

LAKASS Program : A Partnership with Communities for Nutrition Improvement

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Introduction

A. Conceptual Framework

The nutritional well-being of a family depends largely on a complex set of factors which affects family food supply and demand, health and sanitation, intrafamily food distribution, and the economic status of the household. The nutritional status of the child is the result of his food intake and his health status. Food and nutrient intake is determined by child feeding practices, and the food and nutrient intake of the household. These factors are further determined by the food supply and demand of the community where the family lives. The intake of individual family members is affected by the distribution of food among its members and the household size. Factors affecting food demand and supply are directly related to family income and purchasing capability and economic activities within the community.

It is within this context that the LAKASS Program was conceptualized. The LAKASS Program, an intensified nutrition action program designed and managed by the community, signifies the coordinated strength of the community in identifying and solving its own nutrition problem. The program consists of a combination of interventions or projects addressing the factors that affect food intake and nutritional status of individuals and families (Fig. 1).

The LAKASS Program embodies a number of key features which set criteria for the selection of target areas and beneficiaries as preconditions in its implementation, to wit :

1. All municipalities are ranked according to prevalence of malnutrition and municipal revenues, and the highest ranking areas are identified as most nutritionally depressed and targeted for the LAKASS program.

2. At least two (2) of the most nutritionally depressed barangays in the municipality are prioritized for delivery of services. Within these barangays, families most affected and at risk to malnutrition are prioritized.

3. Programs and projects are identified, implemented, and managed by the community itself with national government agencies (NGAs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) extending technical, financial, or material assistance.

4. Programs and projects are identified to prevent and cure malnutrition, and promote good nutrition.

5. Communities are mobilized and empowered to build and sustain their capabilities to improve their nutrition situation.

B. Background and Rationale

LAKASS was launched by the National Nutrition Council Governing Board (NNG-GB) in 1989 in 115 nutritionally depressed municipalities (NDMs) as a strategy to alleviate poverty and malnutrition in the most depressed areas of the country. LAKASS implementation in these areas proved that the program is an effective strategy to uplift the nutrition situation in project areas. This prompted the NNC to generate resources and expand its coverage to 31 more NDMs in the country for the period 1992-94. Apart from

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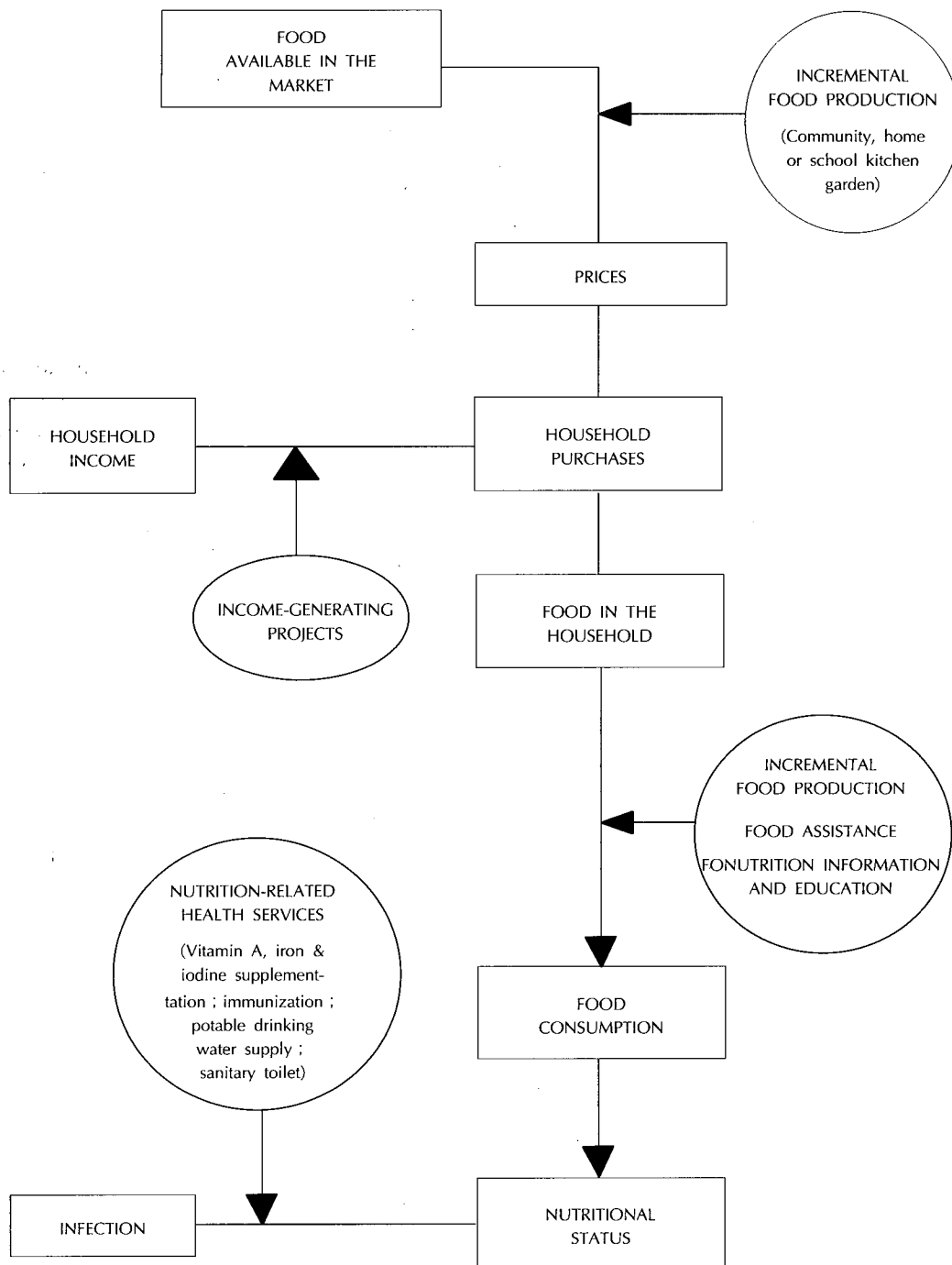


