers. Through the years, programs of the government which provide opportunities for livelihood have seen encouraging results. Many of the poor who accessed such programs were able to improve their lives. Entrepreneurship and poverty reduction are frequently being linked as tandem priority concerns, as solution to socio-economic deprivation. As said earlier, rural is by definition poverty itself, bringing livelihood opportunities in rural areas may largely contribute to the creation of a healthy economy and thus uplifting its status.

c. Implementation of PAPs for the elderly and PWDs

It is important to internalize that the elderly and the PWDs are still able to care for themselves. The provision of programs for them will largely take away the burden from the government on continuous dole-out services. Providing them avenues for employment and livelihood that is within the limits of their capabilities will not only make them feel part of the community but also a contributing factor to the improvement of the economy of the Region. By doing this, these groups become empowered, they become self-reliant, and they do not rely on others for their day to day needs.

d. Localization of national social welfare service programs

Most of the social welfare services have been devolved to the LGUs as provided for in the Local Government Code of 1991. The devolution of basic services to the LGUs has reaped progress since then. The LGUs need to continue supporting the programs and projects of the National Governments for the vulnerable groups.

The concerns of the IPs, women, and children can best be served by the LGUs. The participation of the IPs in decision-making processes can be implemented at the local level since the LGU knows their constituents better.

The provision of programs and basic services to the women would also be very effective if spearheaded by the LGU since it will be easier to bring it down to the lowest level which is the barangay. Also, basic services for the children should be attended to by the LGU especially at the early childhood stages (3-5 years old). Most of the development of the child happens before reaching three years old. This is the stage where they develop their abilities to think, speak, learn, and reason. This should be the period where the LGUs should lay the foundation for the children's values and social behavior when they become adults, the importance of which has been provided for in the Early Childhood Care and Development Act (RA 8980). The LGUs should make use of the structures like the Local Council for the Protection of Children which ensures that the rights of the child are observed.

Strategic Outcome

Increased number of families/communities/vulnerable groups participating in social welfare activities provided with basic service assistance.

Enhancing Housing Security

Target

Halved the number of households occupying unacceptable dwelling units.

Key Strategies

Improved access to housing programs through:

- a. Providing policy environment for greater private sector participation and increasing investments in housing

The current development policy of the administration for the housing sector is expected to contribute to the achievement of the 6th agendum of the 10-Point Legacy of the Arroyo administration, particularly decongesting Metro Manila by forming new cores of government and housing centers. This agendum is to address housing backlog and create employment opportunities.

Funding has been the greatest constraint of the government in implementing housing programs and projects that would address the problem on scarcity. Many regular programs and projects of the government were not even sustained because of the large funds that are required. The notable deficiency in funds cannot be addressed over a shorter period of time since the requirement is high and government puts priority to projects which benefit from economies of scale. The government should, however, continue to augment investments for housing in order to address

the proliferation of informal settlements especially in the urban areas, as the eventual negative effect of this would be far greater than its cost.

In order to optimize the use of funds, the government must continue and expand the coverage of its self-help housing programs such as the Community Mortgage Program, Resettlement Assistance Program, Local Housing Program, and other socialized housing programs.

Expanding the loan beneficiaries of GFIs such as GSIS, SSS, and PAG-IBIG are also worthwhile endeavors to increase access to housing of low and middle income earners. By providing lower interests and longer loan payback period, they will be encouraged to apply for a housing loan, thus, decrease the number of informal settlers.

Investments for housing do not only come from national funding through the various KHAs but also from LGUs. With their devolved functions, the LGUs can very well trigger development in the sector as they push for their housing programs and projects in partnership with the private sector and KHAs.

Another key strategy in addressing the housing problem is by increasing the role being played by the private sector, especially financial institutions, in the housing market. Currently, the government monopolizes the housing market through its direct housing provision and low interest rate housing financing but private financing through banks remains very low.

Private sector participation is an important strategy in bringing down the cost of housing units. Households will have more options for borrowing and competition will effect, thus, pull the prices of units at reasonable levels and raise the quality of housing and services. In order to encourage private sector participation and increase investments from the private sector, incentives should be provided to them to encourage them to participate in the housing market. The government can then begin to solely focus on housing provision for very poor and homeless households, as well as in the delivery of basic services and amenities that go with it.

b. Expanding affordable housing options

The issue on affordability is restrained by two important factors: household's capacity to pay and preference. Most, if not all Filipino families, prefer to have a unit that is made of concrete and built on a spacious land. However, poor households cannot afford to purchase a piece of land, much more build their dream house. Despite this reality, Filipino culture recognizes the importance of owning a house and lot regardless of ones economic status. This belief further aggravates the case of scarcity in supply of housing and the situation of homelessness.

Because neither price of land nor cost of construction will go down at any time sooner and because hardly every homeless household can avail of housing loans from the GFIs, affordable housing package for the homeless and the marginalized group can be accessed through self-help programs, lease-to-own housing schemes, cooperative housing, and use of inexpensive alternative materials for construction. The LGUs' support to the housing sector through the establishment of resettlement areas and sites and services will also increase access of poor families to decent housing.

To address the issue of increasing number of informal settlers, homeless, and those households occupying unacceptable dwelling units, community self-help programs and community ownership concepts, such as the *Community Mortgage Program*, should be promoted. This program provides the marginalized sector to own the lots they occupy or choose to relocate and eventually

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improve their homes and neighborhood to the extent of their affordability with the assistance of GFIs, such as the NHMFC, and key housing agencies, such as the NHA, together with the LGU.

