

**PRESENTATION OF QUEZON CITY MAYOR FELICIANO BELMONTE, JR.
IN THE BIG CITIES LOCAL CHIEF EXECUTIVES FORUM**

Specifically, for the Roundtable Discussion with the Big Cities Mayors

Topic: "Facing the Challenges of Urbanization : The Issue of In-migration"

From 3 – 5 pm, June 4, 2008, Asian Institute of Management

1. HISTORY OF MIGRANTS

Quezon City is a city of migrants. When it became a chartered city in 1939, the city, with a population of only 41,592, consisted then of vast open spaces and rolling hills. Quezon's City growth and boom however took off during the post-war period starting with the establishment of low-cost government housing projects which attracted thousands of young families.

2. POPULATION

- Now, Quezon City is the third most-populated local government in the country today, after Cavite and Bulacan, and has the biggest population among all Philippine cities. We have 2.68 million people, having grown by over 505,000 people over the past 7 years. Our population growth rate alone equals or surpasses the entire population of several Metro Manila cities. Just one of our 142 barangays, Commonwealth, with a population of 172,834 is bigger than two Metro Manila LGUs.
- Of our population increase of 505,619 people, we have determined that 55% or 280,256 were the result of immigration.
- These figures are intended to give you a perspective of the immensity of our problem.

3. LOCATION CONDUCIVE TO MIGRATION

Our city is located right at the center of Metro Manila, easily accessible by transients and migrants from our surrounding cities and nearby provinces.

4. POLICY TO MONITOR MIGRANTS

To keep track of our in-migrants, we have passed an ordinance establishing a population information and monitoring center in all of our barangays. Its objective is to identify the inhabitants, monitor increases and decreases in population, including the ingress and egress of transients and in-migrants.

5. STRATEGIES : POVERTY ALLEVIATION

- Our basic strategy is to try to assimilate the in-migrants, integrate them into a progressive city life, and help them become productive, contributing citizens.
- We have organized our response to in-migrants by viewing them as integral components of our population. As with QC born, in-migrants are the beneficiaries of our development thrusts, which we call the ABC of Development, enunciated as:
 - Alleviation of poverty
 - Building up the city
 - Competing on efficiencies
- Of Quezon City's P8.6 billion budget this year, P1.45 billion goes directly to poverty alleviation services and P2.55 billion goes to building up the city or infrastructure services that create better facilities for the poor.

Organizers:

1. Hague Process on Refugees and Migration
2. Initiative for Dialogue and Empowerment
3. Asian Institute of Management Policy Center
4. League of Cities

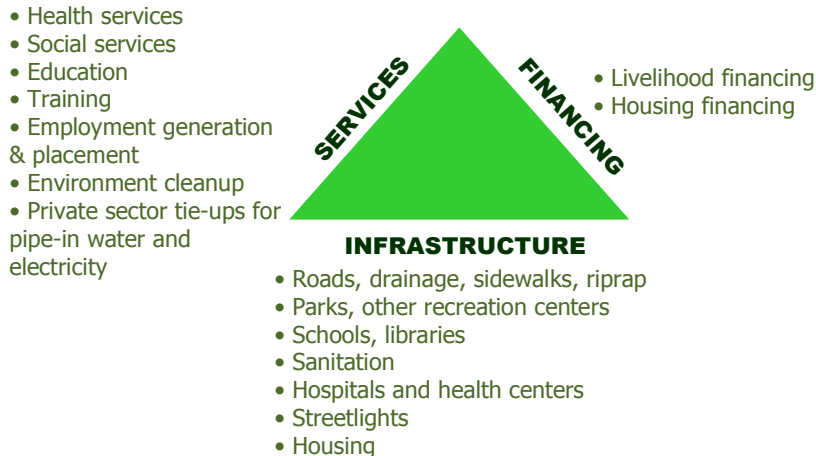
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- Let me show you the dimensions of assistance for poverty alleviation in Quezon City.