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of nutritional status.

these areas, the program provided funds to 5 more NDMs, 2 of which were tribal communities or those classified as areas of "special concerns" as defined by the Department of Agriculture(DA). By the second year of program implementation residual funds were reprogrammed resulting to the addition of 6 more NDMs to be assisted by the program. This brings the total coverage of LAKASS to 157 NDMs.

The success of the initial LAKASS Program is attributed to the multilevel and multidisciplinary approach in dealing with malnutrition which called for a combination of short-and long-term strategies. The local government unit(LGU), through its local nutrition network called nutrition committees, also played a critical role in mobilizing resources, organizing and planning appropriate supplemental interventions, managing the projects, and monitoring the progress of the program. Trainings on nutrition program management and advocacy campaigns provided LGUs with the necessary tools that enabled them to manage their projects efficiently and effectively.

C. Program Objectives

LAKASS Program had the following objectives :

1. To improve the nutrition situation in the identified nutritionally depressed municipalities and barangays ; and

2. To provide effective and sustainable services for and by the community to improve their nutritional status.

D. LAKASS Implementing Structure

The LAKASS Program utilizes the existing structure of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition(PPAN) as shown in Fig. 2.

The NNC-GB is the country's highest policy-making body on nutrition. It is composed of 10 NGAs and 3 private sector representatives, with the Secretary of Agriculture as chairman. Similar interagency structures called local nutrition committees(LNC) operate at subnational levels. At the regional level, the regional nutrition committee(RNC) is usually chaired by the regional director of an NGA. On the other

hand, the local chief executive(LCE chairs the provincial, city, municipal, or barangay nutrition committee(P/C/M/BNC). It is to be noted that even before the implementation of the 1991 Local Government Code(LGC) , the NNC had already recognized the crucial role of LCEs as area program managers. Thus, since 1974, LCEs have served as chairman of LNCs, taking a lead role in planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring their local nutrition programs.

The NNC-GB sets policies and guidelines for the implementation of the LAKASS Program. The NNC Secretariat provides technical support to the NNC-GB. It also attends to the day-to-day operations of the LAKASS Program at the national level. It likewise provides technical assistance(on nutrition program management) to LNCs, primarily through its regional nutrition program coordinators(RNPCs). The RNC and PNC provide technical assistance and supervise program implementation at the regional and provincial levels, respectively. The C/MNC manages the municipal or city nutrition program. It also assists and supervises program implementation at the barangay level.

Trainings conducted were not only confined to nutrition program management but also covered other concerns such as management of livelihood projects including bookkeeping and value formation aspects.

A series of orientation seminars and conferences with state universities and colleges(SUCs) commissioned by the NNC as external LAKASS monitors was also conducted. An orientation seminar with SUCs was held to discuss the protocol for the LAKASS external evaluation. A midyear conference was held to discuss the evaluation's progress followed by another to present and discuss the results of the evaluation.

E. Financial and Material Assistance

Each NDM was provided an average of US\$ 8,000 from which 80% was used by the municipality for productive or sustainable projects such as income-generating projects(IGPs), while 20% was used for direct

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erating projects(IGPs), while 20% was used for direct nutrition interventions or consumption type of activities like food assistance, micronutrient supplementation, deworming, and water and sanitation projects.

