Editor’s Notes

The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines “self-sufficient” as “being able to maintain oneself or itself without outside aid”. This basic definition is worth revisiting in light of this issue’s main feature. For many years and up to the present time, the Philippines has been partly dependent on rice imports to feed its growing population.

The principal target the government has set in its Food Staples Sufficiency Program (FSSP) is zero rice importation by 2013. Whether or not this target is intended to address the mounting concerns over food security or the constant criticisms of continued rice importation to meet local demand is irrelevant to analyze at this point. The more important issue to consider is whether this is the most appropriate strategy to pursue.

The PIDS study by Dr. Roehlano Briones which looked into the feasibility of zero rice importation resonates with the conclusion that such goal is untenable. One of the major reasons pertains to the flawed assumptions, particularly on fixed per-capita consumption, with which the said goal was set. Clearly, this is not possible as population growth leads to increases in per capita demand for food staples, particularly rice. It is thus surprising that a goal of zero imports has been set on such an unrealistic assumption. The program also projects a level of local production that is capable

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Rice self-sufficiency = no rice imports: Is it really feasible?

Ask a Filipino about the food that he can’t live without, and his/her answer will most probably be “rice”. Not only is rice a major staple in the Philippines, it is also an important source of livelihood for many Filipinos. Its popularity, familiarity, and prevalence in the country are also the reason why the term “rice” has a lot of variations in our language. There’s palay, bigas, kanin, lugaw, bahaw, and malagkit, to name a few.

The centrality of rice in Philippine life makes the issue of self-sufficiency always a controversial one. Will it remain an elusive dream for this administration just as it has been for the previous ones? Is it really possible that the Philippines will no longer need to import rice?

The Food Staples Sufficiency Program (FSSP)
In his second State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 25, 2011, President Benigno Aquino III summarized the national policy on food staples sufficiency. He expressed his sentiment in a form that the typical Filipino would understand, "Ang gusto nating mangyari, una, hindi na tayo aangkat ng hindi kailangan. Ikalawa, ayaw na nating umasa sa pag-aangkat. Ang isasaying ni Juan de la Cruz, dito ipapunda, dito aanihin, dito bibilhin." (What we would like to happen is that first, we don’t have to import if it’s not needed. Second, we don’t have to rely on importation. What Juan de la Cruz cooks, it is planted here, harvested here, and bought here.)

Based on these remarks, the current administration’s vision is clear: rice self-sufficiency means not having to resort to rice importation. To realize this, the Department of Agriculture (DA) launched the Food Staples Sufficiency Program (FSSP) 2011–2016 on July 5, 2012 during the 2nd Agricultural Machinery Exposition or the "Makina-Saka 2012" at the World Trade Center in Pasay City under the Agrikulturan Pilipino (AgriPinoy)
framework. While FSSP also covers other staples including corn, root crops such as cassava and sweet potato, and banana (*saging na saba*), the program primarily focuses on enhancing domestic rice production and how the country can achieve rice self-sufficiency.

It is FSSP’s goal of a Philippine society that is food secure where farmers benefit from rising standards of living and achieving self-sufficiency in food staples. Self-sufficiency is regarded as meeting the domestic requirements for food, seeds, processing, and feeds through domestic production. Productivity growth is expected to raise rural incomes, which will, in turn, bring about sustainable food security and reduce poverty in the country.

**Plans and feasibility results**

To meet the objectives of the FSSP, the DA crafted a comprehensive plan that covers the period 2011–2016. This plan—identifying targets for yield, area harvested, and production for the next five years after the program has been launched—is based on the 2010 baseline of 15.8 million tons of palay.

