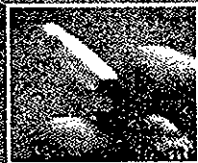


HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

# Intersectoral Consultations

A Component of the Health & Environment Policy Impact Project



Environmental Health Service  
Department of Health

*in collaboration with the*



College of Public Health  
University of the Philippines Manila

*and the*



International Development  
Research Centre Canada

**HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT  
INTERSECTORAL CONSULTATIONS  
A COMPONENT OF THE HEALTH AND  
ENVIRONMENT POLICY IMPACT PROJECT**

**Environmental Health Service  
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**College of Public Health  
University of the Philippines (Manila)**

and the

**International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada**

**September 1998  
Manila, Philippines**

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
INTERSECTORAL CONSULTATIONS  
PHILIPPINES**

A Component of the Health and Environment  
Policy Impact Project (HEPIP), Philippines

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## PREFACE

To protect the public from emerging health hazards and risks caused by environmental deterioration, the Environmental Health Service (EHS) of the Department of Health, in collaboration with the College of Public Health University of the Philippines, Manila and funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada, conceived the *Health and Environment Policy Impact Project (HEPIP), Philippines*. The project's primary objective is to develop a document on Philippine environmental health that will guide policy makers at all levels in ensuring the integration of health, environment, and economic development issues into the policy formulation process.

The HEPIP has three components: the Environmental Health Risk Perception Survey (RPS); the Secondary Data Collection; and the Community Consultations.

A nationwide Environmental Health Risk Perception Survey (RPS) was organized to aid in the development of appropriate solutions for the worsening environmental degradation. Its general objective is to determine the perceptions of the population in the study communities regarding the nature, sources, and effects of pollutants, as well as the measures necessary to prevent, control, and mitigate the occurrence of pollution and its repercussions to public health.

The findings of the survey will be linked with the collected secondary data. This component aims to review existing literature, research data, and other information regarding the environment and health, particularly those that pertain to Philippine conditions.

The third component is the consultation process, which is considered vital in the completion of this project and is the focus of this document. A series of community consultation activities was made in all areas included in the survey to integrate the people's responses from the grassroots level in the policy formulation process. Likewise, other technical consultations were held with the different sectoral communities—the academe, non governmental organizations (NGOs) and the business sector, and the government agencies that comprise the Inter-Agency Committee on Environmental Health (IACEH). Results from the consultations are incorporated with the other components of the project into a single document that will be presented to policy-making bodies and decision-makers. This document is the Philippines Health and Environment - the Vital Link.

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## INTRODUCTION

The complex interrelationship between health and the environment extends the responsibility of promoting health to all groups in a society. Health is no longer the sole responsibility of health workers, but is also the responsibility of government officials, employees, teachers, students, senior citizens, non-governmental organizations, the business sector, the media, and all others who influence the physical and social environment.

Thus, it is important to reshape our outlook towards the protection and conservation of our environment and the sustainability of our good health. We need a powerful, yet focused, consensus on what key recommendations to give to strengthen our environmental health policies and programs. We need strong voices from the diverse sectors concerned, resounding the challenge to halt the degradation of the environment and the wasting of healthy lives. And, most of all, we need vigorous institutional and community interaction in order to implement and evaluate the proposed action plans.

Under this project, intersectoral consultations were held primarily to draw out responses, through recommendations and suggestions, from the participants concerning the problems identified in the Environmental Health Risk Perception Survey. Included in the consultations are other relevant issues pertaining directly or indirectly to environmental health as seen by the various sectors. The mechanics of the consultations revolved around these tasks: (1) the identification of roles and responsibilities by the various concerned sectors in the promotion of environmental health; and (2) the formulation of policy recommendations that are appropriate and responsive to Philippine health development and environmental needs.

Environmental health practices should also be promoted involving people from all walks of life. Through these intersectoral consultations, a comprehensive environmental management program must be emphasized because such a program is essential in disease prevention and health promotion.



