

Editor's Notes

To mark the first anniversary of the implementation of the 1991 Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160), this issue presents four articles on local governance. Two articles, in fact, contain preliminary outcome of the implementation of the code on two critical governmental functions: planning and health service delivery. The rest of the articles are on the experience of other countries in local governance. Their inclusion is made with a hope that lessons can be gained from such experience to make the code a more effective tool of democracy and development.

The first article by Jocelyn C. Cuaresma entitled "Reforms in Local Planning" underscores the crucial role of local development councils in the implementation of the Code. She does it by pinpointing the issues which may arise in the expanded membership of the council provided for by the Code.

The second article entitled "Health Service Delivery: Issues, Problems, and Prospect of Devolution" by Salve B. Borlagdan *et al.* discusses the problems and opportunities which emerged following the initial steps undertaken to devolve the health functions of the Department of Health to the Provincial Government of Laguna. The results serve as an instructive mirror of the prospects of the devolution of other central government functions to local units.

One of the two articles which setting is outside our borders is Simeon Agustin Ilago's "Centrality and Local Spending in Japan." It describes in length the relationship between the centrality of a city and its expenditure patterns in a resource-rich country which strides towards decentralization is at the higher end of the scale. Critical bureaucratic features are used as major variables in the study.

The other article is by Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman entitled "Local Government and Administration in Bangladesh: The State of the Art." The article documents the growth and evolution of the local government system in a resource-poor country which attempts at decentralization are still fledgling. The dynamics of major factors that affect the structure and functions of the system are also identified. He concluded that local government bodies in Bangladesh are neither viable nor self-governing, but are merely extensions of the national government.