Likewise, through the Resettlement Program, sites are developed to generate serviced home lots for families who are being relocated from danger areas or land needed by the government for its infrastructure program.

To address the high cost of housing units in the urban areas, sites and services should be revived. With only land preparation and some infrastructure provision from the government, low-income families can complete the project at their own pace. Row-house or cluster type of housing units could also be adopted. The *Consolidated Pag-Ibig Housing Program* of the government is targeting to construct housing units at an annual average growth rate of 10 percent to cater to the middle income families. Rent-to-own housing schemes should be promoted as in other countries as this scheme saves on the cost of land.

To complement the housing programs, basic housing facilities and services such as roads, electricity, and water supply should be provided. Government must prioritize the energization of areas who do not have electricity, establish Level I, II, and III water systems in areas where potable water source is absent, advocate practice of sanitary disposal of waste. The LGUs and the private sector can harmonize their efforts to provide these infrastructure and urban services.

c. Improving cost recovery

The very limited resources afforded by the government to the housing sector can be complemented by improving the collection efficiency of KHAs, thereby increasing the available funds for housing. This means that KHAs must undertake institutional and operational reforms, as well as improve monitoring systems to improve collection efficiency.

Strategic Outcome

- a. Increased number of housing program beneficiaries belonging to the bottom 30 percent of the social strata
- b. Increased collection efficiency

III. PRIORITY PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Upgrading of Essential Medical Equipment for Strategic Government Hospitals in Davao Region

Provision of additional essential equipment to strategic government hospitals in Region XI. The equipment varies from simple medical gadgets to highly sophisticated, state-of-the-art medical machines to be deployed to eleven hospitals. To be implemented by the DOH-Center for Health Development-Southern Mindanao.

Establishment of Mindanao Cancer Center (MCC)

Construction of MCC and acquisition of medical equipment, the project will be a multi-disciplinary approach to cancer management. It includes diagnostic capabilities, treatment modalities, palliative and hospice care, prevention and control, and psychosocial support. The

intended beneficiaries are the people of Mindanao particularly those who belong to low to middle income groups. The project will be implemented by the Davao Regional Hospital.

Educational Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP is a scholarship provided to poor IP children implemented jointly by the NCIP and Congress through the yearly allocation of Congressional funds. The program has been expanded to cover all Congressional districts of the Region to be implemented by NCIP XI from 2005 – 2010.

Scholarships to Poor Families

Free scholarships to 360 poor but deserving high school students to undertake secondary education with special emphasis on the sciences and mathematics. The scholars will enjoy such privileges as free tuition, free loan of textbooks, uniform allowance, transportation allowance, stipend, and living allowance. The project will be implemented by PSHS-Mindanao campus from 2005-2010.

Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) Stage 2

Aims to improve the quality of and access to basic education in Mindanao, thereby contributing to the attainment of peace and development in Southern Philippines. It has four components: 1) Human Resource Development; 2) Materials Development; 3) Increasing Access; and, 4) Project Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation. The project is implemented by the DepEd XI under AusAid Grant from 2004 to 2008.

KALAHI Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services – *Kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay*

Program for a focused, accelerated, convergent, expanded, and strategic effort to reduce poverty. Target beneficiaries are families who are poorest of the poor coming from 32 depressed barangays in Davao region. The project is implemented by DSWD XI from 2003 to 2005.

Self-employment Assistance Kaunlaran (SEA-K) Integrated Livelihood Program 1 & 2

Adopted in 1993, the program is a community based credit scheme for the marginalized sector. It is a livelihood assistance program which involves the provision of an integrated package that will enable the economically disadvantaged individuals, families, and groups access non-interest bearing capital assistance. This also seeks to enhance the capability of the community-based credit association to self-administer a socialized credit scheme for income-generating projects. The project is implemented by the DSWD XI.

KOICA Training Center Project

An educational infrastructure made possible through the cooperation of the Philippine and Korean governments. It will cater to several major trade areas and allied trades along automobile maintenance, farming, machinery maintenance, mechanical processing, welding/piping, freezing/air conditioning, electronics, and information processing. The project which will be completed by 2005 is being implemented by TESDA XI.

Community Mortgage Program (CMP)

The CMP utilizes an innovative system of mortgage financing whereby an undivided tract of land may be acquired by several beneficiaries through the concept of community ownership. Financing thru Community Mortgages is intended primarily to assist residents of blighted or depressed areas and/or the urban poor. The program is being implemented by the NHMFC.

Group Land Acquisition Development Program

The program aims to provide financial assistance to organized groups of formally employed Fund members for the acquisition and development of raw land or partially developed land, which shall serve as the site of their housing units. The program is being implemented by the HDMF.

Resettlement Program

Involves the acquisition and development of large tracts of raw land into serviced homelots or core housing units for families displaced from sites earmarked for government infrastructure projects and those occupying danger areas. The program is being implemented by the NHA.

Rent-To-Own Program

The Program is aimed at instituting a mechanism through which the HDMF shall further expedite the recovery of its investments in non-performing mortgage loans and provide Pag-IBIG members, whose current income cannot sustain the monthly amortization on a Pag-IBIG housing loan, with a facility that will provide affordable housing and ensure home ownership by the time they become eligible for such loan. The program is being implemented by the HDMF.