# CHAPTER 1

## Consultation with the Study Communities



## 1. CONSULTATION WITH THE STUDY COMMUNITIES

Since the implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991, the decentralization of the national government's responsibilities to the local level placed the importance of decision-making and action on the community itself. Involvement is imperative at the grassroots level through consultations in order that community concerns are incorporated in all health, environment, and development programs and policies.

### 1.1 OBJECTIVES

The community consultation aims to:

1. Present to the study community the project background, community profile, and the results of the Environmental Health Risk Perception Survey (RPS) from each area;
2. Elicit responses from the participants concerning the problems identified in the survey, including other relevant problems and issues present in the community; and
3. Develop an action plan based on the responses given.

### 1.2 STUDY COMMUNITIES

The community consultation workshops included the areas that were covered by the Environmental Health Risk Perception Survey of the Health and Environment Policy Impact Project (HEPIP), Philippines. These areas were divided into two groups: the high risk areas, which were chosen because of the presence of industrial estates, mining, logging, irrigation, or intense and indiscriminate use of pesticides and fertilizers; and the low risk areas--

which, aside from serving as control areas, were chosen because of the relatively low rate of environmental problems in their communities.

Table 1 shows the list of the study areas, representing the island groups of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

**TABLE 1: Study Communities**

HIGH RISK AREAS	LOW RISK AREAS
Barangay Karuhatan, Valenzuela, Metro Manila	Barangay Nangka, Marikina City, Metro Manila
Barangay San Roque, San Rafael, Bulacan	Barangay Palapala, San Ildefonso, Bulacan
Barangay Paknaan, Mandaue City, Cebu	Barangay Cubacub, Mandaue City, Cebu
Barangay Balud, San Fernando, Cebu	Barangay San Isidro, San Fernando, Cebu
Barangay Tablon, Cagayan de Oro City	Barangay Nazareth, Cagayan de Oro City
Barangay Agusan Canyon, Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon	Barangay Alae, Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon

### 1.3 PARTICIPANTS

Various sectors were represented during the community consultation workshops. They are the following: (1) the health sector, which includes representatives from the regional, provincial, and municipal or city health offices; (2) the barangay unit officials, which includes the barangay chairperson and kagawad (councilors); (3) the religious sector, such as the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Women's League; (4) the youth sector, with representatives from the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK); (5) Parents-Teachers Association (PTA); (6) senior citizens; (7) school officials; and (8) representatives of industrial establishments.



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## 1.4 PROCEEDINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

### 1.4.1 Registration

The first activity was the registration of participants. Each participant was provided with a nametag and a kit containing RPS handouts and writing materials.



### 1.4.2 Opening Ceremonies

A community participant gave the invocation at the formal opening of the consultation. The city/municipal mayor rendered the welcome remarks. Introduction of the participants followed.

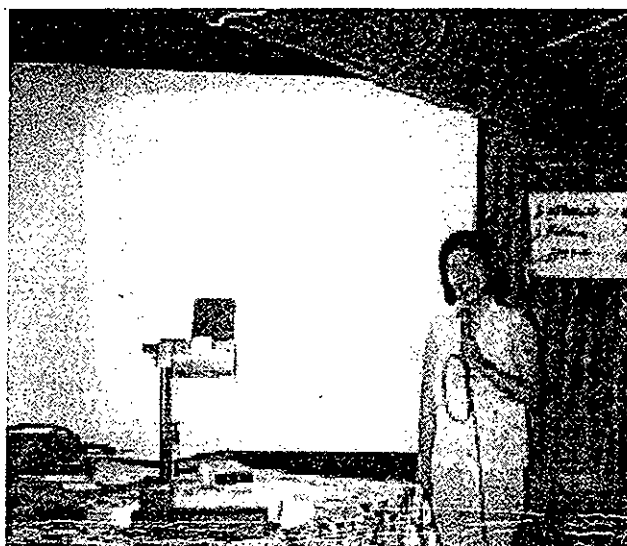


### 1.4.3 Project Presentation

Following the formal opening, a film clip on the current Philippine environmental condition was shown to heighten the participants' receptiveness on environmental concerns.

After the film showing, technical personnel from the Environmental Health Service (EHS) presented the project background, community profile, and RPS results. The information presented were the specific findings for each community.

The presentation was done in English and Filipino.



