

G. Cebu City, PHILIPPINES

1. Summary of Conditions.

Cebu City is the Philippines' largest city outside of Metropolitan Manila, and its second largest sea port. It is also the oldest city of the Philippines. It lies near the site (Mactan) of Magellan's 1521 landing, and his fatal encounter with a local chief, Lapu Lapu. When the Spanish returned after the Magellan voyage completed the world's first circumnavigation, Legaspi founded the city in 1565, naming it Ciudad del Santissimo Nombre de Jesus, or City of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. At that time, Cebu formed a major point of contact and conflict between two intruding cultures: Spanish overseas imperial culture, and the expanding world of Islam. Muslim traders had brought Islam to Southeast Asia two centuries earlier, and it spread throughout the islands, from Malacca and Indonesia, arriving in the Southern Philippines shortly before the Spaniards. Its northward spread was halted by the Spanish, who built forts against "The Moros" along the island of Cebu, with Cebu City as the military and administrative center. Today a relic of the cross planted by Magellan lies in Cebu City, and the city celebrates an annual Santa Nino festival in part recalling the early coming of the Spaniards.

Cebu city soon lost its major position in the Spanish Philippines, however, with the founding of Manila, which became a thriving port in the Galleon trade from China to Mexico. Mexican gold and silver enabled the Spaniards to purchase luxury goods from China. Rather than risk the hostile Asian seas where Portuguese, Dutch and English armed merchants were expanding, the Spanish traders shipped their goods to Manila and thence across the Pacific to Acapulco. From there goods were carted by mules across the isthmus, for the somewhat safer Atlantic voyage to Spain. Manila, Acapulco, Mexico City, Vera Cruz and Havana were all cities that grew and gained some of their wealth and cosmopolitan character in this famous Galleon trade. Manila became a center of trade and Spanish culture. Cebu city would languish as a very minor port until the late 19th century, when the spread of the western capitalist system brought it more fully into the world trade network

Population Dynamics. The first official census of Cebu City in 1903 showed a population of almost 46,000. With 610,000 today, this implies an average annual growth rate of about 3 percent. This has fluctuated somewhat, with a high rate of over 4 percent in the two decades before the Second World War and the Japanese occupation. During the war the city lost population, and from 1939 to 1948, the average annual growth rate was only about 1 percent. From 1948 through 1980, the growth rate remained above 3 percent, but fell to just over 2 percent in the 1980s. The city today extends over 329 square kilometers, giving an overall density of over 1,800 persons per square kilometer. Of the city's 80 barangays (or wards), the 31 that extend into the mountains around the city are classed as rural.

Unlike many growing urban areas, Cebu City is growing far more from natural increase than from migration. The 1990 census showed that only as much as 93 percent of the population lived in the city five years ago. Of the roughly 37,000 counted as migrants, just over a third were short distance migrants coming from other municipalities in the same province. More than half (59 percent) came from other provinces. Just a handful came from

foreign countries and the rest (10 percent) are of unknown origin. Also unlike many cities fueled by rapid in-migration, there is no difference between males and females in the migrant stream.

The crude death rate has been below 10 for some time, and declined slowly from 7 to 5 over the past decade. The crude birth rate is also declining slowly, from 28 to 22. Thus the rate of natural increase has declined slowly from just over 2 percent in 1980 to about 1.7 percent in 1990. The Philippines national family planning program has gone through a series of ups and downs since it was first established in 1970. It is being revived under the current government, but there is still strong opposition from the religious hierarchy, and the contraceptive use rate remains apparently less than 10 percent of eligible couples.

Quality of Life. There is not much direct information provided on the quality of life, but there is no reason to believe that in Cebu City it is much different from the rest of the Philippines. We have seen the same progress in the decline of infant, maternal and general mortality in the Philippines that we have seen in much of Asia. The Philippines has been ahead of most of South and Southeast Asia for decades in educational attainment, making its human resource one of its most important exports. There is virtually universal primary school education and a large proportion of both boys and girls go on to secondary school and to the university.

