Agenda Item 3: Thematic discussion on achievements, challenges, gaps and emerging issues in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific

Roundtable B: Health, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights

As delivered by Dr. Mara Jean Almazora-Millar, Medical Officer IV, Disease Prevention and Control Bureau, Department of Health, Philippines

Reproductive health services play an integral part in both the fulfillment of the universal health coverage and Reproductive Health Law in the country. Part and parcel of it seeks to ensure that everyone is covered by the Health Insurance Corporation that allows them to receive contraceptives, antenatal and postnatal services, child immunization, and other sexual and reproductive health services - to reduce the out of pocket expenses.

But in order to have a more impactful change in our health outcomes, the health sector acknowledges that factors beyond healthcare are important. In this regard, the Philippines recently initiated enabling health policies in both learning institutions and workplaces. In addition to this, we also collaborated with Departement Education, and the Commission on Population and Development for the convergence of Comprehensive Sexual Education - Adolescent Reproductive Health. In relation to safeguarding the rights of children in the Philippines, among the major milestone is the signing of the “Act Prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage” into law. This is part of the whole-of-government response to the ongoing challenges of reproductive health issues among youth. Lastly, all the mentioned policies and future ones are to be guided by the Omnibus Health Guidelines, which integrates elements of reproductive health to the standards of care across all life stages and across all settings.

Thank you for your kind attention.