### 1.4.4 Workshop

The workshop was opened with problem identification and prioritization facilitated by the project consultants, EHS personnel, and local officials.

The participants were grouped into several working teams and were required to suggest solutions to the problems identified.

They were asked to identify the responsible implementing agency or responsible person for each given activity. Each group appointed a leader and a rapporteur for the action planning activity. The results were then presented and discussed in the plenary session.

The plenary session gave the participants a clearer perspective of the problems concerned, enabling them to provide practical and innovative solutions.



#### 1.4.5 Closing Ceremonies

The workshop ended with a synthesis of the consultation activities and objectives. Certificates of participation were awarded to each participant. The barangay chairperson gave the closing remarks.



#### 1.5 PLENARY RESULTS

Discussions during the community consultation centered on the prevailing environmental problems of the communities. The exchange of ideas and experiences among participants yielded helpful recommendations and even possible solutions.



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## 1.5.1 Problems Identified

The identification of health, environment, and other related problems were given due emphasis by the participants from the community. Most of these problems were culled from the RPS results.

Below is a table of identified problems, in high and low risk areas, classified according to air, water, food/soil-related risk factors, and noise pollution (the identified problems are not ranked according to severity).

TABLE 2: Identified Problems

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS	MAJOR PROBLEMS HIGH RISK AREAS	MAJOR PROBLEMS LOW RISK AREAS
Air-related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>soil and road dust</li> <li>vehicular emissions</li> <li>industrial emissions</li> <li>burning garbage</li> <li>agricultural burning</li> <li>smoking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>soil and road dust</li> <li>vehicular emissions</li> <li>industrial emissions</li> <li>burning garbage</li> <li>smoking</li> <li>use of biomass as cooking fuel</li> </ul>
Water-related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>domestic sewage and household liquid waste</li> <li>industrial wastewater</li> <li>lack of water supply</li> <li>absence of sanitary toilet</li> <li>wastewater from piggeries and poultry</li> <li>stagnant water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>domestic sewage</li> <li>industrial wastewater</li> <li>lack of safe water supply source/unsanitary water storage</li> <li>absence of sanitary toilet</li> <li>stagnant water</li> </ul>
Soil / Food-related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improper solid waste/garbage disposal</li> <li>indiscriminate use of pesticides and fertilizers</li> <li>improper disposal of toxic chemicals/ hazardous substances</li> <li>practice of buying food from doubtful sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improper solid waste/garbage disposal</li> <li>indiscriminate use of pesticides and fertilizers</li> <li>practice of buying food from doubtful sources</li> <li>pests and rodents (vectors)</li> </ul>
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>industrial noise</li> <li>vehicular noise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>industrial noise</li> <li>vehicular noise</li> <li>domestic noise</li> </ul>
Odor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offensive odor from commercial/industrial establishments and piggeries/poultry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offensive odor from commercial/industrial establishments and piggeries and poultry</li> </ul>
Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>alcohol consumption</li> <li>drug abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>alcohol consumption</li> <li>drug abuse</li> </ul>
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>zoning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>zoning</li> <li>vandalism</li> <li>street children</li> <li>robbery</li> </ul>



Comparing the identified problems presented in Table 2, differences seemingly are not distinct between the high risk and low risk areas.

### 1.5.2 Other Issues

The participants in the study communities raised other issues:

- (1) Local government units (LGUs) are not aware of the existing national policies concerning environmental pollution and sanitation;
- (2) Community health workers, who are mostly volunteers, do not receive adequate logistics from the local government;
- (3) Involvement of community representatives in the monitoring of industries and development projects in their areas is lacking;
- (4) In some areas, industries and development projects are introduced without community consultation regarding their impacts on health and the environment;
- (5) There is inadequate training of local environment and health personnel on how to conduct monitoring activities and to properly implement environment-related regulations;
- (6) Government officials, local and national, are lax in enforcing rules and regulations on environmental protection; and
- (7) Monitoring of industries and development projects are conducted irregularly.