From the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, the 2010 figures that serve as the baseline of the project include the following:

- Total supply: 15.3 million tons
- Production: 10.3 million tons
- Imports: 2.4 million tons
- Beginning stock: 2.6 million tons
- Total demand: 15.3 million tons
- Food consumption: 10.6 million tons
- Other uses: 1.3 million tons
- Ending stock: 3.4 million tons

Targets, on the other hand, include an increase in production of about 10 percent in 2010–2011, 9 percent in 2012, 8.5 percent in 2013, 7 percent in 2014, 3 percent in 2015, and 2.5 percent in 2016. Beginning stock, from 2.6 million tons in 2010, is expected to grow to 3.27 million tons by 2016, while ending stock is projected at 3.4 million tons. Other factors that have been anticipated to improve until 2016 and are being closely monitored on a yearly basis include total usage of food, seeds, processing, and feeds and waste.

One very interesting item in the rice supply and utilization projections under the FSSP is the total amount of imports for 2009–2016. While the 2010 baseline for import is 2.4 million tons, it is actually projected to reduce to 1.36 million and 0.59 million tons by 2011 and 2012, respectively. By 2013 onwards, DA predicts that the country’s import for rice will be zero and, thus, the Philippines will already be self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency is therefore equated in the program to a scenario where the country no longer imports rice.

The various strategies identified in the FSSP to achieve this target include:

- Sustaining research and development in new varieties and crop management;
- Promoting mechanization of on-farm and postharvest operations;
- Enhancing effectiveness and strengthening the delivery of extension services;
- Boosting yield growth in rainfed areas;
- Harnessing the potential of high-elevation and upland rice ecosystems;
- Enhancing economic incentives and enabling mechanisms; and
- Managing food staples consumption toward a more diversified diet.

So is the Philippines anywhere near? While the plans and strategies are all in place, the question is, are the government’s actions hitting the target? Is the Philippines ready to sustain rice supply on its own? Is zero rice importation really feasible through the various agricultural and socioeconomic strategies that the government had laid down for the rice sector?

**Challenges and pain points**

In a Pulong Saliksikan at PIDS titled "Rice self-sufficiency for the Philippines: is it feasible?", PIDS Senior Research Fellow Roehlano M. Briones presented his insights on the issue. In Briones’ assessment, the target of zero rice imports is not feasible. He explained that based on historical records, rice self-sufficiency is still untenable and FSSP’s targets are rather ambitious (Table 1).
Data from the FSSP showed that from 2011 to 2015, palay yield should increase from 3.78 to 4.53 tons per hectare while production should increase from 17 million tons to 22.7 million tons per year. As such, this scenario entails a yearly growth rate of 3.8 percent in yield and 6.3 percent in production to attain rice self-sufficiency. However, past records showed an average growth rate of only 1.5 percent for yield and 3.2 percent for production from 1994 to 2010.

“Since the start of the plan period in 2010, we can already observe deviations from the target. Palay production in 2011 fell short by 2.8 percent. Imports were held to just 0.7 million tons in 2011 and 0.5 million tons in 2012, but this does not mean domestic production is becoming sufficient to meet local demand,” Briones said.

He added that taking into consideration the supply-demand scenario analysis using the Agricultural Multimarket Model for Policy Evaluation or AMPLE, a numerical model that provides a systematic way to incorporate economic behavior of producers, consumers, and market assessments, the results are negative.

Briones said that after conducting the initial run in AMPLE for 2009–2020 called Reference Scenario, results indicated that palay production fell short of the FSSP targets.

For 2012, the Reference Scenario projects a harvest of 18.7 million tons, which is 6.5 percent short of the FSSP target of 20 million tons. By 2020, it is projected that palay production will reach 23.7 million tons. In terms of yield growth, while the Reference Scenario showed that the 2.1 percent yield growth is faster than the 1.5 percent historical growth, it still did not meet the 3.8 percent target of the FSSP.

Based on FSSP projection, the Philippines would no longer import rice by 2013 and would be able to achieve self-sufficiency. This suggests that the country must produce the national domestic requirement while maintaining a buffer stock to be used in times of need.

“Our analysis is telling us that even by 2020, we are expected to still import about two million tons annually. Clearly, imports do not decline to zero,” Dr. Briones added.

