



NURTURING THE FILIPINO  
TOWARDS A STRONGER NATION



**ISBN NO. 978-971-619-037-3**

**Philippine Copyright 2014 ©  
NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL**

Published by:

**NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL**

Nutrition Building, 2332 Chino Roces Avenue Extension

Taguig City, Philippines

June 2014

**All rights reserved.**

No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means - electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher and owner of this book.

# CONTENTS

MESSAGE of NNC Governing Board Chair	4
MESSAGE of Chair, Civil Service Commission	5
MESSAGE of Executive Director	6
A Brief History of NNC	8
Nutrition's Biggest Hurdles	14
Breaking Through the Barriers	22
Helping Hands	36
Our Guiding Lights	40
We Look to the Future	46
The White Knights of NNC	48
Acknowledgments	62

# MESSAGE



My warmest felicitations to the National Nutrition Council as it celebrates 40 years of relevant and meaningful existence. I congratulate my fellow members of the Governing Board, the inter-agency Technical Committee, the NNC Secretariat, Local Nutrition Committees chaired by their local chief executives, Nutrition Action Officers at provincial, city, municipal and barangay level, and Barangay Nutrition Scholars all of whom comprise the NNC network.

As the highest policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition, the NNC was able to orchestrate improvements in nutrition in the last four decades. Through the development of national nutrition policies and plans, stakeholders were guided along actions to address malnutrition through direct nutrition interventions and actions addressing malnutrition at its root causes. NNC led programs such as the *Lalakas ang Katawang Sapat sa Sustansiya* (LAKASS) Program, the Barangay Nutrition Scholars Program, Philippine Nutrition Surveillance System and the Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program. Cognizant of the need for positive nutrition behaviour through correct nutrition information, the NNC continues to promote good nutrition among our people, using mass media creatively to reach families even in remote and hardship areas.

However, challenges remain as the NNC is not only tasked to address undernutrition but is faced with a growing Filipino population who are suffering from overnutrition and diet-related non-communicable diseases. The role of nutrition in preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases is also critical for Filipinos to be able to lead healthy lifestyles. NNC is also faced with the challenge of ensuring that nutrition in emergency response is institutionalized after I designated it as Chair of the Nutrition Cluster. And lastly, NNC must be able to make nutrition politically palatable and attractive to local investments despite the regular change in national and local leadership.

I tip my hat to the women and men of the NNC Secretariat led by Assistant Secretary Bernie Flores for the hard work, dedication, creativity and persistence you have shown all these years in leading the nation in nutrition policy and program formulation, advocacy and coordination.

I am privileged to Chair the Governing Board and I assure you of my continuing support and commitment to champion nutrition.

*Mabuhay!*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Enrique T. Ona'.

**Enrique T. Ona**  
Secretary of Health  
Chair, NNC Governing Board

# MESSAGE



On behalf of the Civil Service Commission, I congratulate the National Nutrition Council (NNC) for its 40 fruitful years in the service. I believe that in all those years, you have been actively contributing to nation building, and I am very grateful that I have been part of your organization's milestones.

From February 2005 to January 2010, we ensured the approval of a number of key nutrition and related policies like the National Policy on Nutrition Management in Emergencies and Disaster. We were also designated by the Department of Health (DOH) as the lead organization in the Nutrition Cluster under the Health Cluster of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

We also led the Anti-Hunger Task Force created under Executive Order 616. This was formulated with supply and demand components that guided the design and implementation of various strategies to produce more food, enhance the efficiency of logistics and food delivery, provide employment and livelihood opportunities, manage population, as well as improve people's productivity.

As part of promoting good nutrition, we launched the Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program (AHMP) and conducted a series of media fora held in the ten Priority One Provinces (or food-poorest provinces), including Zamboanga del Norte, Masbate, Maguindanao, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Mountain Province, Lanao del Norte, Camarines Norte, Sarangani, and Zamboanga Sibugay.

These are just some of the many successful projects that brought NNC to where it is now. I encourage you to continuously prove your zeal for public service in the years to come. The farther you go, the higher you should soar, with uncompromised quality of service, excellence, and integrity.

May you succeed in all your future endeavors. **Mabuhay** ang National Nutrition Council!

**Francisco T. Duque III, MD, MSc**  
Chairman, Civil Service Commission  
Former Chair, NNC Governing Board, 2005-2009

# MESSAGE



The National Nutrition Council and I literally grew up together.

I was a fresh graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Community Nutrition from the College of Home Economics of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, when I joined the National Nutrition Council in 1975.

The agency was barely a year old, having been just created in June 1974 through Presidential Decree 491 or the Nutrition Act of the Philippines when I started as a casual employee in its Management Planning Division. While moving up the ranks and given bigger responsibilities in the entire organization, I participated and witnessed the actualization of the National Nutrition Council's role and vision as the country's highest policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition, recognized both globally and locally.

From baby steps to giant leaps, the National Nutrition Council gradually shaped the mindset of policy makers, decision makers, and even the ordinary Filipino to recognize the word "nutrition", understand, and appreciate that good nutrition is an important factor in the determination of development. Schoolchildren learned about GO, GROW and GLOW food groups. Nutrition became a buzzword, a marketing brand for the ads media and food industry. Mothers learned that having their children weighed particularly during the annual Operation *Timbang* will tell them if their child was malnourished or not. Among local governments, nutrition became an excuse to organize parades, contests, and related activities to celebrate the month of July as nutrition month as well as recognize best efforts of communities to produce and prepare food, nurture healthy babies, and adopt healthy eating habits.

Because of what it has accomplished the past 40 years, the National Nutrition Council has become the nucleus of a national nutrition service web at the regional, provincial, city, municipal and barangay levels extending the agency's reach and assistance to the farthest, poorest segments of the population.

In the coming years, I aspire for the National Nutrition Council, in conjunction with all stakeholders to further its understanding of nutrition within sectoral perspectives and on national development, gain a sharper perception of the nutritional needs of individuals within a changing population, and stimulate ideas for future nutrition program development and more efficient methods of communicating nutritional benefits to the people.




I would also like to see the sectoral departments on health, agriculture and food security, trade, employment and livelihood, social protection, science and technology, local governance, and overall economic development; including those from the private sector and the business community have a change of heart and mind about nutrition and ensure that nutrition is integrated into their policies, programs, and budgets. This will ultimately translate to an improved nutritional status among Filipinos thereby ensuring the universal right to nutrition.

The National Nutrition Council has nurtured the Filipino people for four decades and we will continue to do so in the next 40 years and beyond. The coming years will be more challenging but we do not fear. We are convinced that we make a difference in the lives of Filipinos. As Confucius said, "It does not matter how slowly we go, so long as we do not stop". Sooner, more than later, we will reach our dreams and aspirations.

On behalf of the entire workforce of the National Nutrition Council, I thank all the people who compose the nutrition network in government, business sector, civil society, and the academe, for supporting the government's nutrition programs and channelling their resources toward contributing to the attainment of nutritional adequacy for all.

***Mabuhay*** ang NNC!



**Maria-Bernardita T. Flores, CESO II**  
Assistant Secretary of Health  
Executive Director IV, NNC



# A Brief History of NNC



*“I hereby declare that nutrition is now a priority concern of the government...”*

**President Ferdinand E. Marcos**



## Nutrition History in the Making

Rising from the ashes after World War II, the Philippines was a picture of great despair. Cities and towns burned down, farms and factories laid to waste, roads and bridges destroyed, and thousands of lives lost. Those who survived the war were forced to put up with hunger and severe malnutrition as food was devastatingly scarce.

