



Evaluation Summary



International
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Evaluation Unit

Ensuring food security and nutrition for children 0-2 years in the Philippines - Mid term Joint evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Philippines*

Mid-Term Evaluation: *Jan 2011*

Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*

ILO Administrative responsibility: *CO-Manila*

Technical Area: *TRAVAIL*

Evaluation Management: *MDG
Achievement Fund*

Evaluation Team: *Richard M. Chiwara*

Project Code: *PHI/09/51/UND*

Donor: *MDG-AF (US\$ 3,500,000)*

UNDP: 4,176,800

UNICEF: 1,620,413

FAO: 222,757

ILO: 287,332

WFP: 428,000

WHO: 941,498

Keywords: *Food security, Nutrition, Social
Protection, Health Services*

Taken from the executive summary of the report

The Joint Programme “Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition for Children 0-24 Months in the Philippines” has a budget of \$3.5 million and contributes to the improvement of nutritional status of 0-2 year old children and complement government’s efforts through social marketing strategies to increase the percent of exclusive breastfeeding through nationwide efforts. In addition, the JP intends to improve the

nutritional quality of home-prepared complementary foods of children 6-24 months through pilot of in-home fortification with multiple micronutrient powder to reduce and prevent anaemia; including training on recipe trials among nutrition and health workers to improve complementary feeding using locally-available foods. The JP works at 2 levels; (i) at the national level, the JP intends to galvanize multisectoral duty bearers to create an enabling environment, through policy and programming, for pregnant, lactating and working women that will support, protect and promote the rights of the child to appropriate quality infant feeding; and (ii) at the local level, by engaging Local Government Units (LGUs) and other local actors to implement and monitor the national policies. The JP also aims to strengthen the nutrition information system and the quality of data reported through the system from the local level to the national level through a pilot municipal level early warning nutrition and food security system.

The JP is implemented in 6 areas that were selected based on the criteria of high prevalence of under-nutrition, poverty, and population size. One province, from the three main island groups was chosen - Naga City, Pasacao, Camarines Sur in Region 5; Carles, Iloilo and Iloilo City in Region 6; and, Zamboanga City and Aurora, Zamboanga del Sur in Region 9.

This Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) was commissioned by the MDG-F to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the JP activities

in relation to its stated objectives and results, as well as to generate knowledge and identify good practices and lessons learned. This report of the MTE represents the findings of the independent evaluation conducted by an independent evaluator during the period June to August 2011; presented in 8 chapters including: (1) introduction and background to the JP, (2) description of the evaluation objectives, scope and methodology, (3) description of the JP, (4) evaluation findings, (5) Management and Governance arrangements, (6) conclusions, (7) lessons learned, and (8) recommendations.

The MTE was undertaken in four phases: (1) Review of official JP, UN agency and government documents, (2) 10 day in-country mission comprising of meetings and interviews to collect primary data from key partners and stakeholders, (3) Site visits to region 5 and region 9 for direct observations on the implementation process, and (4) Debrief of preliminary findings and feedback from the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG). Mid-Term Evaluation: Ensuring Food Security for Children 0-24 months in the Philippines (MDG-F 2030)

Summary of findings

The key findings of the evaluation are listed below:

- (1) The JP is very relevant in the context of the development objectives of the Philippines, and is adequately aligned with Government priorities and strategies as well as the overall objectives of the UN.
- (2) There are clear linkages between the JP and relevant MDG goals, particularly MDG 1 and 4; and indirectly MDGs 2, 3 and 6.
- (3) The JP leverages on prior and existing government programmes and lessons from past experience.
- (4) The design of the JP did not fully take into account the comparative advantages of all participating UN agencies, and consequently does not demonstrate a strong benefit from 'delivering as one' although it contributes to development of synergies across UN programmes.

(5) Activity implementation was delayed due to initial administrative challenges that were experienced during the inception phase, which by itself does not directly contribute to expected outputs.

(6) Implementation of activities is structured around components, which is a good practice that enables different UN and Government agencies to jointly focus on common results and contributes to reduction of duplication and overlap.

(7) The JP Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework lacks adequate and measurable indicators, most being quantitative even when qualitative indicators would be more appropriate. As a result, reporting tends to be activity-based.

(8) The JP governance and management arrangements are very effective and have strong national ownership and leadership. This was strengthened by the good practice of establishing Technical Working Groups (TWGs) at the national and sub-national levels.

(9) While there is good coordination based on national ownership and leadership, there is a lack of specific mechanisms for measuring the effect on transaction costs.

(10) The engagement of government counterparts at the national and sub-national levels provides a good venue for programme sustainability. However, the absence of a specific exit strategy has affected the development of a targeted capacity building strategy and establishment of a process documentation methodology that will ensure replication based on national capacities.

Lessons learned

Based on the above findings, four key lessons have been identified:

- (a) After the approval of the JP, there seems to be a gestation period which lasts about 6 months in which the systems and structures required to launch activity implementation are put in place. This process culminates with the Inception Workshop, which signals the Mid-Term Evaluation: Ensuring Food Security for Children 0-24 months in the Philippines (MDG-F 2030) actual start of implementation. This phase of the JP programme cycle does not

contribute to actual outputs as defined in the RME framework; and as such essentially shortens the actual time in which programme activities that contribute to results and outputs are actually implemented.

(b) The systems that are in place at LGU level for monitoring and tracking data are inadequate, such that they may affect the accuracy and reliability of national data on some of the indicators. The capacities for information management have to be strengthened at LGU level in order to achieve credible national data.

(c) When implementation of activities is structured at the component level, partners' capacity to collaborate and engage in joint activities including planning, implementation and monitoring is enhanced. This is a good practice, which is fundamentally different from other implementation approaches which are designed around specific UN agency outputs.

(d) Sustainability of JP processes and results requires the establishment of specific venue for continuity. The JP has adequately addressed this by giving the lead coordinating role to the NNC and engaging broad participation of civil society and other national institutions.

(e) Lack of a specific exit strategy could affect the design and development of a replicable model that is capable of implementation in the framework of national systems and capacities. Such an exit strategy, if appropriately design should establish what the JP intends to leave in place at the end of the programme cycle, including national capacities, documented process models as well as mechanisms for engaging broad national partnerships.

Recommendations

Overall, the MTE concluded that the JP is on track and does not require major changes or adjustments in implementation. However, five recommendations were identified to strengthen the JPs effectiveness and contribution to future programming:

(1) The MDG-F should consider separating the JP Inception Phase from the project cycle.

(2) The UNRCO, in collaboration with UN agencies and national counterparts, should design a study to identify the key elements that contribute affect transaction costs, and how these can be effectively measured, monitored and reduced.

(3) The JP should develop specific strategies and interventions to strengthen local-level information management systems.

(4) The JP should expand the practice of Father's classes to all JP areas to enhance support and food security for lactating mothers and their infants.

(5) The JP should design and undertake a targeted study to determine and recommend appropriate MNP dosage for the Philippines.

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(6) The JP in collaboration with partner UN agencies should continue review and redraft of the JP indicators.

(7) The JP should develop a specific Exit Strategy that clearly defines what the JP will leave in place at the conclusion of the programme, including national capacities and fully tested process models for replication.