

HEALTH and NUTRITION

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Women, who constitute half of the country's population, must be physically and mentally healthy to contribute productively to national development.

As bearers and rearers of children, women are caught in a cycle of pregnancy, childbirth and lactation that is marked by malnutrition, infection, fatigue and emotional stress due to multiple-burdened work. They suffer from the many conditions of health needs and problems related to reproduction. Among their concerns are:

- Inability of the health and delivery system to meet women's health and reproductive needs;
- Need to further improve the health and nutritional status of women and children; and
- Need to encourage participation of women in the delivery of health and nutrition services.

Some of the more recent policies, institutional and program developments on health and nutrition include the following:

- The Department of Health's (DOH) issuance of policies significant to gender and development such as: "**Periphery as a Bias**" and "**Population Management**". The first policy states that people in the periphery, specifically the poor, children, women, indigenous people, aged and disabled, shall be the priority of the DOH. They shall be guaranteed health information, education and services to make them responsible for their health and the health of their communities. The second policy states that in a humane and gender-sensitive way, the DOH will provide everyone equal access to information, services and guidance in planning their families, whether through natural or artificial methods, as a means of improving their health and well-being. The underlying priorities are enhancing women's health, ensuring safe motherhood and promoting child survival through birth spacing.

- The **Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project (WHSMP)** which began implementation in mid-1995. It aims to improve the health of women in support of the government's current drive to reduce female morbidity and mortality. Aside from providing basic health services, the program will support cooperative efforts to empower women in the communities to improve their health conditions.
- The DOH issuance of more than 100 medical cards to comfort women in 1994 through the NGO Task Force on Filipino Comfort Women. To make the Comfort Women Program more effective, standard procedures and guidelines were formulated to implement and monitor the program.
- The **Maternal and Under-Five Care Program** which aims, among others, to reduce morbidity among mothers during and after pregnancy. One of its main activities is the expansion of its **Female Functional Literacy Project** to seven (7) provinces.
- Recognizing mothers and children as the most vulnerable groups among the urban poor, the Urban Health and Nutrition Project has targeted comprehensive maternal and child health services to ensure survival and development of children and to protect mothers from a host of ailments that threaten maternal health.
- The **Guidelines on HIV/AIDS IEC Activities** (print, broadcast and interpersonal communication) formulated by the Philippine National AIDS Council which recommend that IEC activities be gender-sensitive. IEC activities should not portray women as inferior to men, e.g. women shown as sex objects of men.

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Table 5.1
DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED LIVEBIRTHS BY SEX,
PROVINCE/CITY, REGION IX: 2003

Province/City	Women		Men	
	Number	%	Number	%
ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA	24,227	48.3	25,978	51.7
ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE	6,681	27.6	7,360	28.3
Dapitan City	785	2.4	841	3.2
Dipolog City	1,020	4.2	1,142	4.4
Other Zambo. del Norte	4,876	20.1	5,377	20.7
ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR	13,878	57.3	14,750	56.8
Pagadian City	1,557	6.4	1,738	6.7
Zamboanga City	6,838	28.2	7,146	27.5
Other Zambo. del Sur	5,483	22.6	5,866	22.6
ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY	3,668	15.1	3,868	14.9
Total	32,632	48.3	34,877	51.7

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

The National Statistics Office (NSO) reported that more males than females were born in Region IX in 2003. A total of 25,978 males and 24,227 females were registered during the year. This indicates that there were 51.7% males and 48.3 % females for every 100 livebirths. The highest percentage of women (57.3%) and man (56.8%) were registered in Zamboanga del Sur while the least percentage of women was 11.2% and 14.9% for men where registered in Zamboanga Sibugay..

Table 5.2
DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED DEATHS BY SEX,
PROVINCE/CITY, REGION IX: 2003

Province/City	Women		Men	
	Number	%	Number	%
ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA	3,843	37.7	6,348	62.3
ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE	1,209	31.5	1,809	28.5
Dapitan City	160	13.2	240	13.3
Dipolog City	355	29.4	481	26.6
Other Zambo. Norte	694	57.4	1,088	60.1
ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR	2,217	57.7	3,733	58.8
Pagadian City	256	11.5	474	12.7
Zamboanga City	1,300	58.6	2,132	57.1
Other Zambo. del Sur	661	29.8	1,127	30.2
ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY	417	10.9	806	12.7

Source: National Statistics Office

There were 6,348 men and 3,843 women who died in 2003 in Region IX. Most of these deaths for both women and men were registered in Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga City. However, the least number of deaths was registered in Dapitan City.

Table 5.3
PROJECTED LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH BY SEX,
REGION IX: 1995-2020 (In years)

Period	Women	Men
1995-2000	68.57	62.70
2000-2005	70.57	64.70
2005-2010	72.07	66.70
2010-2015	73.57	68.20
2015-2020	74.77	67.40

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

Life expectancy of women and men is increasing from 2000 to 2015 and it continues to increase up to 2020 among women but it decreases among men. Women are expected to live longer than men by an average of six (6) years during the period 2000-2005, five (5) years from 2005 to 2015, and seven (7) years from 2015 to 2020. The 1995 Census-Based National, Regional and Provincial Population Projections show that the projected life expectancy for women in Region IX is 71 years while that of the men is estimated at 65 years for the 2000-2005 period.