### 1.5.3 Recommendations

The participants cited certain activities to minimize the problems' further progression. The participants in high risk areas gave the following recommendations:

- (1) Involve the LGUs in monitoring of establishments and regulation of industries and forge a monitoring plan between LGUs and national government agencies based on existing policies and guidelines;
- (2) Conduct community consultation to determine the social and environmental acceptability of industries to be established;
- (3) Conduct training for local personnel in the monitoring and enforcement of regulations regarding environment and health programs;
- (4) Coordinate the programs and activities of the community and agencies concerned to combat the effects of pollution on the environment and health;
- (5) Enforce strict compliance by the industries and establishments on the regulations set by local and national government agencies;
- (6) For the LGUs, pass ordinances that would suit the needs of the community, however, if there is already an existing law, there should be strict enforcement;
- (7) Develop policies prioritizing health on the agenda of policy makers in all sectors; and
- (8) Strengthen community action through advocacy, information, and education campaigns.

Likewise, the participants in the low risk areas raised additional recommendations:

- (1) Emphasize the role of the LGUs according to the devolved structure;
- (2) Conduct training for farmers regarding proper use of fertilizers and pesticides; and
- (3) Foster vigilance on the community's part.



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Community people at Barangay Palapala with consultants of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada.

## 1.6 CONCLUSION

Success will largely depend on the strong and sincere commitment of the workshop participants, as well as their families, their communities, and their local leadership. In their endeavor to effect change, the participants pledged to:

- (1) be more environmentally conscious;
- (2) focus attention on public health issues related to air, water, food and soil pollution;
- (3) acknowledge people as the main resource for development—to support and enable them to keep themselves, their families, and friends healthy in the utmost capacity;
- (4) be vigilant in promoting good health and clean environment; and
- (5) respond swiftly and efficiently to the community's problems on the part of the local officials

Undertaking such initiatives is neither without risk nor hard work. Still, such potential—cooperation of the community, local officials, and industry and establishment owners to achieve advancements in health and the environment—will eventually yield fruitful results for today's and tomorrow's generations.





## CHAPTER 2

### Consultation with the Academe, the Non-Governmental Organizations and the Business Sector



## 2. CONSULTATION WITH THE ACADEME, THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE BUSINESS SECTOR

Composed of various groups from the academic community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the business sector, a consultation was held to put together the gamut of skills, motivations, and experiences to improve our country's environmental health situation and practices.

The primary and pivotal role of the academe is to facilitate formal training in environmental science courses; for the NGOs, it is to foster activism and advocacy among the citizenry; and, for the business sector, to promote environmental sensitivity and protection in their development projects.

### 2.1 OBJECTIVES

The consultation conference hopes to:

1. Present the Environmental Health Situation in the Philippines, the Risk Perception Survey (RPS) Results, and the State of the Art of Environmental Education in the Philippines;
2. Identify the roles of the academic community, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the business sector regarding environmental health; and
3. Formulate policy recommendations that are appropriate and responsive to Philippine health development and environmental needs.

### 2.2 PARTICIPANTS

The participants of the consultation conference were from different groups within the academic, NGO and business sphere. There were rep-



Before the presentations, Dr. Mario Villaverde, the EHS director, delivered a speech on environmental health.

representatives from the University of the Philippines (Diliman; Manila; Los Baños), De La Salle University (College of St. Benilde; Dasmariñas), Philippine Women's University, and Far Eastern University-Nicanor Reyes Memorial Foundation (FEU-NRMF).

Participants from NGOs and businesses – such as the Haribon Foundation, Lingkod Tao Kalikasan, Philippine Business for the Environment, Green Forum Philippines, SOLJUSPAX (an NGO concerned with the environment), Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, and the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution – were recognized.

Resource persons from the College of Public Health (UP Manila), the Environmental Health Service (DOH) and the Environmental Management Bureau (DENR) presented the Environmental Health Situation in the Philippines, RPS Results, and the State of the Art of Environmental Education in the Philippines.



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Prof. Elma Torres of the College of Public Health (UP Manila) presented her paper on the Environmental Health Situation in the Philippines.



As part of the consultation conference, Engr. Victorio Molina presented the results of the survey.

## 2.3 PLENARY RESULTS

Participants were delegated to address certain issues besetting local and national environmental health situations and also more general issues pertaining to emerging environmental health risks and management problems.



