

Evaluating poverty and promoting development through health dynamics of indigenous people in Southern Luzon, the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the critical aspect of health dynamics in the context of poverty and development of indigenous people (Agta Isarog & Agta Tabangnon) in Mt. Isarog, Southern Luzon, Philippines. The datasets were gathered from the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) of Goa municipality, complemented by IP Censuses of 2018-2019. To begin, the core poverty indicators were analyzed in aggregated and disaggregated approaches. The poverty of each locality differs yet a large portion of the entire households and population of indigenous people are living below the poverty and food thresholds. In addition, the poverty incidence, gap, and severity using headcount ratios, gap metrics, squared gap statistics, and Watts indices were evaluated. It has been revealed that the poverty of indigenous people is moderate to intense and manageable through intervention programs and policy initiatives. It then subsequently characterized the variables of health dynamics which vary per locality, and have been impacting poverty across all barangays. To confirm whether health dynamics predict poverty occurrences, logistic regression models were estimated in an individual and consolidated manner. Results confirm that health dynamics significantly predict poverty outcomes. Moreover, focus group discussion (FGD) and key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with government officials, indigenous people, and stakeholders to generate information for devising intervention programs and policy efforts. Finally, policy mapping and program targeting were outlined to promote economic and community development for each locality.

Keywords: indigenous people, community-based monitoring system, health dynamics, poverty, economic development