ALLEVIATING POVERTY IN QC

Our dimensions of assistance



- The Chairman of the National Anti-Poverty Commission has been impressed with our wholistic and comprehensive approach which shows Quezon City's multi-dimensional responses to poverty alleviation, which respond to the problems of:
 - Hunger
 - Low incomes
 - Poor health
 - Lack of education
 - Poor social development
 - Lack of shelter
 - No upward mobility
- Let me cite you some of these:
 - **RECOGNITION OF RIGHT TO EXIST**
 - Free birth registration for unregistered children as of 2007.
 - **HUNGER**
 - Feeding program in all City daycare centers
Beneficiaries annually : 20,000 pre-school children
 - Feeding program for the severely malnourished in public elementary schools
Beneficiaries annually : 5,000 severely malnourished school children
 - Vegetable gardening in schools and barangays
 - Barangay-based nutrition programs

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- Food-for-work Community-based programs
Beneficiaries : 18-59 year old volunteers for community projects

- ILLNESS / HIGH MORTALITY
 - 59 Health centers (adequately stocked and staffed) spread over the City; 6 are Super Health Centers (which function like mini-hospitals, open for 24 hours)
Beneficiaries : All poor constituencies
 - Comprehensive medical & dental program for infants and children (free immunization, free Vitamin A supplements, complete fluoride treatment & free toothbrushes for kids in daycare)
Beneficiaries : Infants to 5-year olds
 - PhilHealth Coverage of low-income earners
 - Reproductive health program, with family planning services extended in all health centers (Annual budget is P12M – highest among all LGUs), prevention of sexually transmitted diseases
 - Maternal health programs
 - Special disease control program for tuberculosis
 - Improvement and expansion of hospital services
 - Transformation of QCGH into a 250-bed medical facility (located in District 1)
 - Rehabilitation and expansion of Novaliches District Hospital
 - Construction of a new hospital in District 2
 - Environmental management approaches for cleaner surroundings and disease-control
 - Regular garbage collection door-to-door (even thru narrow alleys)
 - Regular waterways collection drive
 - Anti-dengue drives to remove breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes)
 - Mass recycling of old tires thru MOA with Holcim Cement (to lessen breeding areas for pests)

- HOMELESSNESS / POOR SHELTER CONDITIONS
 - Community Mortgage Programs
Beneficiaries : 3,255 families
 - Direct Sale Programs
Beneficiaries : 2,458 families
 - HURA Medium-rise Housing Development
Beneficiaries : 480 families (informal settlers & low-income govt. employees)
 - Partnership with Gawad Kalinga : 70 projects
 - Resettlement/ relocation Assistance
Beneficiaries : 4,423 families
 - Infrastructure Support (roads, drainage & sewer systems, sidewalks and alleys, riprap)
 - Assistance in electrical and water connection
Beneficiaries : 29,410 families
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- Development of more public parks (rehabilitated & built 49 since 2001, with 26 more scheduled for completion this year)
- Development of two new Sports Centers (at Theresa Heights and at Belarmino Elementary School)

■ **ILLITERACY / LACK OF EDUCATION**

- Free daycare
Beneficiaries : About 20,000 children annually; mothers also become conduits for other assistance from City government
- Public school education program, from pre-school to high school, with special program components (one textbook per student program, ICT programs, leadership programs, Madrasah education, new IT Centrex Building)
Beneficiaries : 338,000 children yearly
- Teacher training program – competency-enhancement and continuous education program
Beneficiaries : all QC public school teachers
- Continuous construction of new schools, more than 1,042 additional classrooms have been built since 2001; 429 more are under construction, with another 156 classrooms to be funded this year. Result: comfortable student-classroom ratios of 32:1 in Districts 1, 3 & 4
- Free college education thru City scholarships
Beneficiaries : 12,384 in SY 2007-2008
- One-year and degree courses in QCPU, 1-year & degree programs in Entrepreneurship, ICT and Industrial Engineering
Beneficiaries : 3,321 students in SY 2007-2008
- Kasambahay Program : Balik-aral program for househelp
Beneficiaries : 3,800 househelp have been registered
- Senior citizens mentoring / tutoring program