Why is this so? Imports remain high because consumption continues to increase by about 3.4 percent per year. This is due to the speedy rate of population growth. The FSSP interventions are useful, but only to a certain extent. When the supply of rice increases, prices go down, hence, consumers can afford more of it. The FSSP assumption of fixed per capita consumption should not be the basis then. If it is used, the amount of palay harvest required to eliminate imports would be underestimated.

Aside from these issues, there are also a number of challenges and pain points that hinder the country from making this dream into reality.

First, the per capita demand for staples will continue to rise with the country’s rapidly increasing population. This means that farmers need to feed more people than in the previous years. This task is made more difficult by an increasingly fragile resource base.

| Table 1. Projected and historical growth rates for palay yield, area harvested, and production |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| All palay                                             |                |                |
| Yield                                                 | 3.8            | 1.5            |
| Area                                                  | 2.4            | 1.4            |
| Production                                            | 6.3            | 3.2            |
| Irrigated palay                                       |                |                |
| Yield                                                 | 3.6            | 1.1            |
| Area                                                  | 4.1            | 2.1            |
| Production                                            | 7.9            | 3.4            |
| Rainfed palay                                         |                |                |
| Yield                                                 | 2.3            | 2.1            |
| Area                                                  | -2.1           | 0.8            |
| Production                                            | 0.2            | 3.4            |

Source: Department of Agriculture (2012)
Second, the presence of new agricultural technologies and modern tools does not guarantee increased productivity. Adoption by farmers is critical. This would take time, effort, and resources, which—to begin with—are already not sufficient or available to everyone.

Third, the capacity of public institutions working in the rice sector needs strengthening. This calls for more resources and innovative strategies that address farmers’ needs, including working more closely with farmers’ organizations and the private sector. Exploring new approaches to deliver extension, credit, insurance, and other services is recommended.

In conclusion

According to Briones, the more crucial strategy to pursue is to expand the area harvested and raise yield through irrigation (Table 2).

There is also a need to continue research and development in rice varieties and crop management as well as promote mechanization of on-farm and postharvest operations. Boosting yield growth in rainfed areas is another area to explore.

Upland rice ecosystems have the potential of high elevation that is waiting to be harnessed. Agriculture workers will also benefit from enhanced economic incentives and enabling mechanism.

Eliminating imports poses the risk of more expensive price of rice that is contrary to the goal of food security. As Briones notes, food security should be viewed in terms of affordability wherein everyone, especially the poor, can afford to buy rice without thinking of the cost and can continue to achieve the necessary average food intake.

The goal of rice self-sufficiency is noble, but it cannot be equated to zero importation. With the continuous demand for food staples, particularly rice, as a result of a steadily increasing population, the government should maintain a practical stance to achieving food security. CSM

References


Table 2. Main strategies to pursue: beginning service area, cropping intensity, and harvest area

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<td>Beginning service area (ha)</td>
<td>1,536,135</td>
<td>1,577,607</td>
<td>1,676,790</td>
<td>1,727,011</td>
<td>1,752,743</td>
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<td>Cropping intensity</td>
<td>1.44</td>
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<td>1.50</td>
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<td>Harvest area (ha)</td>
<td>2,212,030</td>
<td>2,319,080</td>
<td>2,515,180</td>
<td>2,642,330</td>
<td>2,734,280</td>
<td>2,804,390</td>
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*Cropping intensity is the ratio of the sum of land planted in both seasons to farm size.

Source: FSSP 2011–2016, DA
KDC Network Annual Meeting: Knowledge as catalyst of change

Just a few months after the World Bank (WB) and the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) signed an agreement to collaborate on the dissemination of research and sharing of knowledge, a team from the PIDS, headed by Ms. Jennifer P.T. Liguton, PIDS Director for Research Information, participated for the first time in the World Bank (WB) Knowledge for Development Center (KDC) Network Annual Meeting on May 14–16, 2012.