In March 1947, under the Manuel Roxas regime, the **Philippine Institute of Nutrition** (PIN) was created in a first attempt to institutionalize a national nutrition program. This marked the country's first step at organized efforts for nutrition. However, coordination proved to be rather limited and rudimentary, and the implementation of nutrition programs was sporadic at best. Approaches to problems related to nutrition were short-lived and more curative rather than preventive.

PIN was later reorganized under the Carlos P. Garcia administration into the **Food and Nutrition Research Center** (FNRC) in 1958. Nutrition research and education-related activities conducted by the FNRC were done under the National Science and Development Board (NSDB). With the aid of innovations in research and technology, nutrition problems in the country were better understood with a more technically-sound and evidence-based assessment.

In 1960, the **National Coordinating Council on Food and Nutrition** (NCCFN) was organized by the FNRC now called the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) in an attempt to coordinate nutrition work of

government and the private sector more effectively. But without a legal mandate, the loosely organized NCCFN carried out nutrition programs only in a number of key cities, provinces, and districts hoping to address malnutrition of infants, young children, and pregnant and nursing mothers.

The 1970s brought the country on the brink of economic and political turmoil. The need for functional coordination of efforts to address nutrition issues was realized and this was accomplished by virtue of **Executive Order No. 285**, issued in 1971. The **National Food and Agriculture Council** (NFAC), which had the responsibility for integrating nutrition into food programs, was created. NFAC took the place of NCCFN in the formulation, coordination and implementation of the first 4-year **Philippine Food and Nutrition Program** of 1971-1974. NFAC took on a more interdisciplinary approach to deliver nutrition services to targeted families through committees and barrio teams.

## Global Nutrition Crisis

Hunger and malnutrition soon became devastatingly threatening not only in the country but around the world. In an article on [Worldhunger.org](http://Worldhunger.org), Eric Holt-Giménez cited that there were 500 million hungry people in the developing world in 1974. International organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Trade Organization (WTO), The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (TAGRA), UN Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) convinced national leaders to take decisive action.



In response to this, President Ferdinand E. Marcos issued **Presidential Decree 491** or the Nutrition Act of the Philippines on 25 June 1974 declaring nutrition as a national priority. This decree created the **National Nutrition Council (NNC)**, making it the highest policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition. This decree likewise created the NNC Governing Board, which was then composed of the following:

- The Secretary, Department of Education and Culture**
- The Chairman-Coordinator, National Food and Agriculture Council**
- The Secretary, Department of Health**
- The Chairman, National Science Development Board**
- The Secretary, Department of Social Welfare**
- The Secretary, Department of Local Government and Community Development**
- The Chairman of the Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines**
- President, Philippine Medical Association**
- One other representative of the private sector to be appointed by the President of the Philippines.**

NNC relieved NFAC of its task in of coordinating nutrition activities from government and private sectors across the country. All nutrition work

then constituted the **Philippine Nutrition Program (PNP)**, the umbrella program that saw through the efficient delivery of nutrition interventions. The PNP approach pooled multi-agency resources to more effectively reach those most vulnerable to malnutrition in the country.

## The First Decade

In order to maximize the involvement of the private sector as well as empower the government further in tapping into the different resources available in the country, then First Lady Imelda Romualdez-Marcos founded the **Nutrition Center of the Philippines (NCP)** on 02 July 1974. A non-stock, non-profit foundation, the NCP's mission was to be at the forefront of mobilizing resources from the private sector in support of national nutrition efforts. To unify this inter-sectoral approach to arresting nutrition problems in the country, the first Executive Director of NNC, **Dr. Florentino S. Solon**, was appointed as head of the NCP as well.

**Former Agriculture Secretary Arturo R. Tanco, Jr.** joined Dr. Solon at the helm and drove the agency towards implementing a Nutrition-Oriented Development Plan (NORD). NNC engaged the productive (agriculture) and supportive (e.g., social welfare, education, local government, among



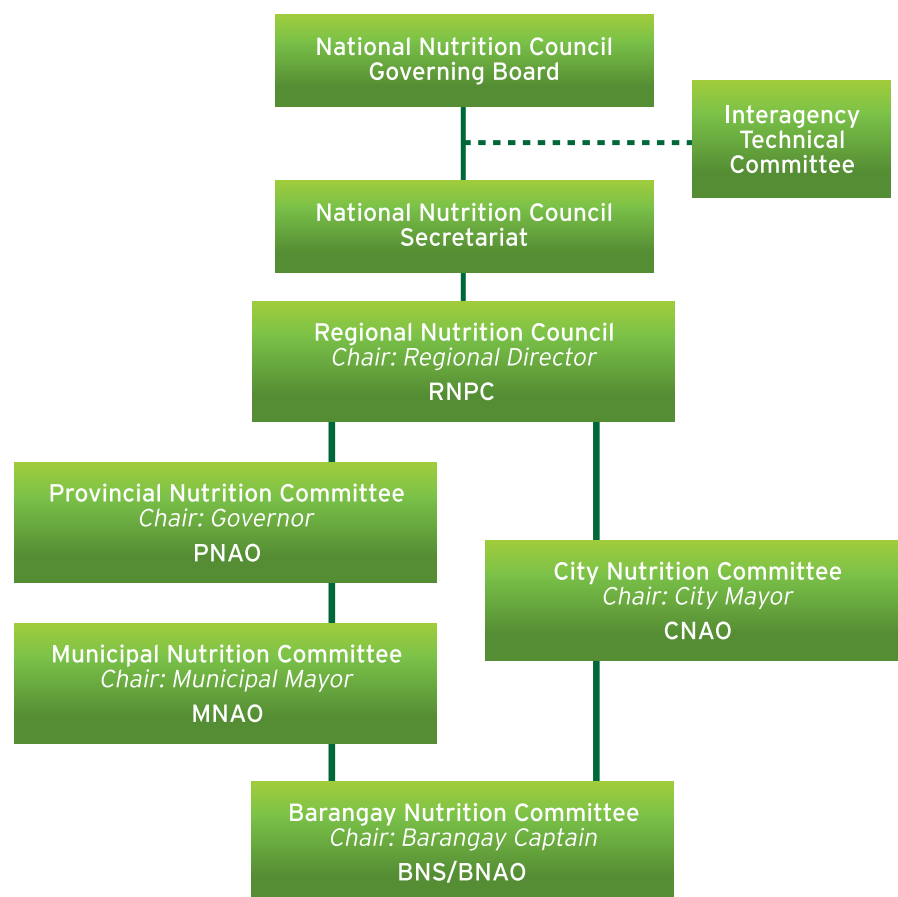
others) sectors in providing direct nutrition interventions as well as development measures that were intended to deal with the root causes of malnutrition.

In July 1976, President Marcos signed a Letter of Instruction which placed DSWD as principal agency in charge of the nationwide food assistance program to reach malnourished children who were identified through Operation *Timbang*. The DA, through the NFAC and Bureau of Agricultural Extension, was given a directive to mount a production program for legumes, beans, vegetables, fruits, livestock, poultry and fishery products, and to provide extension services for the nutrition education of farm housewives all over the country. The Department of Education and Culture was directed to include subjects on basic nutrition and techniques in nutrition education while the DOH was directed to be the principal agency in the treatment and rehabilitation of severely malnourished children. Lastly, the Department of Local Governments and Community Development was instructed to establish functioning **local nutrition committees** in every region, province, city, municipality and barangays to implement a national nutrition plan.