■ **LACK OF INCOME/ UPWARD MOBILITY**

- Training, for skills building and entrepreneurship
- Job placement, job training
- Self-employment assistance (capital and technical training)
- Livelihood financing (thru NGO conduits and NG-funded programs)
- Direct employment

Channels of assistance :

Social Services Department

* Provides skills training, job placement& referrals, self-employment capital and technical training

Beneficiaries : 103,806 in 2007

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Sikap Buhay & Cooperatives Development Center

* Provides collateral-free credit, with 7 micro-finance institution as partners; P358 M in loans released; provides links to government and private training institutions
Beneficiaries: 42,042 borrowers as of 2007

Negotech

* Provides computer-related and vocational training courses
Beneficiaries : 5,047 as of 2007

IRO-PESO

* Job placement thru job fairs
* Direct employment for community projects, government internship
* Self-employment and livelihood bazaars
* Skills-registry programs
Beneficiaries : 25,178 in 2006

Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department

* "Kalat Mo, Kabuhayan Ko" program
* Organization of scavengers at Payatas for cooperative livelihood arrangements
* Organization of junkshops

BPO- ICTES TaskForce

* Training of public high school graduates to meet employment requirements of BPOs
* Transformation of unused classrooms into BPO training centers

5. a) Barangay Perspective

Let me present the magnitude of our assistance from the perspective of two of our poorest barangays, with a strong in-migrant population.

- Payatas. Thirty years ago, Payatas had been a ravine surrounded by rice paddies and farming villages. As Manila rebuilt in the postwar decades, a great migration from the countryside to Quezon City ballooned the population to 117,000 today.
- From this barangay, the City draws an average annual income of about P 1.5 million, or about P9.49 million from 2002 up to the first quarter of this year. But we have spent more than 52 times its income, or more than P495 million just on infrastructure investments in this barangay alone. Our infra spending alone comes up to a per capita budget of P4,230 per person in Payatas.
- Commonwealth. Another barangay is Commonwealth. It generated a total income of P17.24 million from 2002 to the first quarter of 2008. Yet we have spent P405 million or 23 times its income, in infrastructure investments alone. Its population has grown by 52,000 people over the past 7 years alone, to reach its 2007 level of 172,834 people. Our per capital infrastructure investments in this barangay has reached P2,343 per person.

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6. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

- Our aim is to help these poor communities catch up with their more progressive neighbors. Our key is to strengthen the entire spectrum of services that provide for a better quality of life, whether they are migrants or in-born residents.
- This school year, we are facing a public school enrolment figure of 409,254, which is the biggest in the country. We accept the reality that not all of them may be from Quezon City. In fact, just recently, when we assessed the training opportunities for 300 of our high school graduates, we found out that some of them were from San Juan, Manila, Caloocan and Marikina.
- That does not stop us from trying to accommodate all those who enroll in our schools. From 2001 to 2007, we have funded the construction of 1,471 more classrooms, and are funding 156 more this year. We are also providing a 1:1 student to textbook ratio in all our core subjects, for both elementary and high school. All our teachers are going through a city-funded training program developed by Ateneo University and the University of the Philippines. This training is mandatory, because we noticed that children from the poorest communities are performing the most poorly in national achievement tests, and the studies have traced the reason to quality of education.
- At the college level, that is when we focus our support on our residents. Those who pass qualifying requirements and can prove their Quezon City residency qualify for our scholarship program. Nonresidents must pay 100% tuition.
- I remember a World Bank official asking me, how do you view your informal settler problem? I said, it is more of a problem of making each person in Quezon City a productive, useful citizen. Thus, whether migrant or in-City born, the challenge for city governance is to maximize the development of all its human resources, give them the means and opportunities to improve themselves and their quality of life, and transform all of them into the human capital that can power greater growth!

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