The annual meeting served as a platform for KDC Network members to discuss procurement reform and social accountability issues, the use of technology as a knowledge sharing tool, and partnership opportunities.

Making growth work for the poor: a multistakeholder dialogue
A dialogue with the theme, “Making Growth Work for the Poor”, was held on the first day of the three-day event. PIDS President Josef T. Yap participated in the dialogue, along with other heads of various institutions from different sectors. The new World Bank Country Director Motoo Konishi, welcomed the participants with a speech about the event’s theme. Making growth work for the poor, as what the Bank emphasizes, means making sure that no one is left behind as the economy improves.

The World Bank also engaged the participants in different activities such as focus group discussions and open forums about the country’s development challenges. These activities were meant to gather feedback on the implementation of the Philippine country assistance strategy for the period 2010–2013. Furthermore, possible options to consider in the World Bank’s programs were also discussed. The night was concluded with a fellowship dinner where participants were given the chance to interact with the new country director.

KDC network: moving forward
The second day of the annual meeting included discussions and presentations about different knowledge practices and innovations. It revolved around the importance and use of knowledge as a catalyst of change and the role of modern technology in knowledge innovations. The social media, in particular, were acknowledged as a powerful tool in knowledge dissemination as the generation nowadays is composed of active “netizens”. The World Bank labeled this network’s transition from old practices to new ones as KDC 2.0.

Global Distance Learning Network (GDLN)
In line with this, the Global Distance Learning Network (GDLN) was introduced to the KDC members. The GDLN is a partnership of over 120 recognized global institutions in over 80 countries that collaborates in the design of customized learning solutions for individuals and organizations working in development. It is considered a powerful tool for training, outreach, knowledge exchange,
Delegates of the KDC meeting had a tour of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Teresa, Rizal. (PHOTO: Jose Ignacio Tenorio, PIDS)

Delegates of the KDC meeting had a tour of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Teresa, Rizal. (PHOTO: Jose Ignacio Tenorio, PIDS)

and dissemination of good practice. Furthermore, the diversity of membership provides a rich set of experiences, content, skills, and resources. KDC Network members from the academe showed interest in the GDLN as a tool for continuing education. The possibility of accrediting the programs offered through the GDLN for academic courses was also discussed during the open forum.

Open Development
Furthermore, as part of the objective to promote innovations on knowledge sharing and dissemination, the open development initiative of the World Bank was again presented and promoted to the KDC Network members. Open Development aims to promote openness and transparency in development, from tools and knowledge resources to Bankwide initiatives. The network members were able to voice out their suggestions on how to improve the existing open development practices of the KDC Network. They were also able to share their own practices in knowledge and information dissemination, one of which is the SocioEconomic Research Portal for the Philippines (SERP-P), a PIDS initiative. The KDC Network members who are not yet members of SERP-P expressed their interest to join the SERP-P Network as well to further promote and strengthen research networking.

The event on the second day was concluded by parallel sessions and discussions. Lawrence Tang and Deeda Gonzales from the World Bank presented the Full Disclosure Policy. This policy requires certain offices in the provinces, cities, and municipalities to fully disclose particular financial transactions of the LGU to keep their constituents informed about the management, disbursements, and utilization of the LGU budget. KDC Network members were able to ask questions and clarify details regarding the policy. They were divided into two groups. The first group participated in the civil society monitoring of public service delivery to the poor while the second group was presented with a project that is funded by the World Bank. The project is called “Check My School”. This project promotes transparency and social accountability by monitoring different schools, acquiring and analyzing data about the school, and coordinating the information with both the beneficiaries and supporters.

Experience, Enforce, and Emulate: A model for solid waste management
The KDC Network conducted a fieldwork on the third day of the event. The first stop is the widely recognized and commended Integrated Solid Waste Management Facility (ISWF) of Teresa, Rizal. Secretary Neric Acosta, presidential adviser for Environmental Protection and Laguna Lake Development Authority general manager, along with the municipal officials of the local government of Teresa, welcomed and oriented the participants to their ISWF facility. The project is financed by the World Bank and the Netherlands government under the Laguna de Bay Institutional Strengthening and Community Participation.