## Nutrition Revolution

The Marcos regime ended with the 1986 People Power Revolution, and Senator Ninoy Aquino's housewife took office as the first female Head of State not only in the Philippines but also in Asia. President Maria Corazon "Cory" Cojuangco-Aquino, viewed as the "Icon of Philippine Democracy," restored democracy to the country after nearly 21 years of authoritarian rule. Soon after ascending to power, the Cory administration paid close attention to civil liberties and human rights. As part of her goals for political reform, **Executive Order No. 234** or the **Reorganization Act of NNC** was promulgated on 22 July 1987 to reaffirm the need for interagency cooperation in nutrition policy-making and coordination. This expanded the NNC membership to include the **National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)**, **Department of Budget and Management (DBM)**, **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)**, and the **Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)**. EO 234 defined that NNC consists of the 10-member Cabinet-level policy-making Governing Board and the 132-member Secretariat tasked to execute the decisions of the Governing Board. DSWD was declared Chair of the NNC Governing Board. It was also this time that the government considered to take the economic aspect of nutrition more seriously. Armed with a fresher perspective on the role of nutrition in national development, **former NNC Executive Director Dr. Dulce Laurel-Bocobo** and **former DSWD Secretary Mita Pardo de Tavera** as NNC Chair were the prime movers for this event and they sought to ensure that the country's efforts were made in the right direction.

## NNC Organization Structure



A year later, the NNC Governing Board chairmanship was transferred back to the Department of Agriculture through Administrative Order No. 88. Over the years that the agency remained under the stewardship of the DA, the NNC became a staunch figure in nutrition education not only in the country but in various other countries around the globe. Apart from increasing the production of different food products (legumes, vegetables,

fruits, livestock, poultry and fishery products), through Letter of Instruction 441 issued by President Marcos in 1976, the DA also delivered nutrition education and programmed funding for its Home Management Technicians whose activities were coordinated by the NNC.

Former DA Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez, Chair of the NNC Governing Board from 1988-1989, ensured that funds were provided for NNC's *Lalakas ang Katawang Sapat sa Sustansiya* (LAKASS) Program to provide cash assistance to the most nutritionally depressed municipalities in the country. Other related nutrition initiatives likewise received funding support from the DA. Former DA Secretary Roberto S. Sebastian, Chair of the NNC Governing Board from 1992-1996, coined the acronym **NUTRITION** -

**N**ationwide salt iodization

**U**nified Actions for micronutrient supplementation and food fortification

**T**argeted assistance to ensure household food and nutrition security

**R**einforced capacities for policy and plan formulation, advocacy, surveillance, research and its utilization

**I**ntegration of nutrition considerations in development policies, programs and projects

**T**ri-media approach for effective nutrition information and education campaign

**I**ntensified alliance among stakeholders toward increased investments in nutrition

**O**rganization and management of local nutrition programs in poorest areas, and

**N**on-wage benefits packages in labor and industry

- an acronym to encourage more support for the crucial nutrition initiatives. Around this period, RA 7884 or the National Dairy Development Act of 1995 was passed with its twin objectives of developing



the local dairy industry and improving the nutritional status of Filipinos. As a result, partnership was forged between NNC and the National Dairy Authority to design a national dairy development program with nutrition considerations. Technical and financial assistance was provided to local dairy cooperatives to boost local milk production which would be used in supplementary milk feeding programs in schools and communities. This program would also help boost incomes of local dairy farmers.

During the stint of DA Secretary Edgardo J. Angara as Chair of the Governing Board from 1999-2001, he sought to strengthen the scientific underpinnings of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition, 1999-2004. The review of the PPAN was commissioned to Dr. Cecilia A. Florencio, a recognized nutrition expert here in the country and abroad. Secretary Angara wanted the NNC to also strengthen its efforts along nutrition information and education.

Meanwhile, Former DA Secretary Arthur C. Yap, Chair of the NNC Governing Board from 2004-2005, was heavily engaged in the Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's administration. The nutrition revolution strived throughout the years with the invaluable support of the NNC's champions, and the DA has proven to be on top of the long list of significant partners.

## Hunger Mitigation

On 30 November 2005, **President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** issued **Executive Order No. 472** which transferred the NNC as an attached agency of the Department of Health (DOH). EO 472 designated DOH as chair of its Governing Board with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as vice chairs.

In addition to its nutrition policy formulation and coordinating functions, NNC was designated as oversight of the Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program (AHMP), ensuring that hunger mitigation measures were in place. Expanding NNC's role in hunger-mitigation, President Arroyo issued **Executive Order No. 616** on 03 April 2007, creating the **Anti-Hunger Task Force** composed of 29 national government agencies implementing component programs of the AHMP.

## Hallmark of Philippine Nutrition

In fulfilling its mission of improving the nutrition situation in the country, the NNC recognizes that this cannot be achieved by merely spoon-feeding the hungry and malnourished. Nor can this be achieved by solely depending on the generosity of any single sector. The logo of NNC is composed of spoons that represent the different sectors - the different government agencies, the private sector, non-government organizations, people's organizations, religious organizations, local governments, and the community as a whole. This epitomizes the collaborative efforts of these sectors in seeking a unified and all-inclusive approach to nutritional well-being of Filipinos. Truly a hallmark in Philippine nutrition, the NNC logo models the interdisciplinary involvement in expediting implementation and coordination of nutrition services in the country.

As early as 1975, a memorandum of agreement between NNC and twenty-five (25) cooperating agencies was signed. To date, this multisectoral cooperation continues with as much dedication to ensuring that families are provided with the capability to reduce and, more importantly, prevent malnutrition. Local nutrition committees chaired by local chief executives and assisted by nutrition action officers carry out the role of NNC at the local level.

# Nutrition's Biggest Hurdles

*“Nutrition is not only a science... it is governance, it is politics. It is finance, it is labor and employment. It has many facets and all these facets are equally important.”*

**Maria-Bernardita T. Flores, CESO II**  
Assistant Secretary of Health  
Executive Director IV, NNC





## In Stride with the Presidents

Political change is something that NNC has weathered through the years. The ever changing political climate in the Philippines has dictated not only the direction of nutrition plans of action in the country but also the amount of support the agency receives. This has consequently led to the continuing evolution of the agency, keeping in stride with whoever sits as president to ensure that the country's nutritional well-being remains a priority in national and local development.

Through the years, the presidents have paved the way for the NNC's nutrition efforts to reach those most vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition in the country. **President Ferdinand E. Marcos** (30 December 1965 - 25 February 1986) had effectively put nutrition in the national development agenda, creating the Council, instituting the Barangay Nutrition Scholars Program, and making local chief executives responsible for driving nutrition programs at the grassroots level. **President Cory C. Aquino** (25 February 1986 - 30 June 1992), on the other hand, drove the inclusion of nutrition as one of the rights of children that the State must defend under the 1987 Philippine Constitution. She also allowed for the reorganization of the Council through E.O. 234. It was also during her administration that

the National Milk Code or E.O. 51 was passed, ensuring safe and adequate nutrition for infants through the *"promotion of breastfeeding and the regulation of promotion, distribution, selling, advertising, product public relations, and information services of artificial milk formulas and other covered products."*

**President Fidel V. Ramos** (30 June 1992 - 30 June 1998) pushed with the nutrition agenda further during his term, where the battle cry was for NIC-hood or Nutritionally Improved Country. He likewise issued Presidential Proclamation 311 on the adoption of the first Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) following the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition. President Ramos also signed the ASIN Law (Republic Act 8172), creating the Salt Iodization Advisory Board (SIAB) of the NNC to coordinate the nationwide salt iodization program. Meanwhile, **President Joseph E. Estrada** (30 June 1998 - 20 January 2001) signed the Food Fortification Law (Republic Act 8976) that provided the NNC with the mandate to review the scope of food fortification. It was also during this administration that the Early Childhood Care and Development Act (Republic Act 8980) institutionalized an *"integrated and comprehensive service delivery system for the health, nutrition, education and psychosocial needs of 0-6 year old children."*





Grappling with political leadership issues, NNC has learned to roll with the punches that go with the transition between presidents. Strategies and plans for nutrition action are carefully studied, refined and defended to make certain they fit into each president's national development agenda. This has proven most effective during the **President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** administration (20 January 2001 – 30 June 2010) during which NNC's annual budget was given a significant increase – from PhP48.047 Million in 2006 to PhP202.400 Million in 2007 and then PhP420.973 Million in 2008. The intensified annual budget of NNC, coupled with stronger ties with local and international partners, paved the way to the success of key nutrition programs under the Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program (AHMP). On top of this, President Arroyo expanded the promotion of breastfeeding through Republic Act 10028, mandating establishment of breastfeeding areas in workplaces.

