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GMA administration failed to meet most MTPDP targets

While the Administration of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo can point to some accomplishments, most of the targets it laid for itself in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for 2004-2010 have been missed. Significant key targets were attained only in the macro-economic program, particularly the moderate economic growth averaging around 5 percent per year since 2001, and in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) development – only 2 of the 17 assessment themes of a recent Assessment of the MTPDP conducted by 27 civil society organizations (CSOs). GMA left office with many more of the MTPDP targets remaining unfulfilled promises. Read More

Integrating the MDGs in the new MTPDP 2011-2016

The UN Civil Society Advisory Committee (UN CSAC), led by CODE-NGO and the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC), recently organized the “Tri-Sectoral Conference on the MTPDP 2010-2016: Reviewing Development Strategy, Integrating and Financing the MDGs.” Supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) under its Human Development Platform Project or Platform HD 2010, the conference was held last August 4, 2010 at the SEAMEO Innotech in Quezon City, where civil society organizations (CSOs) presented to government and donor agencies their recommendations on integrating the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the new administration's Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP).

Government representatives led by Budget and Management Secretary Butch Abad and officials of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) responded to specific recommendations of CSOs concerning their respective agencies. UN Resident Coordinator Jacqui Badcock, AusAid Minister Counsellor Titon Mitra and Ms. Camila Hagstrom of the EU pledged their continuing support to civil society work on MDGs. The results of the conference will be incorporated into the crafting by UNCSAC and other CSOs of an Alternate Roadmap to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs. This will be launched on September 13, 2010 during the MDG Week at the Philippine Congress. Read More
Lack of transparency on Pork Barrel funds related to Congress’ failure to ratify the Freedom of Information Bill

The failure of Philippine Congress to ratify the bicameral conference committee bill on Freedom of Information (FOI) last June 4, 2010, is consistent with their failure to provide the public information about how they use their pork barrel funds. As part of its pork barrel watch project (PDAF Watch), CODE-NGO wrote letters to 269 congresspersons and 24 senators to request information on how they used their Priority Development Assistance Funds (PDAF) and congressional allocations from 2007 to 2009. More than 6 months after and despite follow-up calls, only 7 congresspersons and 2 senators have replied. 

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Politics of change after the May 2010 Philippine elections

Even after the elections, CODE-NGO continues its engagement to reform Philippine politics. It conducted a series of regional post-election workshops last June 2010 in 9 key cities around the country to evaluate and reflect on non-partisan and partisan electoral engagement of civil society groups in the recently-concluded Philippine national elections. A national conference was also held last June 26-27, 2010 in Quezon City. Aside from the sharing of the results of the regional workshops, Liberal Party Campaign Manager Butch Abad also spoke on the prospects and challenges for reform under the Administration of President Noynoy Aquino while Teilibert Laoc of the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) and Bro. Raymond Sanchez, SJ of the Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan and Task Force 2010 also shared their experience and lessons in the 2010 elections and their post-election plans.

Meanwhile, the Change Politics Movement also held an expanded national council meeting last June 27, 2010 where the movement renewed its commitment to continue to support reform candidates in the upcoming October 2010 barangay elections and in the 2013 midterm elections, as well as to exact accountability from the newly-elected officials in government. On one hand, member individuals and organizations of the movement will continue their respective advocacies through their organizations. On the other hand, CPM will focus on several cross-cutting advocacy issues such as: Freedom on Information and formation of local multi-sectoral social accountability networks, revamp of the National Anti-Poverty Commission and people’s participation in local governance.

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Building youth leadership for Constitutional reform advocacy

The youth sector, which is the largest sector in Philippine society today, is the least represented in the Constitutional reform advocacy of the Coalition for a Citizens’ Constitution (C4CC). For this reason, C4CC has paid special attention to providing opportunities for the youth to better participate in the advocacy for reforms in our Charter. It has initiated various activities to raise their awareness about social issues, develop personal interest in social development work, strengthen their leadership capabilities and build partnership with fellow young Filipinos. It recently held the C4CC Youth Team Building and Planning Workshop in Antipolo City to build their leadership skills, make them aware of their roles for social change and introduce them to C4CC’s advocacy for federalism. It is hoped that these kinds of activities contribute to bringing up the future reform leaders of the country.

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Dinky Soliman no longer connected to CODE-NGO during the PEACe Bonds process

In light of recent and repeated statements by various quarters linking Social Welfare and Development Secretary Corazon “Dinky” Juliano-Soliman to CODE-NGO’s PEACe (Poverty Eradication and Alleviation Certificates) Bonds initiative in 2001, CODE-NGO reiterated that
Secretary Soliman was no longer connected to CODE-NGO in March – October 2001, the period of the process for the PEACe Bonds. Ms. Soliman did not participate in this process either as a leader of CODE-NGO or as a government official.

The PEACe Bonds successfully raised an endowment fund of 1.4 Billion Pesos. This fund is being used up to now by the Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF) for poverty reduction projects of non-government organizations (NGOs) and people’s organizations (POs). From the income of the fund, PEF has been able to provide around 1 Billion Pesos since 2001 to support various anti-poverty projects while preserving its endowment fund.

Ms. Dinky Soliman, who had worked with development NGOs since the 1970s, was elected Chairperson of CODE-NGO on March 1, 1998. She served in that capacity up to January 2001 when she resigned to take up the post of DSWD Secretary.

For more information on PEF, visit www.pef.ph. Click here to know more about the PEACe Bonds.

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