Assistance was also extended in the form of training materials : i.e., LAKASS Implementing Guidelines, LAKASS Training Kit, reference papers on nutrition program management, calculators, and staplers.

The core of program implementation is at the municipal and barangal levels. At the municipal level, the MNC directs and manages the implementation of the LAKASS Program. It reviews project proposals for LAKASS funding and packages these into the municipal LAKASS proposal for submission to the NNC. The MNC also generates additional funds for LAKASS projects as local counterpart. It likewise assists barangays in implemeting LAKASS projects. LAKASS funds are released by the NNC directly to

the municipal government. Thus, the municipal mayor, as chairman of the MNC, is accountable to the NNC for the full implementation of the program. At the barangay level, LAKASS projects are implemented and managed by community-based organizations with the guidance of the BNC.

Provincial and municipal LAKASS officers(P/ MLOs), hired or designated by the governor or mayor, attend to the day-to-day operations of the program at their respective levels.

Program Inputs

A. Social Mobilization

One of the key features of the LAKASS Program is the call for active participation of the community from the problem identification phase up to the program implementation phase(Fig. 3). Social mobilization provided this opportunity for the community

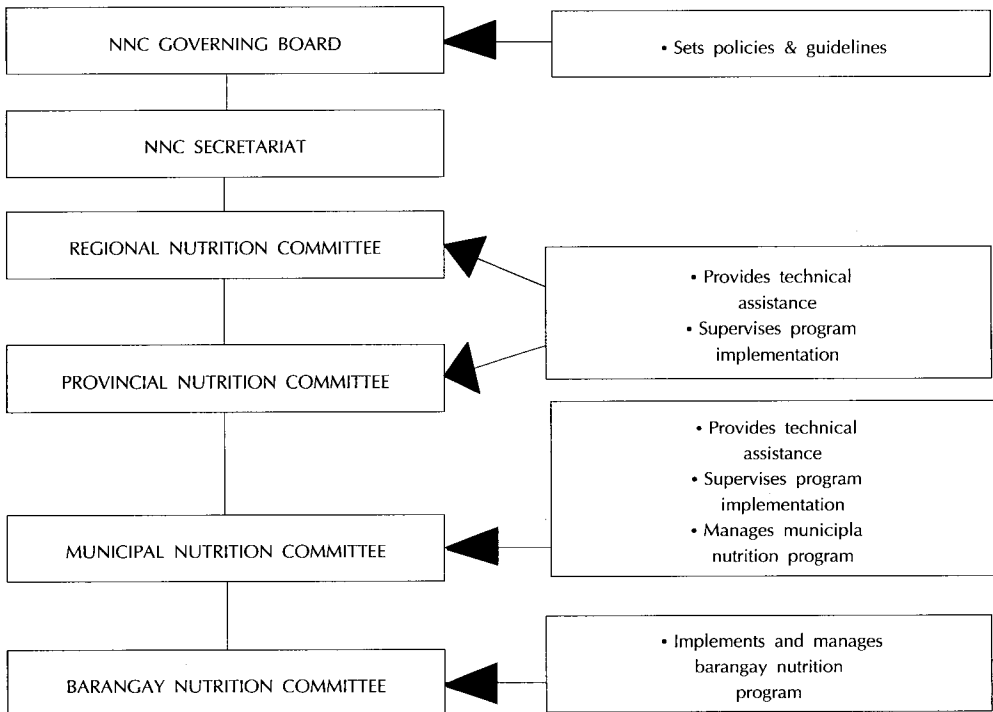


Fig. 2. Structure for implementing the LAKASS program.