After the presentations, an open forum was held.

### 2.3.1 Issues

Several major issues were raised in the discussions:

#### (1) Environmental Education

Although integrated in the primary and secondary curricula, environmental education is allotted inadequate time. Oftentimes, it is lumped with the all-encompassing topic of health education with the discussion usually centering on sanitation and personal hygiene. In the secondary level, teachers are tasked to compress topics on the environment into a short 40-minute once-a-week lecture period. In addition to this, most of



the 34,000 elementary schools under the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS) find difficulty in conforming to the prescribed curricula.

## (2) Environmental Health Database System

The current environmental health database and information system in the country needs updating — it is either inadequate or inaccessible. Most of the data from studies, researches, and reports done are scattered among the different government agencies and private institutions. Poor communication and cooperation of these agencies and institutions sometimes hamper the sharing and utilization of these informations. However, in the case of the studies and researches done by the academic community, while the information is readily available, it is poorly or inadequately disseminated, limiting their utilization for policy development by the different government agencies and institutions.

## (3) Enforcement of Standards and Implementation of Programs on Health and the Environment

There is a need to augment the sanitation inspectors' knowledge and skills in terms of technical proficiency for them to adequately perform their designated functions (i.e. service provision and regulation and enforcement), since they are the ones who enforce the standards and regulations and implement programs on environmental health. There is also a need to review the staff requirements at the local level necessary to enforce environmental health standards and programs.

## (4) Intersectoral Linkage and Collaboration

There is a need to strengthen intersectoral and interagency linkages among concerned

groups to minimize, if not eliminate, the confusion of roles and responsibilities regarding environmental health activities and efforts.



A round table discussion was lively participated in.

Other specific issues discussed are the following:

### (1) Incinerators

The issue of constructing and operating incinerators were brought up, particularly the cost it would incur for private institutions, such as hospitals and medical schools.

### (2) Implementation of Government Policies

The discrepancy between what government agencies advocate and the policies and programs they implement was also pointed out. For example, they urge the agenda of sustainable development but pass ordinances on the importation of second-hand engines, or worse, lift the total log ban law.

### (3) Smoking Ban

The smoking ban in school campuses and public places is not strictly implemented.



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#### (4) Information and Education Campaign

Among business sectors, there is no adequate and comprehensive information (e.g. statistics based on studies and researches) and education campaign on the health effects of environmental degradation. Participants also observed that people, adults and children alike, are not properly informed or educated concerning healthy lifestyles and environment-friendly activities.

#### 2.3.2 Recommendations

The conference participants felt that the current efforts being done should be sustained since it will yield positive results in the near future. One of the NGO representatives even urged the others to look into systems that are working and to further improve them.

In line with this, the following recommendations were garnered:

(1) The Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS) should facilitate the integration of environmental education within the different subject curricula, such as science, social studies, and health at the primary and secondary levels. More and more universities and colleges are now offering tertiary and graduate courses and programs on environmental health. Proposals to give other short courses and training packages on general subjects, such as environmental awareness, to specific ones, like waste disposal management or wastewater treatment operations are numerous.

(2) To systematically gather environmental health data from the various government and non-governmental agencies and institutions, efforts should be fostered towards developing a network. There is a



The participants gave varied and helpful recommendations.

need to develop a comprehensive database and information system to channel important materials for easy access and utilization by all sectors.

(3) Adequate training and logistical support should be given to sanitation inspectors to improve their technical proficiency in the implementation of the Philippine Sanitation Code. To professionalize them, they should be required to acquire formal academic training and pass a licensure examination. A career path should also be established to provide motivation. Their salaries should also be upgraded corresponding to their responsibilities as both service providers and regulatory staff and enforcers of environmental health rules and regulations. There is a need to review the existing ratio of one sanitary inspector for every population of 20,000, considering the job entailed to implement the requirements in the Sanitation Code.

(4) The roles and responsibilities of the various concerned agencies and institutions should be clearly defined in order to avoid overlap-



ping of functions and to achieve fruitful results. Networking should be encouraged.