Incumbent **President Benigno Aquino III** (30 June 2010 up to present) has enacted several health-related laws that positively impact the nutritional well-being of Filipinos. He signed into law Republic Act No. 10351, or the Sin Tax Law, which restructured the existing taxes imposed on alcohol and tobacco goods. Proceeds from taxes collected went to the promotion of healthy lifestyle among Filipinos. In addition, the Reproductive Health Law

or Republic Act No. 10354 was signed by President Aquino, providing for a national policy on responsible parenthood and reproductive health.

## Shifting Gears

Coming a long way from viewing nutrition as a mere by-product of national development, NNC has made a number of paradigm shifts to ensure that nutrition efforts are headed in the right direction. Shifting gears has also paved the way for the agency to refine strategies and plans, making certain that efforts achieve optimum efficacy. For instance, the removal in 1984 of the Philippines from the bracket of recipient countries of the US Food for Peace Program (Public Law 480 Title II) implemented by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) under the US Agency for International Development (USAID) resulted in significant program shifts for nationwide nutrition action.

In 1988, the NNC also adopted the **Nutrition Policy Statement** which took on a two-pronged approach to addressing malnutrition. The approach requires direct interventions to alleviate the conditions of the malnourished and long-term developmental strategies to solve the problem at its roots. The new paradigm in nutrition policy and action





came with the realization that any decisive response to malnutrition does not solely rely on food. Although food production and agricultural development are seen as fundamental links to nutrition, the **Nutrition in Development (NID)** approach saw a definite need for more sustainable preventive measures in addressing the country's nutrition issues. Now seeing nutrition in a more dynamic role in national development, endeavours to address nutritional problems in the country are now done parallel to efforts in addressing poverty, reducing morbidities and mortalities, particularly maternal and child mortality, achieving national economic growth and inclusive development.

## Weathering the Storm

Designed by National Artist for Architecture Leandro V. Locsin in the early '70s, the Nutrition Building was part of the complex of social welfare agencies along with the Population and Development Center and the Social Welfare and Development Center for Asia and the Pacific. Locsin was widely known for his use of concrete, floating volume and simplistic design, and his design of the Nutrition building was comparable in elegance and beauty to his other works - the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), National Arts Center, to name a few.

On 26 September 2009, Typhoon *Ondoy* (international name: Ketsana) devastated Metro Manila and several provinces in Luzon, washing away homes, offices and various other infrastructures. The NNC headquarters was not at all spared. The first floor of the Nutrition Building was heavily flooded. Documents, reports, equipment and other valuable materials were destroyed or heavily damaged. Parked vehicles floated away after floodwaters from the creek behind the building overflowed into the compound. A portion of the roof was blown away and water seeped into the walls of the building, damaging office interiors, furniture and fixtures.

NNC showed exactly how this destructive typhoon brought out the best in Filipinos. NNC staff led by its executive director went to the office the following day, despite it being a Sunday, to determine how much had been damaged and to clean up the mess left by the storm. Rather than feel depressed or let down, employees took turns cleaning out offices at the first floor, removing carpets and hauling boxes out of the building. The NNC Secretariat transferred and rented an office on the second floor of the Administration Building of the Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) in Taguig City so that they could continue their operations with minimal disruption. The DOH provided funds in the amount of PhP22 Million in 2010 and PhP10 Million in 2012 to enable the NNC Secretariat to rehabilitate the damaged office.



# Nutriskwela Radyo Komyuniti

One Nutrition  
One Nation

Pioneering Philippine Community Radio Internet Broadcasting



## Evolution of Technology and Equipment

As with any other government agency, NNC started operations with the most basic of equipment and machinery available. Owing to several partner organizations here and abroad, NNC acquired buses and vans, which were used to deliver nutrition service packages across the country. UNICEF-donated *Sakbayan* (*sasakyang katutubong bayan*), also known as the first Filipino car, was also widely used in NNC's regional operations. Typewriters and glass maps were used for the manual production of reports and mapping of nutrition efforts around the country. Telegraphs were also widely used as a means of communication before these were replaced with telephones, fax machines and the Internet.

By 1987, NNC purchased its own vehicle and began investing on more high-end equipment for nutrition surveillance and monitoring. As the years passed, the agency was able to procure computers and equipment that improved the delivery of information and education campaign materials, among others. The agency has established 25 *Nutriskwela* Community Radio Stations in 15 regions of the country, reaching more people in remote communities that are not reached by commercial radio with their nutrition campaigns. Technological advancements in nutrition education, coordination, and surveillance have made it possible for NNC to disseminate significant data to implementers of nutrition action here and abroad.

## Working with Limited Resources

One of the common organizational challenges particularly in a public bureaucracy is working with limited resources. The implementation of nutrition programs in the beginning as well as reaching those most vulnerable to nutrition problems proved most difficult. Armed with a “dream” and relentless commitment, NNC prevailed amidst these challenges over the years. The NNC dreams were enhanced along the way, coupled with shared experiences and expertise from partners here and abroad, creating nutrition plans of action more realistic and achievable. Successes in policy formulation and program implementation are a testament to the agency's resilience despite having to operate with limited resources. Recent years have afforded the agency with more access to the vulnerable population, with an increased operating budget and stronger interagency cooperation.

In the years that the agency operated with very limited resources, the NNC partnered with other agencies such as the DA for its nutrition campaigns, the most successful of which was the Malnutrition Prevention Program in cooperation with the Bureau of Agricultural Extension (BAEx) and implemented by the Bureau's home management technicians. The BAEx partnered with the Rural Improvement Clubs of the Philippines (RIC), a



non-government organization composed of 6 million strong rural women who were able to closely monitor the nutritional status of children in communities. (The RIC also later became a member of the Governing Board represented by its President Ms. Susan Pagdanganan.) UNICEF also became NNC's partner for the implementation of the nutrition component of several cycles of the various Country Programme for Children (CPC), the programme of cooperation between UNICEF and the Government of the Philippines.

The agency conducted trainings on nutrition program management for local government functionaries with the funds coming from the fees paid by the participants themselves. Initially targeting only 3 batches, the NNC completed 13 batches because of the demand from local government units for capacity-building.

More investments were made over the years in aid of the country's efforts to improve the Filipinos' nutritional well-being. Since the time of the Marcoses, weighing scales were provided to the LGUs to ensure that local monitoring via the OPT program is carried out. Handgrinders were likewise distributed for use in the Malnutrition Prevention Program, particularly in grinding rice, legumes, and dried fish and other commodities for the production of complementary foods. The Marcos administration likewise

invested on the setting up of malwards, nutrihuts, nutri-villages to provide nutritional and medical interventions to malnourished children and their families in the case of the nutri-hut and the nutri-village; and the training and deployment of Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNSs) with USAID funding assistance.