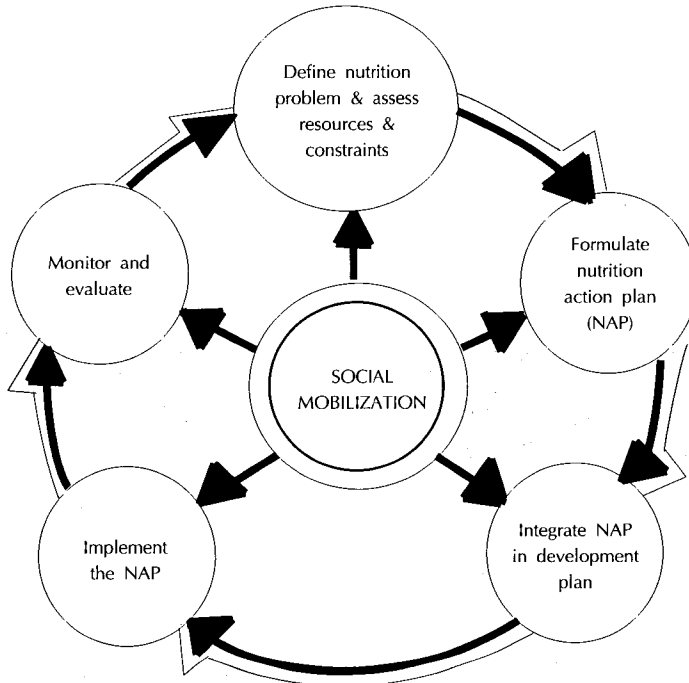


Fig. 3. Operational framework for social mobilization.

to be involved. It enabled the LGUs to tap the LNCs for their involvement in planning, managing, and monitoring their respective LAKASS projects. As a result of social mobilization, LCEs designated full-time MLOs in each of the NDMs to oversee the efficient and effective implementation of various LAKASS projects. To sustain interest in the program, information materials such as LAKASS primers and brochures were produced and distributed to NGAs, NGOs, LGUs and target household. Dialogues and meetings with local government officials and community leaders were regularly conducted. Advocacy campaigns through the NNC regional offices were conducted targeting local chief executives. During these advocacy meetings, support for the LAKASS Program vis-a-vis additional funds and manpower resources was solicited.

B. Trainings Conducted

Trainings played a major role in enabling project implementors at the municipal as well as at the barangay level to manage their respective LAKASS projects and

activities. Municipal and barangay trainings on nutrition program management were conducted, during which trainees participated in lecture discussions and workshops on assessing their own nutritional problems, identifying and designing projects, among others. These two sets of trainings were facilitated by the NNC regional and central office staff. Participants to these trainings were municipal and barangay local officials, project beneficiaries, NGA representatives as well as representatives from NGOs, including religious and civic organizations.

C. Monitoring and Evaluation

Crucial to the successful implementation of any program is the sustained monitoring of its activities and the regular evaluation of the process as well as the outcome of program activities. The LAKASS Program was monitored and evaluated using both the in-house or institutional monitoring and evaluation system of the NNC as well as an external system which tapped SUCs as external evaluators and monitors.

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1. In-House Monitoring. At the regional level, the RNPCs of the NNC took the lead in monitoring the progress of program implementation and provided technical guidance to the LCEs for more effective implementation of LAKASS projects and activities.

Project visits were likewise conducted by teams of the NNC Central Office staff who obtained first-hand information on the implementation of the program. Meetings were held with local officials at the municipal and barangay levels to discuss issues at hand. Project beneficiaries were also interviewed to obtain indications of project success or benefits gained.

Each visit was documented and monitoring reports were disseminated to all concerned to serve as basis for resolving issues and facilitating action.

2. External Monitoring. Selected SUCs were commissioned by the NNC to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the LAKASS Program. The SUCs operating near or adjacent to the province with the LAKASS NDM were selected on the basis of track performance. Three program stages were evaluated by the SUCs, namely ; preimplementation, mid-year implementation and after a year of program implementation, to gauge the impact of LAKASS. A research protocol was developed by the NNC which guided the SUCs in monitoring and evaluation. Periodic reports on the status of project implementation were submitted to the NNC which in turn prepared progress reports to the NAFC and the DA as well as to the NC-GB and NNC Technical Committee.

Program Accomplishments

A. Conceptual Framework Area Coverage

Majority(63%) of the LAKASS barangays are classified as agricultural zones with farming as the main source of livelihood. Dwelling units are mostly made of *nipa* and concrete materials. Springs and artesian wells are the most common sources of potable water supply. One-third or 38% of the barangays have no irrigation system, and 32% of the farmers rely on rain

as source of water. Seventy-five percent(75%) of the barangay roads are unpaved.

B. Socio-Economic Profile of Household Beneficiaries

LAKASS Program targeted economically and socially disadvantaged families within NDMs. Results of baseline data collection conducted by SUCs revealed that the average household size of LAKASS household beneficiaries is six. One-third of the parents were not able to finish their elementary schooling ; another one-third completed the elementary level ; and the rest either completed or attained a year or two of secondary level education. Majority of 78% of the household beneficiaries are below the poverty line of ₱ 7,350.00¹⁾. The main source of livelihood among heads of household beneficiaries is farming(56.7%), 29.3% are service workers, 7.6% are self-employed, and the remaining 6.4% are fisherfolk.