- (5) The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) should do more stringent monitoring and enforcement of regulations to abate pollution.
- (6) Review existing environmental policies and programs to conform to the objectives set in the government's commitment to support sustainable development.
- (7) In line with sustaining the knowledge on the health risks of smoking, policies should be formulated to safeguard the children's health against smoking. For instance, behavioral change should be instilled through positive examples. Another suggestion is the imposition of school fines for students who smoke or, at the national level, raise the tobacco industries' taxes so that those who intend to smoke will think twice before buying these "luxury" items.
- (8) Mutual understanding should be nurtured, through regular open discussions and dialogue, between the business sector and the regulating government agencies regarding policies on environment and health protection. Steps should be taken to properly educate and inform the public concerning the protection and care of its health and environment. Internalization of an individual's responsibility and contribution to the sur-

vival of a community and the continuity of future generations is also vital.

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

The deteriorating environment and the resultant ill health is everyone's concern. The need to be vigilant of the changing condition of our environment should be encouraged. Studies and relevant researches along the line of environmental and health protection should be religiously pursued by the government and the academic community. Moreover, environmental and health policies should be constantly reviewed and updated. Human resource development at the local government level specifically on environment and health monitoring, surveillance and regulation should be strengthened. Offering of academic courses on environmental health and inclusion of environmental education at the elementary and secondary levels should be pursued and institutionalized.

Finally, multisectoral discussions on these issues should continuously take place in order to develop relevant and appropriate policy alternatives for the future.

With a better informed public and effective network of environmental health stakeholders, we can look forward to a healthier environment for us and for our children and eventually, to a more productive populace that will thrust us into a competitive new millennium.



## CHAPTER 3

### Consultation with the Inter-Agency Committee on Environmental Health (IACEH)

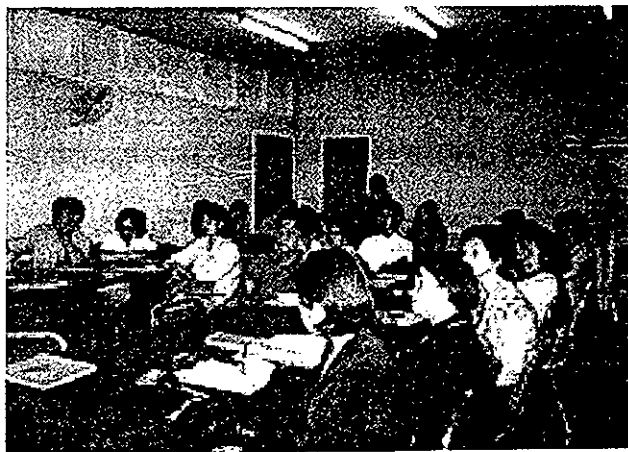


### 3. CONSULTATION WITH THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (IACEH)

Along with the policy thrust of the Philippine Government to safeguard and make the environment conducive to the improvement and maintenance of the people's health, Executive Order No. 489 was issued in 1991. This Order aims to institutionalize the Inter-Agency Committee on Environmental Health (IACEH) which is composed of 11 government line agencies. Its main concern is on health and environment issues.

The possible solutions from the growing health problems brought by environmental factors are secured through recommendations and formulations of pertinent policies made by the committee.

(DPWH), Interior and Local Government (DILG), Agriculture (DA), Trade and Industry (DTI), Transportation and Communication (DOTC), Science and Technology (DOST), Labor and Employment (DOLE), National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), and Philippine Information Agency (PIA).



Presentations marked the start of the IACEH consultation.