In order to address inadequate resources to fully support local initiatives, international and private partners were introduced into the mix. The UNICEF Country Programme for Children had been instrumental in funding several nutrition programs in the country. Partnerships with the private sector allowed Nutrition Month celebrations more promotional avenues.

### **Instigating Behavioral Change for Nutrition**

Preventing malnutrition relies heavily on influencing the behavior of those affected or vulnerable to it. Influencing people to make proper nutrition choices is by far the most challenging for any agency. NNC is a forerunner in encouraging behavioral change, influencing the general population to make desirable nutrition and health practices by affording them access to nutrition information and education. NNC took this a step further through the annual National Nutrition Month celebration, which has become the agency's platform for key specific nutrition messages.





### Nutrition Month Themes through the Years

YEAR	NUTRITION MONTH THEME
1976	Maximum utilization of local resources
1977	Strengthening the nutrition program at the barangay level
1978	<i>Ugnayan ng kabataan sa nutrisyon</i>
1979	<i>Malusog na bata, malusog na bansa</i>
1980	<i>Wastong nutrisyon, landas tungo sa magandang kinabukasan</i>
1981	<i>Nutrisyon at kaunlaran</i>
1982	<i>Nutrisyon at kabuhayan sa kaunlaran</i>
1983	<i>Tiyakin ang kinabukasan, wastong pagkain ay kaugalian</i>
1984	<i>Wastong nutrisyon sa sariling pagsisikap</i>
1985	Increased family productivity for economic recovery
1986	<i>Sa lakas ng sambayanan, wastong nutrisyon ang kailangan</i>
1987	<i>Sa pagbubuklod ng diwa at bisig, wastong nutrisyon makakamit</i>
1988	Nutrition in development
1989	<i>Sapat sa sustansiya, lakas ng pamilya</i>
1990	<i>Malnutrisyon: tuklasin at puksain</i>
1991	<i>Sa sama-samang pagkilos, malnutrisyo'y malulutas</i>
1992	<i>Karapatan ng bawa't Pilipino, wastong nutrisyon ay matamo</i>
1993	<i>Higit sa lahat, pagkaing sapat - para sa lahat</i>
1994	<i>Prutas at gulay ng bayan, taglay ay lakas at yaman</i>
1995	<i>Buto at ngipin patibayin, gatas ating inumin</i>

YEAR	NUTRITION MONTH THEME
1996	<i>Kapag kumain nang sapat, wastong timbang ang katapat</i>
1997	<i>Kalusugan tiyakin sa masustansiya at ligtas na pagkain</i>
1998	<i>Fortified foods kainin, dadgag sustansiya'y kamtin - selyong Sangkap Pinoy hanapin</i>
1999	<i>Pagkaing sapat siguruhin, wastong nutrisyon ating kamtin</i>
2000	<i>Wastong nutrisyon: alamin at gawin</i>
2001	<i>Kalusugan Pagyamanin, Fortified Foods Kainin</i>
2002	<i>Pagkain at paglaki ay bantayan, upang ang wastong nutrisyon ay kamtan</i>
2003	<i>Kabataan palusugin, isulong ang breastfeeding</i>
2004	<i>Breastfeeding panatilihin, dagdagan ng wastong pagkain</i>
2005	<i>Batang may kinabukasan, sa wastong nutrisyon simulan</i>
2006	<i>Kumain nang RIGHT, para maging batang BRIGHT</i>
2007	<i>Healthy lifestyle ng kabataan, landas sa kinabukasan</i>
2008	<i>Sa wastong nutrisyon ni mommy, siguradong healthy si baby</i>
2009	<i>Wastong nutrisyon kailangan, lifestyle diseases iwasan</i>
2010	<i>Sa pagkaing tama at sapat, wastong timbang ni baby ang katapat</i>
2011	<i>Isulong ang BREASTFEEDING - Tama, Sapat at EKsklusibo!</i>
2012	<i>Pagkain ng gulay ugaliin, araw-araw itong ihain</i>
2013	<i>Gutom at malnutrisyon, sama-sama nating wakasan</i>
2014	<i>Kalamidad paghandaan: Gutom at malnutrisyon agapan!</i>



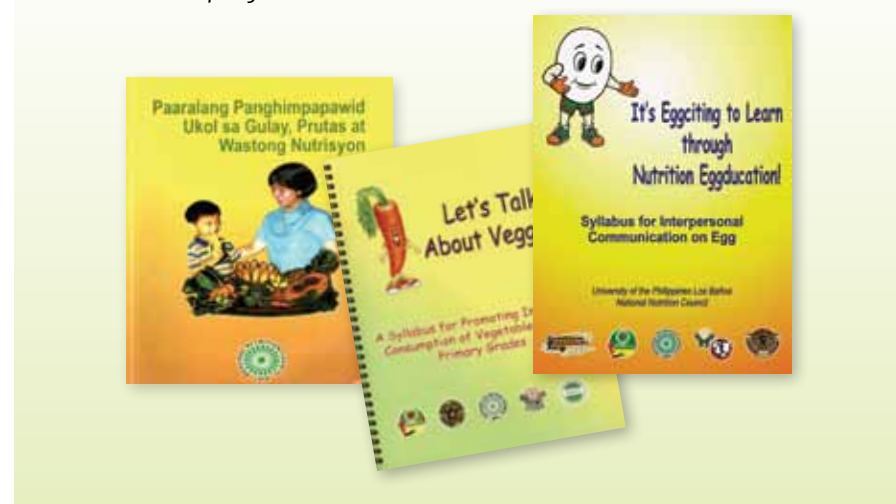


The agency stops at nothing to make sure that Filipinos are armed with relevant and up-to-date information on how to prevent hunger and malnutrition right from their own homes. NNC embarked on a multi-media campaign to promote good nutrition harnessing the available media channels including television, radio, print, electronic billboards, mega billboards and the Internet.

Nutrition programs have been airing in radios over the years. *“Radyo Mo sa Nutrisyon”* on DZXL 558 kHz and *“Katumbas ay Biyaya”* on DZRH 666 kHz, both aired every Saturday, advocate positive nutrition behaviors and better understanding of nutrition and health concerns through dramatization and discussion with the experts. Presence in television likewise generated much appreciation for NNC’s campaigns. For the first time, the NNC produced its first TV program, the 20-minute *“Busog Lusog,”* which aired over ABS-CBN Channel 2 for two seasons with 13 episodes per season, featuring topics that covered eating a variety of foods daily, benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, nutrition for teenagers, nutrition for pregnant and nursing women, and various others. This was then followed by two seasons of *“Why Not?”* which featured the production, preparation, and nutritional values of various food commodities through an edu-infotainment format. The TV programs were made possible because of the partnership of NNC with ABS-CBN Foundation which was headed by Ms. Regina Lopez who was then

appointed as member of the NNC Governing Board for 2007-2010. GMA Kapuso Foundation, another media partner, was also a member of the Governing Board.

NNC also utilized mobile electronic buses and bus wraps. Billboards on the nutritional guidelines could be seen in major thoroughfares in Metro Manila, in LRT stations and the north and south Luzon expressways. Interpersonal communication was also used through the nationwide implementation of the *“Pabasa sa Nutrisyon”* nutrition education strategy. Regional offices had their own share of promoting nutrition through their local media campaigns.



