



Republika ng Pilipinas
KAGAWARAN NG KALUSUGAN
PAMBANSANG SANGGUNIAN SA NUTRISYON
(NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL)
Nutrition Building, 2332 Chino Roces Avenue Extension
Taguig City, Philippines



12 November 2019

DIRECTOR MARY ANN R, DARAUAY

Director, Social Development Staff
National Economic and Development Authority
Member, NNC Technical Committee
NEDA #12 St. Josemaria Escriba Drive
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Dear **Director Darauay**:

Greetings from the National Nutrition Council (NNC)!

In reference to the agreement during the Evaluation Reference Group meeting held last 21 October 2019 at NEDA. We are forwarding herewith, the accomplished management response to the recommendations of the study on the Formative Evaluation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2017-2022.

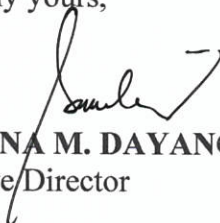
Likewise, please accept our sincere thanks for identifying nutrition as among the priority topics in the NEDA-UNDP Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation Project. NNC is committed to lead actions toward reducing stunting and all forms of malnutrition, guided by the recommendations of various studies which were recently completed including the IPA study.

We look forward to more partnerships with NEDA and other stakeholders as we work together for improved nutrition of our human capital, contributing to the goals of the Philippine Development Plan, *Ambisyon Natin 2040* and the Sustainable Development Goals.

For any other concerns and inquiries on the submitted management response, your staff may contact Ms. Hygeia Ceres Catalina B. Gawe, Chief of the Nutrition Surveillance Division with telephone number 8843-5824 and email address jigay.gawe@nnc.gov.ph.

Thank you!

Very truly yours,



AZUCENA M. DAYANGHIRANG, MD, MCH, CESE
Executive Director

"Kumain nang wasto at maging aktibo... push natin 'to!"

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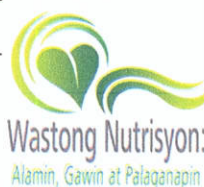
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Management response and implementation plan¹

Program/Project Title: **Formative Evaluation of the Philippine Plan of Action (PPAN) 2017-2022**

Implementing Agency(ies): **National Nutrition Council**

Completion Date of Evaluation: **October 31, 2019**

Date of Issuance of Management Response:

Contributors: ***Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) Philippines***

Cleared by: ***National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)***

I. Context, background, and key findings²

Child malnutrition is a persistent and pressing global health problem that has severe health and economic consequences at the child, household, and national levels. In the Philippines, 30 percent of children under the age of five are stunted—a chronic form of undernutrition—with limited progress seen in recent years. Responding to these nutritional concerns, the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2017-2022 is the country's results-based policy framework that aims to reduce the country's high malnutrition rate.

The persistence and severity of child malnutrition in the Philippines necessitates an evaluation of strategies identified in the PPAN 2017-2022. Timely evidence on these strategies will help steer the country's efforts to address child malnutrition in the right direction. A key first step in determining the impact of the PPAN is to conduct a formative evaluation to better understand the current delivery of nutrition programs in the Philippines and know where efforts to determine impact should be focused. This formative evaluation seeks to describe nutrition program planning, coordination, and delivery as guided by the PPAN 2017-2022 and identify the challenges or constraints faced. It focuses on stunting among 0-5 year-olds as a key outcome of interest.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. The majority of the analysis is based on 205 semi-structured interviews with key nutrition policy-makers and implementers at the central, regional, provincial, municipal/city, and barangay levels and beneficiaries at the barangay level. Interviews were conducted across three regions, six provinces, six municipalities, and 18 barangays, evenly distributed across Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao. The evaluation team also constructed and analyzed a panel dataset of Operation Timbang Plus (OPT), the annual weighing and measuring of children 0-5 year-old, to assess the integrity of this important monitoring and evaluation system used for targeting, monitoring, and resource allocation.

¹ Adopted from the UNDP Management Response Template

² Based on the Executive Summary of the Final Draft Report submitted by the evaluation team

The main findings are the following:

(1) The relevance of the PPAN 2017-2022 is strong at higher levels of government and diminishes as it is cascaded down. Regional, provincial, and largely municipal levels readily identified stunting as a nutrition concern in their localities, understood its consequences for child health and development, and aligned their nutrition action plans with the PPAN's strategic thrusts to combat stunting. At the barangay level, a main site of nutrition program implementation, local policy-makers, and implementers did not readily identify stunting concerns or understand it as a key preventable and reversible nutrition issue. As such, nutrition action plans demonstrated less alignment with the PPAN's strategic thrusts.

(2) The Micronutrient Supplementation (MS) and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Programs, key interventions featured in the PPAN to address stunting, were implemented in all sample sites but with varying degrees of fidelity to their program design. The MS Program has clear guidelines that were followed for vitamin A supplementation but less so in administering iron supplements and micronutrient powder, which were complicated by issues of supply and uptake among target beneficiaries. IYCF interventions were present in all sites and varied by the mode of delivery, but misconceptions about breastfeeding and complementary feeding persisted.

(3) Sustainability of nutrition planning processes at higher levels appears strong. Sustained performance in nutrition planning and implementation at lower levels of government are susceptible to issues related to governance, funding, management, and human resources. Operationalization of nutrition action plans largely relies on the interests of Local Chief Executives (LCEs) who often do not actively participate in nutrition planning. Where political and financial support exists, accountability mechanisms and incentives may not be strong enough to ensure good performance over time.