The project has already contributed to a 38-percent waste reduction in Teresa and is now providing additional income for the municipality. Years ago, the municipality of Teresa had a 2,000-square-meter open dumpsite that attracted flies and vermin, and scavengers who made a living by picking garbage. Then newly elected Mayor Rodel dela Cruz and his team quickly responded to this problem and after a few years of persistence and hard work, the dumpsite was officially closed. Furthermore, they were
able to come up with low-cost approaches to waste recycling and composting.

The municipality now has a large and modern materials recovery facility consisting of a shredder, hammer mill, and bioreactor/windrow system. They are producing fertilizers and utilizing the compost to test vegetables and seedlings’ growth in the subproject site. The facility also produces some 150 hollow blocks and footpaths per day out of nonbiodegradable materials that are chipped into small pieces and mixed with cement and sand.

The success of this project is not only in cleaning the environment but also in eliciting active participation from the community members in proper waste management and opening up new income opportunities, hence the town should be “emulated”, Acosta said. The municipality of Teresa continues to showcase what needs to be done on a larger scale and the KDC project visit, according to him, is a good avenue to let different institutions “experience” and understand how the project actually works. “Enforcement” will then happen through the sharing of this experience with others.

The KDC Network members were given the chance to ask some questions and voice out their ideas and opinions during the brief open forum. All agreed that there is more work to be done and a stronger partnership among stakeholders must be reinforced to be able to protect the environment.

The importance of knowledge management and dissemination was once again emphasized during the forum. Dr. Miral cited the joint project of CPBRD and PIDS called the Electronic Resource Base for Legislation as an example of information and legislation engagement. The project involves setting up of a website that serves to fulfill the mutual needs of policymaking and research. Its objective is to strengthen the quality of legislation by providing high-quality content relevant to policymaking and, at the same time, making information available and accessible to the public. The event ended with a tour of key places in the House of Representatives.

Indeed, moving forward will not be possible without embracing challenges and adapting to changes. The annual meeting this year was a fruitful event that showed how the KDC Network continues to explore its full potential as a knowledge network by adapting to the changes brought about by advancements in information technology and increased social networks. It is hoped that by working closely together and by continuously facilitating knowledge, the goal of contributing to broad-based, inclusive development will be achieved. KCO

Information and legislation: a visit to the House of Representatives

As one of the active members of the KDC Network, the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) of the House of Representatives (HoR) warmly hosted the KDC Network’s visit. Speaker of the House, Hon. Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., acknowledged the presence of the World Bank KDC through his welcome remarks which was delivered by one of his staff members during the short forum. This was followed by a short discussion by Dr. Romulo E.M. Miral, Jr., OIC-director general of CPBRD, on citizen’s engagement in legislative policy.
Ilocos Norte Governor Maria Imelda Josefa R. Marcos led the inauguration of the 20th Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) Corner at the Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) Library in Batac, Ilocos Norte on July 9, 2012.

The PIDS Corner at the MMSU Main Library was formally opened with the ceremonial ribbon cutting by Governor Marcos, PIDS President Josef T. Yap, and MMSU President Miriam E. Pascua. A Memorandum of Agreement formalizing the partnership between PIDS and MMSU was also signed. The event was attended by local leaders from various government agencies as well as students, faculty members, and administrators.

Speaking predominantly in Ilokano and Filipino, Governor Marcos, who took time out before her State of the Province Address scheduled in the afternoon, underscored in her speech the importance of evidence-based policymaking grounded on scientific research in achieving and sustaining development in the province. “Ang mga polisiya ng gobyerno ay hindi iniimbento lamang at kinukuha sa hangin.” (Government policies are not merely invented and are not picked from the air.) She explained that the province is experiencing various social, economic, and demographic changes and dealing with these necessitates policies that are formulated based on hard facts and statistics. She therefore enjoined the local policymakers and the MMSU community to take advantage of the information resources available at the PIDS Corner.