# Breaking Through the Barriers



*"I think the main accomplishment that we've done is to keep the light burning for nutrition..."*

**Maria Lourdes "Didi" A. Vega**  
Chief, Nutrition Policy and Planning Division, NNC





## A Worldwide First

NNC is the first in the world to be created with a mandate as the highest policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition. The country has been looked up to by developing nations globally, emulating its methods and strategies in delivering nutrition programs and projects nationwide. The multi-agency composition of its Governing Board ensures that all aspects of nutrition - health, agriculture, economic development, labor and employment, education, social welfare, local governance, science and technology, trade and industry, budget management - are utilized to provide optimum nutritional advantage to communities across the nation. Moreover, the presence of the NNC Secretariat, with its own physical office, staff complement and regular budget is the envy of many countries that have attempted to organize similar structures for nutrition policy and coordination.

## The Statistics and The Plans

The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Database on Child Growth and Malnutrition (2013) recorded the malnutrition prevalence in Filipino children under the age of 5 as follows:

## Prevalence of underweight among children below 5 years, 1975-2011

SURVEY YEAR	PREVALENCE (%)
1975	45.5
1982	29.6
1987	29.3
1990	29.9
1992	29.8
1993	26.3
1998	28.3
2003	20.7
2008	20.7
2011	20.2

As seen from the above data, malnutrition prevalence in Filipino children under 5 years of age was found to be at 45.5% in 1975. This saw significant improvement during the NNC's first decade as malnutrition prevalence declined to 29.6% by 1982. In the succeeding years, however, the decline in number of Filipino children found to be malnourished slowed down, although it picked up its pace in 1993 with 26.3% from the previous year's 29.8%. The next huge decline was seen in 2003 with 20.7% which further lowered to 20.2% by 2011.



Meanwhile, malnutrition among children using height-for-age indicator showed a similar decline over the years.

### Prevalence of stunting among children below 5 years, 1975-2011

SURVEY YEAR	PREVALENCE (%)
1975	60.2
1982	48.7
1987	44.7
1990	43.3
1992	40.9
1993	38.9
1998	38.3
2003	33.8
2008	32.3
2011	33.6

The above table shows data on stunting in children in the last four decades. Based on these data, stunting was recorded at 60.2% in 1975. This was significantly reduced to 48.7% in 1982, and saw continuing improvement over the years - 44.7% in 1987, 43.3% in 1990, 40.9% in 1992, and 38.9% in 1993. By 2011, data on stunting was recorded at 33.6%.

FNRI has likewise provided noteworthy information on the iodine and vitamin A deficiencies in different age/physiologic groups. The prevalence of iron deficiency anemia in infants, for example, significantly improved - from 66.7% in 2003 to 57.0% in 2008. In addition, the country experienced success in reducing Vitamin A deficiency from a level of public health concern to only 15.2% among children 6 months to 5 years olds in 2008 from 40.0% in 2003.

These statistics provide the scientific underpinnings of the various national nutrition plans and component programs. The Plan presents the regional dimensions of the statistics provided, giving way to NNC and its partner agencies to strategize more effectively and efficiently. Strategies and priority plans for action have been identified with which to provide substantial guidance and support to the nutrition programs of implementing agencies.

The Philippine Plan of Action (PPAN) underwent several enhancements over the years (1978-1982, 1983-87, 1988-92, 1993-98, 1999-2004, 2005-2009/2010), building up on previous strategies that were seen with varying degrees of success. LGUs and national government agencies continue to prepare annual operational plans for funding through national and local appropriations, complementing official development assistance as well





as initiatives of non-government organizations (NGOs). The **Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2011-2016** was built on past and present experiences to ensure that the right mix of strategies and interventions are determined and acted upon.

### The *Nutri*-Campaigns

Driven by the need to provide immediate aid to those most vulnerable to hunger and nutrition problems, NNC dispensed food assistance programs for severely malnourished children to prevent death and help improve their nutritional status. Furthering this food aid campaign, all nutrition services were packaged with the prefix “*nutri*” to allow the public easier recognition and retention of the campaigns promoted by NNC and its partner organizations.

Introduced to the Philippines through PL480 Title II under USAID in the 1970s, *Nutribuns* were distributed to schools and feeding centers in identified areas where malnutrition manifested. One hundred and four (104) *Nutrihuts*, rural versions of a hospital *malward* (malnourished ward) were set up in remote barangays by the end of 1977 with financial assistance from NNC. Meanwhile, *Nutribuses* were deployed to remote areas for information dissemination with the use of its audio-visual

presentation capabilities. In addition, *Nutristores* were opened in far-flung barangays to make rice, cooking oil and other food products available to the community at reduced prices.

Local nutrition committees also made wide use of the *nutri*-campaigns in their efforts at the community-level. *Nutripaks* (food supplements), *nutri-gro* (fortified biscuits), and *nutri-pan* (fortified bread) were supplied to barangays and schools. Activities such as *nutri*-contests, *nutri*-recipe development, *nutri*-quiz, *nutri*-walk, *nutri*-run and various other campaigns were staged in communities to encourage participation and awareness from families. Ad campaigns like “*Ang Malunggay, Bow!*” became widely disseminated, educating citizens on the benefits of different types of locally available and nutritious food commodities.

### A Learning Arena for Nutrition

Cognizant of the significance of information and education to the Philippine Nutrition Program (PNP), the Information Education and Communications (IEC) Technical Working Group of NNC formulated guidelines for the Applied Nutrition Program which also serves as a vehicle for the implementation of nutrition programs in schools. In its first decade alone, NNC has become a trademark of success in its undertakings in

the field. Widely recognized for its initiatives, NNC was chosen by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to host a workshop on Strategy for Nutritional Surveillance on 28-30 July 1976. NNC also hosted an International Conference on Nutrition Education in 1977, followed by a national conference on “The Use of Radio in the Dissemination of Nutrition Messages” held in Iloilo City that same year. Collaboration with international agencies such as the FAO, USAID, UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank expanded technical assistance to nutrition activities nationwide.

In 1978, NNC established an International Nutrition Program (INP) Unit to provide a mechanism for international exchange of nutrition expertise, knowledge and experiences on nutrition planning, management as well as nutrition surveillance. Through the INP, implementers of the PNP including NNC staff played an active role in accommodating United Nations University - Nutrition Center of the Philippines (UNU-NCP) fellows from different countries in completing advanced training and practicum.

Furthermore, NNC provided a venue for the third International Workshop on Multisectoral Rural Development Planning and Implementation on 25 February to 01 March 1980, and the International Workshop on Field Program Management (FPM) Training in December that same year. In 1982, NNC co-hosted an international conference on “actions needed to improve maternal and infant nutrition in developing countries” with the International Nutrition Planners’ Forum.

During the early building up period, NNC was heavily engaged in the design and organization of capacity-building programs to prepare the staff of the NNC Secretariat, members of the various technical working groups, committees, and field implementers particularly nutrition action officers

and district/city program coordinators on nutrition program management. Particular focus was given to nutrition assessment and surveillance, policy formulation, development-oriented nutrition planning, program monitoring and evaluation, project design, advocacy, and nutrition education in formal and informal setting using tri-media and interpersonal communication.

NNC was also instrumental in the development and selection of the country as the institutional home of a multi-disciplinary advanced training program on food and nutrition planning for Asia and the Pacific. The program aimed to provide countries in the region with a cadre of personnel trained in a broader approach to nutritional improvement-one which recognizes the relationships between nutrition and the larger processes of economic growth and in which strategies for agricultural development, price policies of food commodities, and concepts of community development are as important components of a food and nutrition policy as are food supplementation schemes and nutrition education campaigns. The training course was conducted in the University of the Philippines Los Baños and funded initially by the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation-International Course in Food Science and Nutrition (NUFFIC/ICFSN) through the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. By the end of 2004, the course had built a cadre of almost 500 middle- to top-level officials from agriculture, health, education, national development planning and other sectoral departments in the Asia and Pacific Region.