More than half(55.1%) of the farmers are either tenants or share croppers ; 37.6% are farm owner-operators ; and 6.7% are farm workers or wage earners. Most common crops produced by beneficiaries are *palay*(64.3%) and corn(40.1%).

Eighty-four percent(84%) of the fisherfolk use non-motorized *bancas* ; two-thirds(66.2%) of these families own fishing *bancas* while the rest rent their *bancas* and fishing gear. Households rely on either artesian wells(41.4%), springs or rivers(22.7%) for their drinking water. Only 18% have access to piped water. More than a quarter of the households(28.7%) are between 100 and 500 meters away from their nearest source of drinking water, another quarter(25.8%) are located a kilometer away from the nearest source.

Forty-three percent(43%) of the households in these LAKASS areas use water-sealed toilets ; about 23.5% still use open-pit toilets ; and 17.9% have no toilet facility.

C. Nutritional Status of Family Beneficiaries

1. Adults. The weight status of adults was det-

¹⁾ 1991 Poverty Threshold, Economic and Social Indicators, NSCB

etermined using the body mass index (BMI) of 21.0 for males and 21.5 for females as cut-off points ; i.e. males with BMI of 21.0 were classified as having normal weight, while those with BMI less than 21.0 were classified as underweight.

Of the 1,759 adults (fathers and nonpregnant women) targeted by the LAKASS projects, more than three-fourths (76.3%) were classified as having normal weights while 17.2% were classified as underweight.

Underweight-for-height is more prevalent among nonpregnant mothers (20.4%) than among fathers (13.1%).

2. Preschool Children

Weight-for-Age. Of the 1,986 preschool children included in the LAKASS Program Expansion I, 25.4% were underweight-for-age. The prevalence of underweight among the boys (26.7%) was slightly higher than that among the girls (24.3%).

Infants at the first stage of weaning (6 to 11 months old) were most affected by undernutrition (28.8%). More than one-third (37.1%) of the boys within this age group were underweight-for-age.

Height-for-Age. More than a quarter (26.5%) of preschool children were considered stunted. Stunting affected 30.4% of the boys compared to almost 23% of the girls.

Infants between six to eleven months were most affected by stunting (34%). Almost half (47.5%) of the boys within this age group were stunted ; higher than the prevalence of stunting of 23.3% among the girls.

Weight-for-Age. Wasting affected 18.7% of preschool children. Twenty percent (20.3%) of the boys and 17.1% of the girls were wasted. A quarter of infants (6 to 11 months old) were classified as wasted.

D. Projects Implemented

The major projects of LAKASS Program were of two categories : the direct consumption type of projects and the productive type of projects. Twenty percent of the funds given to LGUs were used for direct consumption types of activities like food assistance ; incremental food production (using the bio-intensive

gardening (BIG) technology) ; nutrition-related health services like micronutrient supplementation, deworming, environmental sanitation ; and nutrition education. The rest of the funds (80%) were used for productive types of activities which included IGP's.

1. Consumption-Type Category. Among the various projects under this category, food assistance was undertaken by majority of the areas mainly center-based feeding activities using locally available food commodities such as mung beans, rice and noodles. Both moderately and severely underweight preschool children were targeted for food assistance.

Mother or guardians of moderately and severely underweight preschool children attended nutrition education activities to improve their knowledge and skills on basic nutrition, meal management and food preparation, sanitation and hygiene, breastfeeding, and family planning.

Nutrition-related health services such as micronutrient supplementation, deworming, and construction of sanitary toilet facilities and potable water systems were planned and implemented. Generally, outreach for nutrition-related health services was high.

For incremental food production projects, fruits and vegetables seeds were distributed for bio-intensive gardens.

2. Productive-Type Category. Swine, goats, and a variety of poultry were raised by the beneficiaries as part of animal dispersal livelihood projects.

Seed capital was provided to finance income-generating projects which included buy-and-sell activities (fish, vegetables, ready-to-wear clothing) ; handicraft projects using bamboo, *sinamay* and other indigenous materials ; money-shop ; and other trading activities in the community.

E. Program Assessment

The various LAKASS projects have helped alleviate the economic and nutritional status of targeted beneficiaries. The complementation of various project elements insured that the beneficiaries benefited most because these projects were focused to the most malnourished and implemented in an integrated manner.

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Thus, food assistance provided to targeted preschool children had a more sustained effect since the families of these children were provided with potable water and sanitary toilet facilities.

Nutrition education, usually done through the conduct of mothers' classes, targeted mothers and child carers of underweight children. It helped to improve their knowledge and skills on basic nutrition. Targets households were taught proper meal management and food preparation, sanitation and hygiene, breastfeeding, family planning, and maternal and child care, among others.