Yap underscored the importance of evidence-based studies and materials in policymaking. He said PIDS Corners have improved the prominence of the Institute’s research products. He likewise highlighted the Institute’s commitment to local and regional development by making PIDS resources available to localities.

Dr. Pascua expressed her gratitude to PIDS and its officials. In her speech, she said that the PIDS Corner is an additional information service of MMSU. According to her, this would be a great help to the MMSU community and other stakeholders. Meanwhile, Dr. Lucena R. Felipe, the university librarian, said that the PIDS Corner will further strengthen their service delivery and improve the information access of students and other clients.

As a tradition to spur development discussions in local areas, PIDS Corner inaugurations are followed by a discussion forum on development-related topics by a PIDS senior researcher. For this occasion, a discussion forum titled “Measuring Vulnerability to Natural Hazards: Preliminary Provincial Es-
timates for the Philippines” by PIDS Senior Research Fellow Marife M. Ballesteros was held at the University Training Center.

The PIDS Corner is one of the Institute’s research dissemination strategies aimed at providing reading and research materials on development-related topics to students, researchers, faculty members, and policymakers in locations where there is a dearth of such resources. The Corner consists of a few shelves containing various studies and publications produced by the Institute and its collaborators. These include books, research papers, discussion papers, journals, newsletters, and other information materials. Since its inception in 2006, there have been 20 (9 in Luzon, 6 in Visayas, 5 in Mindanao) PIDS Corners strategically located in provincial libraries, and public and private academic institutions all over the country.

The setting up of a PIDS Corner in Ilocos Norte started with a proposal by the PIDS to Governor Marcos in early 2012. It was originally suggested that a Corner be opened at the Ilocos Norte Provincial Library. However, in a preliminary meeting between PIDS officials and provincial government officials, it was agreed that the PIDS Corner be established in the MMSU main campus in Batac. This decision was made because MMSU’s library has already established a network not only in the academe but also in other sectors. For instance, the Library is currently linked with the United States Embassy’s Thomas Jefferson Information Center as well as the Philippine American Educational Foundation.

Moreover, MMSU is the leading research university in northern Philippines. Hence, the establishment of the PIDS Corner augurs well with its research thrusts and initiatives. For more information about PIDS Corners, visit http://www.pids.gov.ph/ris/pidscorner.html. PJB
A tribute to JPTL

"It is always difficult to part from something that one has seen being conceived and then helped to nurture and see grow. At some point in time, it becomes a part of the person and closely associated with him/her. There is, however, a time for everything. And for [me], it is time to bid farewell..."

Jenny wrote this herself in her final message as managing editor of the Philippine Journal of Development. It succinctly captures her three-decade journey with the PIDS. She joined the PIDS in 1982 during its early years and over time saw the Institute’s development into one of the most reputable and trusted think tanks in the country and in the Asia-Pacific region.

As its chief communication officer, her greatest contribution to PIDS was the formation of the Research Information Staff (RIS). Jenny was director of RIS throughout her stint in PIDS. She put together a systematic and organized research utilization and dissemination strategy to ensure that the Institute’s research studies do not only stay in the shelves but actually reach their intended publics. Among the innovations she instituted were the establishment of the PIDS library and introduction of new products such as the research and discussion papers, the staff paper series, the Policy Notes, and the Development Research News. She took the moribund Journal of Philippine Development from NEDA and revitalized it as Philippine Journal of Development, which is now the Institute’s flagship publication.

Jenny then embraced advances in information and communications technology and used them to introduce pioneering products such as the SocioEconomic Research Portal for the Philippines, the e-Library, and more recently, the adoption of social networking services. Over the years, she developed the Institute’s topnotch convening capacity that brings diverse voices from a range of sectors in discussing critical development issues in the country. Today, PIDS prides itself in its ability to organize world-class conferences and seminars. Later in her career, she focused on networking and knowledge sharing which brought the Institute’s products to subnational audiences through conduct of regional conferences and the establishment of PIDS Corners, and even beyond national borders through participation in international knowledge intermediation.