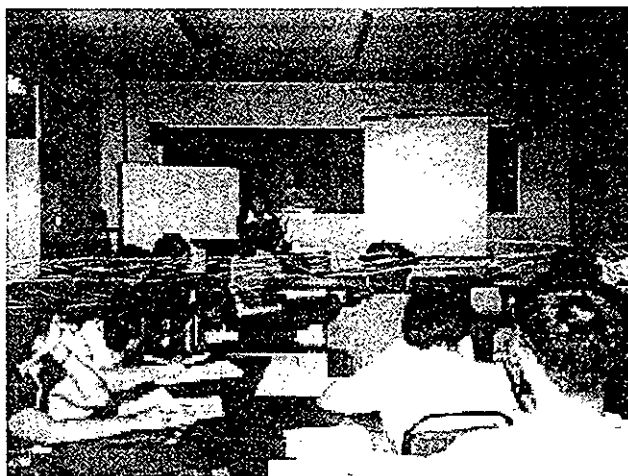
#### 3.1 OBJECTIVES

The IACEH consultation aims to:

1. Present the Environmental Health Situation in the Philippines, the Risk Perception Survey (RPS), and the Community Consultation results done by the Department of Health (DOH); and
2. Explore possible solutions and policy recommendations to the identified environmental health issues and concerns.

#### 3.2 PARTICIPANTS

The members of the IACEH are the following: the Departments of Health (Chair of the Committee), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) (Vice-Chair), Public Works and Highways



The results from the consultations done in the study communities were discussed.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE  
*Department of Health*



### 3.3 PLENARY RESULTS

Following the opening session, the participants were formed into working groups to explore ideas, solutions and recommendations to the issues that were identified.

#### 3.3.1 Issues

- (1) There is a dearth of education, training, and public information trickling to the communities. Most people have little knowledge of environment-friendly activities, such as recycling and the like. With less information dissemination, people will have less enthusiasm to participate and cooperate in these activities.
- (2) Some provisions found in environmental laws and policies are outmoded because of the rapid changes happening with regards to environmental issues and protection and the rapid advancement of technology.
- (3) The communities and the local officials clamor for stricter implementation of laws. A strong sense of urgency was expressed: violations and other related problems are increasing, and if not abated, more people will be affected.
- (4) Cooperation and support among national government agencies, local government units (LGUs) and the communities are minimal when it comes to multi-sector monitoring and the review of possible effects of proposed development projects. Many problems that arise are seldom reported to the concerned agencies or, if reported, are not usually given quick action.
- (5) Many private industries and government-

managed establishments have inadequate anti-pollution devices installed, like dust collectors or wastewater treatment facilities.

- (6) There is insufficient support to LGUs to acquire sanitation and health equipment, including environmental monitoring devices.



After identifying the issues, the participants brainstormed and offered recommendations.

#### 3.3.2 Recommendations

- (1) Conduct relevant education, training, and public information programs that reach the grassroots level.

For instance, a massive promotion on integrated waste management or concepts on waste segregation, recycling, reuse, and composting is likely one of the solutions to the solid waste dilemma. Likewise, training should be done, particularly on sanitation management strategies and skills (e.g. food sanitation), as well as training on health and environment compliance monitoring.

- (2) Review and modify some of the major health, environment, and economic policies

## SUMMARY

The environmental factors that threaten the health of the community are persistent and complex. Thus, the situation necessitates for a broader consultation agenda among communities, the academe, government agencies, the business sector, the media and other concerned nongovernmental organizations.

In the study communities, problems stem from the confusion brought about by the decentralization of national plans and programs. There is no strict enforcement of ordinances and policies concerning the environment, health, and sanitation at the local level. Local government personnel have either inadequate technical skills or insufficient knowledge of the existing policies, or inadequate logistics support to implement programs. In addition, community members are to be informed and educated regarding environmental health issues for them to be more concerned and responsible in sustaining their health and protecting their environment.

To strengthen environmental health policy advocacy, the academe is more than willing to share

their knowledge and skills to the other concerned sectors. They also support the integration of environmental education into the primary, secondary, and tertiary school curricula. For the nongovernmental organizations, they recognize the importance of forming networks with government agencies and private businesses. They see the need to build support structures that will provide mechanisms to foster strategies in advancing the environmental health agenda. The business sector, in turn, would cooperate and coordinate with the NGOs and government agencies in their environmental programs. For instance, they would practice environment-friendly measures (e.g., avoid using toxic materials, conserve energy and resources, and the like). However, they want to be sufficiently informed with facts and figures based on recent environmental studies and researches.

The consultation process yielded a reaffirmation of the IACEH member agencies' responsibilities and duties, particularly in the areas of policy formulation, public information, advocacy, monitoring and research.

