

WELCOME REMARKS

NSCB-HDN Dissemination Forum on the 2009 Subnational
Human Development Index
10 December 2012; 1:00 PM
Boracay Room, EDSA Shangri-La Hotel,
Mandaluyong City

by

JOSE RAMON G. ALBERT
Secretary General, NSCB

The Honorable Deputy Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Dr. Emmanuel Esguerra;

The Honorable Governor of the Province of Sarangani, Governor Miguel Rene Dominguez;

The Honorable Former Secretary of Socioeconomic Planning and Founding president of the Human Development Network (HDN), Prof. Solita Collas-Monsod (aka Mareng Winnie);

The Honorable Commissioner Dr. Ma. Cynthia Rose Banzon-Bautista of the Commission on Higher Education and Vice President of the HDN;

Dr. Toby Melissa Monsod of the HDN;

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Team Leader for Poverty Reduction and Support for the MDGs, Ms. Corazon Urquico;

Former Secretary General of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), Dr. Romulo A. Virola;

Our friends in the Human Development Network;

Our colleagues, friends, and partners in the Philippine Statistical System (PSS), the academe, media, private sector, civil society, and international development agencies;

Fellow public servants...

Good afternoon!

On behalf of the NSCB, I welcome you all to this Dissemination Forum on the 2009 Subnational Human Development Index.

Human development, as defined by the UNDP, is a process of enlarging people's choices. The three essential and critical goals for human development are for everyone to be healthy, to get educated and to have a decent standard of living. Following this framework, the Philippine Human Development Index (HDI) focuses on three dimensions of human development: health, as measured by life expectancy; education, as measured by mean and expected years of schooling; and income, as measured by real capita income.

HDI is deemed beneficial to planners and policy makers, in particular, and to the public, in general. At the subnational level, it can serve as a guide for planners in prioritizing their goals and in policy-setting as it provides information on the provinces'

strengths and weaknesses from the point of view of human development. I am glad to say that we have witnessed the popularity of the HDI among our local government partners as provincial governments compete for the much coveted top provinces performing in HDI, including the top gainers, which received commendation by the UNDP and HDN for LGU performance in the areas of education, health and welfare. It will be interesting to know how our country compares with other countries in terms of HDI. Are we better off or do we continue to lag behind other developed as well as developing nations; especially our ASEAN neighbors? We will find out later in this forum.

In 2010, the UNDP Human Development Report Office introduced refinements in the Global HDI methodology. The refinements in the methodology shall be presented this afternoon by Dr. Monsod. The NSCB Technical Staff, on the other hand, shall present some perspectives from the official statistical community on the refined methodology.

The NSCB and HDN partnership on the generation of the Human Development Index dates back to 1996 when then President

Ramos directed the NSCB to officially compile subnational HDI. The NSCB and HDN have continuously improved the methodology despite some constraints in the PSS. We appreciate the public-private partnership with the HDN towards our advocacy to mainstream and release official HDI estimates regularly.

It is for this reason that we invite all of you today so that we may present the refined HDI estimation methodology, estimates for 2009 as well as for 2006. But this is not yet over for us, the NSCB and the HDN, with help from our partners from the government and other experts; we will continue to improve the HDI estimation methodology to better capture the state of the human development in our country.

There are those who point out that the 7.1 percentage growth of our economy in the third quarter of this year is not completely felt. Although economic growth is not always synonymous to development, yet growth is important , because if it is inclusive and if it is sustained, this growth can be translated to better social services, education and jobs for our *kababayans* to further human development in our country.

On behalf of the NSCB, I thank the HDN, through Dr. Monsod and Commissioner Bautista for this collaboration and Ms. Urquico of the UNDP for its funding support of this undertaking.

Magandang hapon at nawa'y pagbigyan ninyo ako na ipahayag ko sa inyo ng maaga ang pag-asa na tayo'y magkakaroon ng maligayang pasko at masaganang bagong taon.