1. Nutritional Impact

Data show that the implementation of the LAKASS Program brought significant positive results as indicated by the decrease in the prevalence of underweight-for-age preschool children from 25.4% to 21.3% at the end of the period under review. This represents a 4.1 percentage point decrease or a decrease in prevalence by about 16%.

Similarly, the prevalence of stunting or underheight-for-age preschool children was reduced by 21%, i.e. from 26.5% at the start of the program to 21% at the end of the period under review.

Furthermore, the prevalence of wasting among preschool children also decreased by 16%, i.e. from 18.7% to 15.7%, at the end of the period under review.

2. Impact on Household Income. LAKASS IGPs have successfully augmented the low incomes of beneficiaries. The seed capital provided to beneficiaries were invested primarily in small animal raising, food and vegetable production and home-based enterprises. The utilization of the BIG technology in household level food production projects insured a steady supply of food for the family all year round. This was translated to additional food supply and increase in family income. An overall increase of 3% in the annual family income of LAKASS beneficiaries was realized for the period under review.

As part of the institution-building thrust of the LAKASS program, several cooperatives were organized at the initiative of the LAKASS beneficiaries

themselves. These cooperatives served as production and marketing arms of the groups for IGPs that the beneficiaries implemented. The spirit of cooperativism provided beneficiaries with the opportunity to pool their resources, both financial and skills, solve their own problems; as well as generate additional resources from other organizations. However, some LAKASS beneficiaries were passive. Furthermore, some of them held on to the wrong perception that since LAKASS was a government project, there was no need to pay the seed capital they received.

Program Strengths

The strengths of the LAKASS Program lie in it being a support program to the government's thrust of people empowerment and human development as laid down by the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 1993-1998 as well as its being a component of the PPAN.

In selecting project areas and beneficiaries, the LAKASS Program had institutionalized a highly objective process of utilizing data on prevalence of malnutrition and municipal revenues. This results to a highly focused, relevant and high-impact program

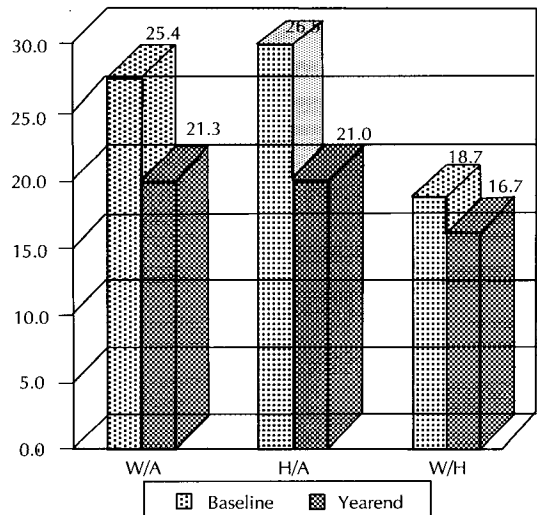


Fig. 4. Nutritional status of preschool children.

that is grounded on the existing nutritional problems and needs of communities and households. To date, the LAKASS Program had covered 176 NDMs out of more than 1,316 depressed municipalities and cities nationwide.

Although LAKASS is a national initiative, it is anchored with the local governments, they being responsible for planning and implementation of local development initiatives, making LAKASS the project of the people. In areas covered by LAKASS, the program proved to be helpful in the implementation of the Local Government Code. Similarly, the integrated and multisectoral approach of LAKASS supports the PPAN strategy of a comprehensive and community-based nutrition program, responsive to the problems and needs of the community.

LAKASS, through its income-generating and food production projects, has instituted mechanisms for empowerment of the very poor and deprived families in the targeted NDMs. First, through community consultations and values formation training, LAKASS enabled the mobilization of communities and family members to contribute to their own development. Second, it developed entrepreneurial skills for self-employment and greater productivity through the provision of seed capital and skills training among community people. Third, through the roll-over scheme, LAKASS to a certain extent promoted responsible credit behavior in repaying loans.

Through the LAKASS Program, government services were delivered to areas which have never been reached yet by any government programs. Thus, the LAKASS Program served as a vehicle to bring the government closer to the people in far-flung areas.

Future Actions

The LAKASS program has proven to be instrumental in improving the economic and nutritional status of children and household beneficiaries in project areas. Thus, it is imperative to insure that the programs implemented and sustained not only in the ex-

isting 176 LAKASS areas but also in other NDMs. Toward this end, the NNC, together with its collaborating institutions and partner agencies, has identified recommended actions at national and sub-national levels to address policy, technical, organizational, and other requirements of the program.