### **Barangay Nutrition Scholars**

Tapping into one of the most potent resources available in combating malnutrition across the country, the government initiated the Barangay

Nutrition Scholars (BNS) Program as a human resource strategy to strengthen the barangay nutrition program. Through the promulgation of Presidential Decree No. 1569 on 11 July 1978, every barangay across the country is required to deploy one barangay nutrition scholar (BNS). NNC administers the program, provides training, travelling allowance and BNS kit while local government units recruit, train, deploy and provide counterpart for the honorarium or allowance of these BNS. **District/City Nutrition Program Coordinators** were hired, and in cases, designated by the local chief executives to supervise the BNSs.

Now numbering more than 38,000, the BNS takes nutrition action down to the grassroots level, identifying and caring for those most vulnerable to malnutrition and its causes. The BNS are community nutrition volunteers responsible for identifying malnourished children through the annual Operation *Timbang*, generating family profiles through community surveys, mobilizing the community to take action on the improvement of the local nutrition situation, serving as a linkage-builder to ensure that members of the community in need of nutrition services are connected to the appropriate nutrition service provider, formulating a BNS Action Plan and recording nutrition and health profiles of the families, and assisting in the delivery of nutrition services in their communities.

In December 2010, the NNC helped organize the BNSs into a national federation now called the National BNS Federation or NaBNSFed Inc. The federation provides the BNS with a more formal system through which their voices could be heard, their concerns understood and recognized as they pursue their role as prime mover and catalyst for nutrition improvement in the community.



**Angelito A. Conde**  
... a True Barangay Nutrition Scholar

Considered a pillar for good nutrition in Barangay Busaon, Tagum City, **Angelito “Nonoy” A. Conde** has been a barangay nutrition scholar since 1998. He has “walked the talk” as a humble volunteer nutrition worker, crediting the success of the barangay nutrition program to the unwavering support of the Barangay Nutrition Committee (BNC) and other members of his community. His steadfast devotion and unfaltering ardor has been widely recognized and he was awarded Outstanding Barangay Nutrition Scholar (OBNS) for more than five times. He was Regional Outstanding Barangay Nutrition Scholar for Davao Region in 2008 and recognized as the National Outstanding Barangay Nutrition Scholar for 2009 during the National Nutrition Awarding Ceremony held on 04 November 2010.

Nonoy was the first male BNS to win the national outstanding BNS award and he showed that men can also do volunteer work for nutrition. He is a staunch advocate for breastfeeding and has developed a syllabus for a whole-day session on health and nutrition with the rural health midwife. Through his efforts, members of the community continuously learn about the causes of malnutrition in the barangay and how these could be minimized through various interventions like immunization, care of the pregnant and lactating women, personal hygiene and sanitation, solid waste management, family planning, and good nutrition. His meticulous attention to detail and passion for learning has helped barangay officials to easily identify target recipients for nutrition-related programs in the community and keep track of support generated from socio-civic organizations and other non-government partners.





## Rewarding Excellent Nutrition Service

Since 1978, NNC annually conducts the **Monitoring and Evaluation of Local Level Plan Implementation (MELLPI)** with the aim of assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments in the planning and implementation of local nutrition programs. In conjunction with MELLPI, the performance of BNS is likewise evaluated by NNC. These evaluations culminate with the recognition of local governments and BNS with excellent performance in nutrition program management and implementation as well as delivery of nutrition services to the communities. Recognition comes in the form of awards and incentives like the **Green Banner Award**, **Consistent Regional Outstanding Winner in Nutrition (CROWN) Award**, **Nutrition Honor Award (NHA)** and **National Outstanding BNS (NOBNS) Award**.

The Green Banner Award is given to municipalities, cities or provinces that have shown excellent performance in the implementation of their local nutrition programs. A Green Banner Awardee for three consecutive years qualifies for the CROWN Award. CROWN Awardees are then visited by an inter-agency National Evaluation Team for another three years to assess their efforts in maintaining improved nutritional status of their communities through the implementation of their local nutrition programs.

CROWN Awardees that qualify are given the Nutrition Honor Award, the most prestigious award given by NNC to exceptional achievers in nutrition program implementation.

The **National Nutrition Awarding Ceremony** is a major annual event of NNC. Often held at the Malacañan Palace, citations, plaques and trophies as well as cash incentives are awarded by no less than the incumbent president. To date, CROWN Awards have been given to 157 LGUs while 47 LGUs have won the highly-coveted Nutrition Honor Award. Meanwhile, 16 BNSs have been proclaimed the National Outstanding BNS since 1997. Data on winners prior to 1997 were among the documents damaged by Typhoon *Ondoy*.





## Nutrition Honor Awardees (1997-2012)

Year	Region	Area
1997	II III NCR V	Solana, Cagayan Cabanatuan City Makati City Naga City
1998	CAR CARAGA	Kapangan, Benguet Butuan City
1999	V	Irosin, Sorsogon
2000	II CALABARZON CALABARZON VII	Echague, Isabela Los Baños, Laguna Trece Martires City Calape, Bohol
2001	I CALABARZON NCR VII VII X XII	San Gabriel, La Union Laguna Province Pateros Aklan Province Danao City Don Carlos, Bukidnon Koronadal City
2002	I II CAR III NCR	La Union Province Isabela Province Kiangnan, Ifugao Sta. Maria, Bulacan Las Piñas City
2003	II CALABARZON VI VII	Dupax del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya Tagaytay City Kalibo, Aklan Talibon, Bohol

Year	Region	Area
2004	X	Malaybalay City Quezon, Bukidnon Bukidnon Province
2005	II	Tuguegarao City
2006	III CALABARZON VII XI	Pulilan, Bulacan Cabuyao, Laguna Inabanga, Bohol Panabo City
2007	II CALABARZON X	Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya Calamba City Libona, Bukidnon
2008	II VI IX XI	Cagayan Province Talisay City Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay Nabunturan, Compostela Valley
2009	III	Plaridel, Bulacan
2010	VIII X	Limasawa, Southern Leyte Kadingilan, Bukidnon
2011	II IX	Batanes Province Santiago City Kabasalan, Zamboanga Sibugay
2012	VII X	Tubigon, Bohol Ozamiz City