Status of Women. Women in the Philippines generally, and in Cebu City as well, enjoy general health and educational equality. Women are as literate as men and have roughly the same educational enrollment proportions as men at all levels of education. Life expectancy of women in the Philippines as a whole is greater than that of men, and the gap is similar to that of most high income countries. There are no independent data given for Cebu City, but there is good reason to believe that the situation is not different from the rest of the Philippines. Women's participation rate in the labor force is less than that for men, but the gap is not large. In Cebu City about 43 percent of the employed population are women. This probably understates women's work, since many women work in the informal sector of street vendors and sales that often are missed in labor force statistical collection. In local government women make up almost 45 percent of the force. They are, however, highly concentrated in medical and health services, and in clerical positions in the treasurer's, accountant's and Mayor's offices. In the power structure, women are represented, but not equally. Only one of the City Council members is a women, but five of the 29 department heads (17 percent) are women. Women have long played important roles in professional, administrative, and even political life, where they have held high positions in the bureaucracy and political office, and recently were represented in the presidency. Thus women in Cebu are somewhat better represented in the higher status and power positions than their sisters in the rest of Asia, but they by no means share these positions equally with men.

2. Urban Problems and Projects

Like most rapidly growing cities in low income countries, Cebu City has almost every known type of urban problem. The most pressing, however, appear to be housing for the slum and squatter population, water supply, and transportation or traffic management. Energy does not seem to be a problem, as there is sufficient electricity to meet the current demand.

Slums, Squatters and Housing. There appear to be somewhere in the neighborhood of 100,000 to 125,000 households in Cebu City.³ This implies an average household size of just under six persons. The reported number of squatter families is 36,000, with an additional 24,800 renters who might become squatters if they are evicted. There are also areas identified as slum areas, but it is not certain the extent to which these overlap with the squatter count. In any event, it would appear that the city is greatly deficient in housing, with as many as a third to a half of the households inadequately housed. Against this, another “conservative” estimate from the city cites the need for 25,000 dwelling units. The housing problem appears acute.

The city has undertaken a slum upgrading program that provided 930 units, and together with the national government has constructed another 1,000 low cost units. Some attempt has been made to organize a housing program together with the national government, but the data indicate that only a small fraction of the need is being met in this manner.

On a more general level, the city has created a master plan with growth centers located outside of the major city center, in an attempt to lure commercial and residential activities out of the center. There is no indication as yet of what impact this is having.

Transportation is a problem, as in most cities, from the rapid increase of motor vehicles. From 1989 to 1991 registered motor vehicles grew from 33,000 to 53,000, for a 17 percent per year increase. Air and noise pollution and traffic congestion combine to make transportation a serious problem. On the brighter side, however, the city recently installed an advanced Australian traffic light system, called SCATS, for Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System. This uses a complex computerized network to sense traffic flows and to act just lights to the flows. It appears to have eased the congestion considerably. Road building goes on, but at a pace considerably slower than the growth of vehicles.

Utilities: Water, Garbage, Drainage. These basic utilities appear to be greatly strained. Only 35 percent of the households have separate indoor water taps; another 32 percent share taps with others, and 12 percent obtain water from wells. This still leaves a sizable population, perhaps 20 percent, with no regular access to water. This is a problem in the slum areas, where the city trucks in 40-60,000 gallons of water into the slum areas. Solid waste generation increases at a rapid pace, growing from 184,000 to 343,000 cubic meters from 1989 to 1993. This is now trucked to an open dump eight kilometers from the city, where more than 100 squatter families make a living scavenging. There are plans to build a sanitary landfill, but this is still in the future. Drainage also constitutes a problem, especially for the low lying coastal parts of the city. The city has created a City Drain Commission to consolidate planning and activity, but much remains to be done to address the problem adequately. Electricity supply is not a problem for the city.

3. The married population 10 years and older includes 105,000 males and 107,000 females, for a total of 212,000; I estimate from this about 215,000 households. (GDN)