Jenny’s professional successes appeared to come effortlessly to her. Born to a middle-class family in Cavite, her Papang was a military officer while her Mamang was a dedicated homemaker. She was a product of Cavite City’s school system and was a consistent first-placer from kindergarten to high school. During the turbulent days of the late sixties, she went to study economics at the University of the Philippines Diliman where she graduated cum laude in 1970. In 1975, she received a certificate in
development course from the University of Cambridge and in 1993 obtained her M.A. degree in communication research from the University of the Philippines.

After graduating from college, accomplishments seemed to drop into her lap. She first worked as research assistant in UP and was later recruited by the eminent economist Gerardo P. Sicat—who is considered to be the father of PIDS—to join NEDA as his head executive assistant. When Dr. Sicat resigned from NEDA, he recommended that Jenny join PIDS.

In truth, however, her feats were not effortlessly achieved. She labored hard all her professional life and never took any shortcuts. She cultivated the finest work ethic that earned her the respect and admiration of her colleagues. Her leadership style was no less commendable. She possessed a rare ability of inspiring and challenging people to work and achieve best results without being imperious.

Gifted with clarity, precision, and a superior writing prowess, she became the Institute’s de facto editor-in-chief, a difficult task she effectively performed. She meticulously and tirelessly edited practically everything that the Institute produced for the past thirty years from the simplest correspondences and press releases to technical books and reports. An assiduous grammarian, she always made sure that everything was grammatically and semantically correct. She loved her craft so much that she just never settled for mediocrity.

Aside from her workaholic and overachiever persona, there is a delightful side to Jenny that she generously shared with her colleagues and staff. She remained humble, grounded, and guileless despite her achievements. Her humility made her one of the most amiable personalities in the Institute. She showed her deep and sympathetic concern for all. Everyone can tell of some friendly act, some clear advice in a moment of perplexity, some sharing of joy, and some flash of humor that they spent with her.

Jenny and her qualities are a rarity. Though she has retired from government service, happily she has not withdrawn from our midst. We are grateful and fortunate to have witnessed her extraordinary depth, integrity, and love, which are true measures of her stature. PJB
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to meet local demand. Briones’ analysis clearly shows, however, that the projected growth rates of palay production under the FSSP are too ambitious to achieve based on historical trends.

By 2013, it will become clearer if the program has reached its target. The outcomes do matter but so are the lessons, which hopefully relevant agencies will take into account in crafting future policies and programs. Effective policymaking rests on sound evidence. Any policy decision to achieve a particular set of development goals should be based on realistic assumptions and expectations that take into consideration pertinent statistics, evaluation results of previous policies, stakeholders’ insights, local and international research, and expert knowledge, among others. As the country’s think tank, PIDS advocates for evidence-based decision-making in setting national government programs, plans, and targets.

The Institute’s unrelenting commitment to knowledge sharing and dissemination of socioeconomic research is also highlighted in this issue. PIDS acknowledges that a network approach is critical to hasten the diffusion of information and thus, it continues to partner with local and international agencies. The World Bank-initiated Knowledge for Development Center (KDC) underscores the important role of knowledge as a catalyst of change and how modern technology, particularly social media, can be a powerful tool in knowledge dissemination. PIDS joined the KDC Network in July this year. Meanwhile, it continues to set up PIDS Corners in different parts of the country. In the same month, it launched the 20th PIDS Corner in the Ilocos Region, in partnership with the Mariano Marcos State University.

Through this issue, we also pay tribute to one of PIDS’ pioneers—Ms. Jennifer P.T. Liguton—who retired in July after more than 30 years in government service. Jenny formed the research dissemination program of PIDS and was its director since she joined the Institute. The Development Research News, which is now on its 30th year, is just one of the many publication and dissemination outlets that Jenny helped develop for PIDS. SVS