

THE MANILA MANIFESTO

On Engaging Government in Mainstreaming PHE Approach Towards the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals

We, the participants to the 6th National Conference on Population, Health and Environment (PHE), in advocating for the achievement of the SDG strongly believe, that an integrated PHE Approach can advance these goals; as we also urge Government to mainstream this strategy in partnership with Civil Society Organizations.

The links between people, their health and well-being, and the environment are extensive and enormous. Some of these relationships are very well manifested while some are mediated by other factors.

Despite the complexities, the need to continue exploring, finding and making the link in population, health and environment is an imperative!

In making the link in Population, Health and Environment as a strategy for development programming in the Philippines, the challenge is to look at how variables and trends in population change, health impacts and human and natural systems interact and affect each other.

As a development approach, the linked programming hopes to create a synergy that will bring greater results for the same amount of effort compared to addressing population, health and environment separately.

In the Philippines, NGOs had pioneered in the integrated PHE approach in their various projects and had provided evidenced based measures and strategies which were adopted by other countries. Samples of these projects undertaken in various parts of the country have themes focusing on the following: addressing population pressures and poor health from reef to ridge in coastal areas, lowlands and upland; Biodiversity conservation development: Balancing conservation needs with human demands; Food security: examining how population and environmental interactions affect supply and distribution; Natural hazards: explaining how population dynamics relate to vulnerability, among others.

The PHE integrated approach is one that recognizes the right of a people to quality health care. It is a strategy that enhances the ability of couples to decide whether and when to have children. It enables “communities to have access to health services, participate in sustainable livelihoods, conserve critical ecosystems, and manage natural resources at the same time all of which are key aspects of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”

Contained in a document entitled – ***“Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”*** , the SDGs were unanimously adopted by the 193 member countries of the United Nations in September 2015 and to which, the Philippines is a signatory. The 17 point global goals carry more than a hundred sub-goals many of which directly pertains to population, health and environment.

Simplified, the SGDs are: *No poverty. Zero hunger. Good health and well being. Quality education. Gender equality. Clean water and sanitation. Affordable and clean energy. Decent work and economic growth. Industry, innovation and infrastructure. Reduced Inequities. Climate action. Life below water. Life on land. Sustainable cities and*

communities. Responsible consumption and production. Peace and justice and stronger institutions. Partnership for the growth.

As countries across the world move to hammer out details and approaches to localize plans on how to achieve SDG, so too, the Philippines. Through the NEDA, being crafted now is Ambisyon 2040 likewise committed to be an agent of world transformation leaving no one behind!

We see this therefore as the most opportune time to once again call on the Government sector, particularly the Local Government Units and the national agencies concerned to adopt the Integrated PHE Approach in pursuing the Philippine Development Plan and allow further discussion on PHE approaches as Ambisyon 2040 is being fine tuned.

We likewise see this crucial period to further the cause of PHE integration by strengthening the PHE Network as an organization and heed the call to cooperate, coordinate, collaborate, calibrate and communicate information about PHE integration.

On this 10th day of November, 2016, on the occasion of the 6th National PHE Conference, we sign this manifesto as an iteration of our call to mainstream the Integrated PHE Approach in Government, build more partnerships and strengthen the PHE Network to further advance PHE integration as a development approach in the Country.

In all these, we commit.