

Keyword: climate-change

Headline: Popcom receives German technology to help LGUs address climate-induced migration

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Published Date: 06:48 PM May 03, 2023

Section: newsinfo

Word Count: 613

Content:

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Population and Development (Popcom) said on Wednesday that it had received digital knowledge portals from Germany, which would help local government units (LGUs) nationwide analyze climate change-influenced migrations.

In a statement, Popcom said the vital tools from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the German Agency for International Development (GIZ) would support LGUs “in effective planning and policy-making in their respective areas” and “analyze internal and external movements” of locals in connection with climate change.

On April 19, GIZ gave Popcom the online resources on Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change (HMCCC), which include the Digitalized Registry of Barangay Inhabitants and Migrants (D-RBIM) and the Popcom Knowledge Portal.

The former is “a demographic database of residents and migrants of implementing LGUs for analysis, which will be vital for development planning and programming,” while the latter is “an open-access platform to the agency’s knowledge products on population and development, including HMCCC research studies.”

“Migration is one of the more difficult population statistics to discern, apart from births and deaths, which are available through registries,” Popcom said.

To address this, GIZ Phils. Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Cluster Coordinator Dr. Bjoern Surborg explained that the HMCCC resources “will clarify the drivers and decision-making processes of individuals and families and households for migrating.”

Based on the manual of operations for establishing the Registry of Barangay Inhabitants and Migrants (RBIM) and World Bank 2017, the urban population in the country reached over 50 million in the last 50 years and is predicted to rise to 102 million in 2050.

Citing data from the Philippine Statistics Authority, Popcom said the leading destination for locals are the Calabarzon region at 27.7 percent, followed by Metro Manila at 19.7 percent, and Central Luzon at 13 percent.

“The last National Migration Survey (NMS) in 2018 also described Filipinos as “highly mobile,” with 40 percent being lifetime migrants and 57 percent having crossed regional boundaries. Some 55 percent of Filipinos ever migrated for three months or more, and in the last five years since then, 15 percent had migrated,” Popcom said.

“Regarding interregional migration in the past five years, National Capital Region and Calabarzon remained the most common destination regions but, at the same time, also registered the largest number of out-migrants in the same period. Both retained the status for migration within regions in the five years before the survey,” it added.

It also noted that “for major receiving and sending areas, changes in their population due to migration will mean ever-changing service requirements; for economically driven migration, there will be implications to a receiving LGU’s capacity to generate jobs and balance this to the needs of the locals and the migrants.”

The agency also noted that one of the main reasons for this migration is the weather, disclosing that “there were lower out-migration rates to municipalities with higher levels of rainfall and that there were higher migration rates to municipalities with a higher number of consecutive dry days,” as discussed during the 2020 sub-committee on internal migration meeting and validation workshop.

It added that environmental factors, which affect economic and social factors, affect locals’ decision to migrate and climate-sensitive infectious diseases caused by floods and storm surges.

Popcom also discovered that climate events affect food security, nutritional status, and agricultural investments.

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“The HMCCC databases will undergo further improvement for different population processes, including human mobility, which is the most difficult population metric to ascertain,” Popcom Deputy Executive Director Lolito Tacardon said.