

Phl among countries with highest adolescent birth rate

The Philippine Star · 15 Apr 2018 · 9 · By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

The Philippines is among the countries in Southeast Asia with the highest adolescent birth rate, experts said.

In a statement, experts from United Nations agencies International Planned Parenthood Federation and Plan International and some civil society organizations said that while adolescent birth rates have declined globally, they remained generally stagnant or has been increasing in Southeast Asia.

At the recent meet in Bangkok on child marriage, early unions and teen pregnancy in the region, it was shown that the average adolescent birth rate in the region is 47 births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 – higher than the average of 35 in South Asia and close to the global average of 50.

The highest adolescent birth rates at the country level were seen in Lao PDR (94), Cambodia (57), Thailand (50), Indonesia (48) and Philippines (47).

It was also shown that despite declines in recent decades, the prevalence rates of child marriage and early union remain high in Southeast Asia.

Björn Andersson, UN Population Fund regional director for Asia and the Pacific, said adolescents in Southeast Asia enter early in marriages and unions for a range of reasons and in widely varying circumstances.