A. Policy Support

At the national level, the NNC will continue to provide policy directions and generate and mobilize resources for the program. LAKASS has proven to be an effective community-based model for nutrition improvement and its framework will be shared with other institutions, local governments, and other agencies for replication and support.

At the local level, LAKASS shall be integrated into the local development plan as a strategy for poverty alleviation and nutrition improvement. In this way, local funds will be allocated for LAKASS. Local legislative ordinances or measures can also be enacted or passed upon to facilitate the implementation of LAKASS program components, e.g. resolutions requiring all households to have backyard gardens for sustained home food production.

B. Technical Support

National government agencies, through the NNC, shall continue to provide technical assistance to local governments on nutrition problem assessment, program planning, management, and skills training. Specifically, guidelines on program management and other resource materials for the different project activities, e.g. nutrition education, livestock management, etc. will be developed for both implementors and beneficiaries. Skills training on financial management like simple bookkeeping shall be strengthened.

C. Organizational Support

LAKASS household beneficiaries shall be organized into community-based organizations such as cooperatives. These organizations will serve not only as the implementing arm for income generating projects but also as a venue for further community interaction

and support to insure that economic activities are sustained and expanded.

At the national level, the NNC can establish and improve networking and interlinkages with LGUs, NGOs, NGAs, and SUCs. These links will be crucial in establishing a resource base for LAKASS in terms of money, manpower, and technical know-how. Links between and among LGUs can be used as a support and advocacy system. In this say, innovative approaches and unique experiences gained by LGUs through the management of the LAKASS program can be shared with other LGUs.

Regular and frequent field monitoring and supervision must be done, especially to far-flung barangays, so that response to program-related problems will be better addressed. In support to this, a simple management and information system shall be developed to help LGUs closely monitor and evaluate the program and provide a system for proper documentation of LAKASS implementation. In this regard, partnership with SUCs shall be continued and strengthened.

The need for continuous advocacy and orientations for local chief executives cannot be overemphasized. Experience in the 176 LAKASS NDMs clearly showed that cooperation and interest of LCEs are vital for the efficient and effective implementation of LAKASS.

Active participation of community members must also be encouraged in the identification, implementation, and development of appropriate projects for their own families. This will encourage total commitment on their part in the implementation of various LAKASS projects because they will actually own the project as they see their important role in overall community development. Emphasis on positive values through strengthened values formation training is also imperative in order for the program to be self-sustaining, thereby giving beneficiaries the opportunity to empower themselves and become self-reliant.

Conclusion

Since its inception in 1989, the LAKASS Program had made significant contributions in alleviating the nutritional problems of 176 NDMs of the country. It facilitated the delivery of services by the government to these marginalized communities in both urban and rural areas nationwide. With its distinct features such as social mobilization along with other complementary components, LAKASS actually served as a catalyst in effecting active people's participation toward genuine community development. The noble task of helping the poorest of the poor and the disadvantaged sectors in our society has continually inspired many. With the government's continued commitment to pursue programs under Philippines 2000 toward the attainment of NICHood in the nutrition sense : i.e. being a nutritionally improved country, LAKASS will remain as the NNC's major strategy in addressing malnutrition. But a huge task lies ahead, for there are still hundreds of NDMs and cities nationwide in dire need of assistance.

The urgent need to address the nation's prevailing nutritional problems to correct unstable economic productivity in the countryside becomes more imperative to achieve international trade competitiveness through a well-nourished and productive human resource base. Solving the country's problem of malnutrition restores not only economic gains, but also one of the basic human rights which is the right to adequate, nutritious and safe food as part of total human development.

Executive Summary

The *Lalakas ang Katawang Sapat sa Sustansiya* (LAKASS) Program is a component of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) formulated and coordinated by the National Nutrition Council (NNC). LAKASS aims to address malnutrition in the identified nutritionally depressed municipalities (NDMs) throughout the country. It adopts a community-based

approach and employs a combination of interventions in dealing with the nutrition problems in the community. The LAKASS Program enables the people in the community, in partnership with the local government unit(LGU), to plan and manage their own food and nutrition programs. Each UGU was provided with an average amount of US \$8,000 for various food and nutrition related projects. Other program inputs included material assistance in the form of training kits and LAKASS Guidelines as well as technical assistance provided at local levels. Program monitoring and evaluation was conducted at two levels, namely : the built-in or institutional monitoring and evaluation system of the PPAN and the external evaluation through the state universities and college(SUCs) commissioned by the NNC.