(4) Operation Timbang Plus, the primary monitoring and evaluation tool used to track malnourished children at the barangay level, exhibits data quality issues. Perceptions of measurement, recording, and encoding errors were widespread and explained by a lack of training, precision of instruments, and accountability. Analysis of a three-year panel dataset indicates the OPT may also be susceptible to data manipulation where stunting rates are underreported.

The bottlenecks in implementation of PPAN identified in this study strongly suggest the need for the following **action points**:

- 1) Strengthen OPT plus data collection and reporting;
- 2) Build capacity of front-line workers to deliver nutrition programs; and
- 3) Sharpen messages on stunting by following the rule of the Three S's: simple, salient, and solvable

II. Recommendations and management response

Evaluation Recommendation 1. Strengthen OPT plus data collection and reporting

Key action(s) to implement	Due date of implementation (specify target month, year)	Unit(s) Responsible (indicate their roles in implementation)	Tracking		Budget (source of funds)
			Status (i.e., not started; ongoing; delayed; completed)	Remarks (e.g., issues encountered in implementing the action points)	
1. Development and rollout of data quality audit protocol for the LGU conduct of OPT Plus	March- November 2020	NNC-NSD and AMWG and/or other experts and consultants			NNC
2. Integration of data quality as indicator in the LGUs and nutrition workers performance monitoring	1 st Quarter 2020	NNC-NSD			NNC
3. Conduct refresher course using online platform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ nutrition assessment ○ eOPT Tool ○ equipment calibration 	2020	NNC-NSD	Ongoing (face-to-face trainings) Online courses not started	Replacement of trained volunteers Resource-intensive	For resource mobilization

Evaluation Recommendation 2. Build capacity of front-line workers to deliver nutrition programs

Key action(s) to implement	Due date of implementation (specify target month, year)	Unit(s) Responsible (indicate their roles in implementation)	Tracking		Budget (source of funds)
			Status (i.e., not started; ongoing; delayed; completed)	Remarks (e.g., issues encountered in implementing the action points)	
Capacity building for local nutrition workers on nutrition program management					
a. Biennial National Conference of Nutrition Action Officers	May 2020	NNC-Nutrition Information and Education Division (NNC-NIIED)	Not started		NNC
b. Biennial National Conference of District/City Nutrition Program Coordinators	August 2021	NNC-NIIED	Not started		NNC
c. Development of Handbook for Nutrition Action Officers	December 2020	NNC-NIIED	Not started		NNC
d. Training on nutrition program management (NPM) for new nutrition workers (electronic learning course on NPM)	2019	NNC-NIIED	Ongoing development		NNC
e. Bridging Leadership on Nutrition Program	2020	NNC-NIIED DOH-FHO	Ongoing discussions with ZFF		DOH
f. Training on Nutrition in Emergencies and Information Management	2019	NNC-NIIED NNC-NSD	Ongoing		NNC DOH-HEMB UNICEF
g. Integrated Training on Maternal Nutrition, and Infant and Young Child Feeding	2019	DOH-Family Health Office	started		DOH
h. Training on Social Behavior Change Communication	2019	NNC-NIIED UNICEF	Not yet started		NNC and UNICEF

Key action(s) to implement	Due date of implementation (specify target month, year)	Unit(s) Responsible (indicate their roles in implementation)	Tracking	Budget (source of funds)	Key action(s) to implement
i. Training on the use of "Idol ko si Nanay" Learning Module on the First 1000 Days	Completed for ECCD F1K areas	NNC-NIED	Ongoing		NNC
j. Development of "Idol ko si Tatay" learning module on the First 1000 Days	December 2019	NNC-NIED	Ongoing		NNC
k. Integration of Nutrition in Local Development Plans	2019	NNC-Nutrition Policy and Planning Division (NNC-NPPD), regional offices	Ongoing		NNC
l. Conduct of LGU Planners' Forum	2019	NNC-NPPD, regional offices	Ongoing		NNC
m. Conduct of NGO forum	2019 - 2020	NNC regional offices	Ongoing		NNC

Support to the Barangay Nutrition Scholars

a. Provision of travelling allowance, medical assistance to BNSs or survivorship support	Annual	NNC-NPPD	Ongoing		NNC
b. Provision of BNS kits and other logistics support	Annual	NNC-NPPD	Ongoing		NNC
c. Assistance to BNSs on civil service eligibility	As requested	NNC-NSD	Ongoing		NNC
d. Recognition of outstanding BNSs and other local nutrition workers	2020	NNC-NSD	BNS Ongoing since 2001		NNC
			Other nutrition workers- 2020 and onwards		


Evaluation Recommendation 3. Sharpen messages on stunting by following the rule of the Three S's: simple, salient, and solvable

Celebration of Nutrition Month 2020 focusing on stunting	April-July 2020	NNC-NIED	Not yet started	NNC
Production and dissemination of promotional materials integrating key messages on stunting				
a. Production and airing of nutrition block-time radio program "Radyo Mo sa Nutrisyon over DZXL and other RMN local stations with airing of nutrition plugs	Year-round	NNC-NIED	Ongoing	NNC
b. "One Nutrition, One Nation" radio program over Nutriskwela Community Radio Stations and over YouTube	Year-round	NNC-NIED	Ongoing	NNC
c. Nutriskwela Community Radio Network	Year-round		Ongoing	
d. Regional media campaign	Year-round	NNC Regional Offices	Ongoing	NNC
e. Development and printing of IEC materials	Year-round	NNC-NIED NNC-Regional Offices	Ongoing	NNC

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Reviewed:


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