A concrete manifestation of the program's success can be seen by its impact on the nutritional status of children covered by the program and the improvement in the economic condition of the family beneficiaries. There was a significant decrease in the prevalence of underweight-for-age, stunting, and wasting by 16%, 21%, and 16%, respectively. There was likewise an overall improvement in the economic condition of family beneficiaries, as evidenced by an increase in their annual income by 3% and the diversity of food they consumed.

The successful implementation of the program was result of collective efforts of the LGUs and the program beneficiaries to complement the financial, material, and technical assistance extended by the NNC. The National Agricultural and Fishery Council(NAFC) of the Department of Agriculture(DA) played a key role in sourcing and facilitating the provision of funds of the LAKASS Program through the RP-Japan Increased Food Production Program.

To date, the LAKASS Program had covered 176 NDMs nationwide, but the bigger challenge lies ahead, for there are still a large number of NDMs needing LAKASS assistance. The call for further expansion cannot be overemphasized for it was proven that positive gains can be derived from the LAKASS

Program.

Acronyms

BIG	- Bio-intensive gardening
BMI	- Body mass index
BNC	- Barangay nutrition committee
DA	- Department of Agriculture
IGPs	- Income-generating projects
LAKASS	- <i>Lalakas ang Katawang Sapat sa Sustansiya</i>
LCE	- Local chief executive
LGC	- Local Government Code
LGU	- Local government unit
UNC	- Local nutrition committee
MLO	- Municipal LAKASS officer
MNC	- Municipal nutrition committee
NAFC	- National Agricultural and Fishery Council
NDMs	- Nutritionally depressed municipalities
NGAs	- National government agencies
NGOs	- Nongovernment organizations
NIC	- Nutritionally improved country
NNC	- National Nutrition Council
NNC-GB	- National Nutrition Council-Government Board
PLO	- Provincial LAKASS officer
PNC	- Provincial nutrition committee
PPAN	- Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition
RNPC	- Regional nutrition program coordinator
RNPET	- Regional nutrition planning and evaluation team
SUCs	- State universities and colleges

Definition of Technical Terms

BIO-INTENSIVE GARDENING - a biological form of agriculture in which a small area(homeyard) is intensively cultivated using nature's own ingredients

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to rebuild and maintain the soil's productivity.

BODY MASS INDEX—defined as a proportion of weight over height, weight expressed in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters (w/h^2). It provides a measure of body mass, ranging from thinness to obesity and is commonly used among adults (18 years old and above). It relates body weight to surface area of the body than to height.

FOOD ASSISTANCE—is a temporary, preventive, and rehabilitative approach to improve the nutritional status of the undernourished and nutritionally at-risk through the provision of food supplements through center-based feeding or dry rationing.

INCREMENTAL FOOD PRODUCTION—intervenes by providing technical, material, and financial assistance to household and communities affected and at-risk to malnutrition to enable them to grow and raise foods by themselves in family, community or school gardens and thereby increase their food consumption.

MALNUTRITION—reflects undesirable health status of the body due to either excess or lack of calories and nutrient supply: condition wherein the function of an individual is impaired to the point where he or she can no longer maintain an adequate level of growth, or the processes of pregnancy and lactation.

MICRONUTRIENT SUPPLEMENTATION—is a nutrition-related health service which provides beneficiaries with micronutrient supplements such as vitamin A capsules, iron tablets or syrup, and iodized oil capsules.

NUTRITION INFORMATION AND EDUCATION—process of acquiring knowledge, developing desirable attitudes and practices that will

modify or reinforce nutrition behavior leading to healthful lifestyles.

NUTRITION-RELATED HEALTH SERVICES—cover a range of services along control of nutritional deficiencies as well as the rehabilitation of moderate and severe malnutrition cases and control of nutrition-related diseases.

NUTRITIONAL STATUS—refers to the condition of the body resulting from ingesting and utilization of food.

NUTRITIONALLY DEPRESSED MUNICIPALITIES—priority areas for nutrition program ranked according to prevalence of severely and moderately underweight preschool children and municipal revenue; municipalities with the highest prevalence of undernutrition and lowest municipal revenue are considered nutritionally depressed.

POTABLE WATER SUPPLY—involves the setting up of communal or home water systems for safe drinking water. It aims to arrest water-borne diseases like diarrhea which may lead to malnutrition.

UNDERWEIGHT—identifies children who are moderately and severely underweight-for-age using a cut-off point of equal or less than the fifth percentile of standard weight-for-age distribution.

STUNTING or Underheight—identifies children who are moderately and severely underheight-for-age using a cut-off point of equal or less than the fifth percentile of standard height-for-age distribution.

WASTING or Thinness—identifies children who are moderately and severely thin or malnourished using a cut-off point of equal or less than the fifth percentile of standard weight-for-height distribution.