## National Outstanding Barangay Nutrition Scholars (1996 - 2012)

YEAR	NOBNS	1 <sup>st</sup> RUNNER-UP	2 <sup>nd</sup> RUNNER-UP
1996	Ms. Jacqueline P. Miras Brgy. Ginatilan, Kidapawan City (Region XII)	Ms. Celsa A. Autentico Brgy. Poblacion, Don Carlos, Bukidnon (Region X)	Ms. Esperanza J. Guevarra Brgy. Don Galo, Parañaque City (NCR)
1997	Ms. Eden E. Barbara Brgy. Pacol, Naga City (Region V)	Ms. Amorlita B. Bayot Brgy. Maitim II West, Tagaytay City (CALABARZON)	Ms. Lolita M. Padilla Brgy. Aguada, Ozamiz City (Region X)
1998	Ms. Federica N. Labrador Brgy. Amas, Kidapawan City (Region XII)	Ms. Lilia S. Enaldo Brgy. Laturan, Libona, Bukidnon (Region X)	Ms. Josefina Canuto Brgy. Upper Dagsian, Baguio City (CAR)
1999	Ms. Generosa B. Sarigumba Brgy. Junction, Kidapawan City (Region XII)	Ms. Cecilia S. Barbadillo Brgy. Laturan, Libona, Bukidnon (Region X)	Ms. Rosavilla D. Marcial Brgy. Poblacion, Bunawan, Agusan del Sur (CARAGA)
2000	Ms. Norma Monforte Brgy. Pinamanculan, Butuan City (CARAGA)	Ms. Mercedes DC. Cara Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Benito Soliven, Isabela (Region II)	Ms. Filomena P. Arances Brgy. Macebolig, Kidapawan City (Region XII) Ms. Ma. Fe A. Magdoza Brgy. Abucayan Sur, Calape, Bohol (Region VII)
2001	Ms. Irene B. Ordinario Brgy. Quinapon-an, Antequera, Bohol (Region VII)	Ms. Carmelita V. Parantar Brgy. Tacunan, Davao City (Region XI)	Ms. Teresa T. Tanguilan Brgy. Cagumitan, Tuao, Cagayan (Region II) Ms. Milagros R. Manansala Brgy. Pulanglupa I, Las Piñas City (NCR)
2002	Ms. Marilou B. Barnuevo Brgy. Zone III, Koronadal City (Region XII)	Ms. Virginia C. Akhtar Brgy. Talipit, Bulacan, Bulacan (Region III)	Ms. Ophelia P. Labiano Brgy. 12 Tandang Sora, Butuan City (CARAGA)
2003	Ms. Metchel P. Malapad Brgy. Kalasungay, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon (Region X)	Ms. Judith C. Mañacap Brgy. Manongol, Kidapawan City (Region XII)	Ms. Susan H. Inson Brgy. New Daus, Nabunturan, Compostela Valley (Region XI)
2004	Ms. Jo Ann B. Alvez Brgy. Salud Mitra, Baguio City (CAR)	Ms. Medarda A. Isabida Brgy. Kalasuyan, Kidapawan City (Region XII)	Ms. Maria Riza Joy A. Cortez Brgy. Poblacion 2, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon (Region X)
2005	Ms. Mary Grace Abad Roblon Brgy. Sangay Diot, Ozamiz City (Region X)	Ms. Ann DM. Mirasol Brgy. San Antonio, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque (MIMAROPA)	Ms. Nery T. Libuna Brgy. San Ignacio, San Pablo City (CALABARZON)
2006	Ms. Adelina C. Indapan Brgy. Casisang, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon (Region X)	Ms. Edna R. Agora Brgy. Bagong Silang, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque (MIMAROPA)	Ms. Rebecca U. Aguilar Brgy. Gayola, Kidapawan City (Region XII)
2007	Ms. Edna R. Agora Brgy. Bagong Silang, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque (MIMAROPA)	Ms. Ma. Enone G. dela Cueva Brgy. A.O. Floirendo, Panabo City (Region XI)	Ms. Christy L. Madayag Brgy. 3, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon (Region X)
2008	Ms. Aurora G. Gancayco Brgy. Cabezas, Trece Martires City (CALABARZON) Ms. Numerita C. Ducos Brgy. Mibantang, Quezon, Bukidnon (Region X) Ms. Ma. Enone G. dela Cueva Brgy. A.O. Floirendo, Panabo City (Region XI)	Mr. Eddie L. Ancheta Brgy. Villa Fuerte, San Mateo, Isabela (Region II)	n/a
2009	Mr. Angelito A. Conde Brgy. Busaon, Tagum City, Davao del Norte (Region XI)	Ms. Karen C. dela Peña Brgy. Asisan, Tagaytay City (CALABARZON)	Ms. Alfonsa P. Hingpit Brgy. St. Peter, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon (Region X)
2010	Ms. Marilou P. Cañete Brgy. Concepcion Grande, Naga City (Region V)	Ms. Lina C. Guerrero Brgy. Concepcion, Kabalasan, Zamboanga Sibugay (Region IX)	Ms. Marites G. Padilla Brgy. Buenavista, Maddela, Quirino (Region II)
2011	Ms. Lina C. Guerrero Brgy. Concepcion, Kabalasan, Zamboanga Sibugay (Region IX)	Ms. Monica N. Sicat Brgy. City Camp Proper, Baguio City (CAR)	Ms. Ma. Digna D. Tayong Brgy. Mainit, Nabunturan, Compostela Valley (Region XI)
2012	Ms. Felisa J. Guilingan Brgy. Guinles, Polanco, Zamboanga del Norte (Region IX)	Ms. Dorothy P. Felipe Brgy. North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon (Region X)	Mr. Sherwin C. Abellaniza Brgy. Magugpo East, Tagum City (Region XI) Ms. Josephine R. Balingit Brgy. Devilla, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque (MIMAROPA)



## Limasawa: A Nutrition Haven

Home to the National Shrine where the First Catholic Mass was held in the Philippines in 1524, the Island Municipality of Limasawa, Southern Leyte is considered a nutritional landmark in the country. Municipal **Mayor Melchor P. Petracorta** is considered a champion in nutrition service excellence as he has led his people in achieving better nutrition status over the years. Under his leadership, the Municipal Nutrition Committee crafted annual Nutrition Action Plans for Limasawa, identifying the root causes of, and developing responses for malnutrition. Participation from the local community is institutionalized in programs such as the *"Buntis Baby Bank," "Pre-Natal sa Biyernes, Pakan-on ang Buntis," "Search for Gandahing Buntis," "Super Baby,"* Micronutrient Supplementation, Food Fortification (rice, flour and salt), *"Tatay Ko, Kaagapay sa Kalusugan Ko,"* and *"Nutri-Quiz for Kids,"* among others. Ordinances were put in place to strengthen this community involvement and ensure that every citizen in Limasawa takes action in overcoming not only malnutrition but also infant and maternal mortality in the municipality.



The Limasawa Municipality earned wide recognition and prominence for ensuring sustainable nutrition action in their locality. On 25 October 2011, Limasawa was conferred the Nutrition Honor Award by NNC in recognition of its excellence in the implementation and management of its Municipal Nutrition Program for six (6) consecutive years. That same year, Limasawa was also bestowed with the *"Galing Pook 2011"* Award by no less than President Benigno Aquino III for achieving *"good nutrition through good governance and teamwork."* In 2012, the Department of Health awarded the municipality with a plaque of recognition for its invaluable support and contribution to the implementation of exclusive breastfeeding in the community. DOH likewise recognized Limasawa for spearheading the elimination of rabies in the municipality.

Mayor Petracorta has created quite a legacy of good nutrition for Limasawa. He has been recognized as one of the mayor mentors on nutrition of the Orientation for Newly-Elected Mayors (ONE-M) project of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines in partnership with the NNC. He proudly shares that the accolades received by Limasawa had been the fruits of *"a collaboration of all agencies and a constituency that wants to ensure a healthy and nutritionally-well community."*



## Operation Timbang

Among the longest running programs in nutrition that has received wide acceptance is the **Operation Timbang** (OPT). Launched in 1974, OPT is the annual weighing of all pre-schoolchildren in an effort to locate families with malnourished children. This survey also identifies children in need of immediate aid. Conducted every first quarter of every year, OPT creates awareness on nutrition concerns nationwide by generating concrete data from the grassroots communities on actual nutrition situations. On 12 January 2012, the NNC Governing Board approved Resolution No. 2, Series of 2012 entitled "Approving the Implementing Guidelines on *Operation Timbang Plus* (OPT Plus)" that now includes height assessment to detect stunting among children. These new guidelines were based on the World Health Organization-Child Growth Standards which "*combines the measurement of weight and length/height to better describe a child's nutritional status in terms of degree and form of undernutrition.*"

These pieces of information prove most valuable to local program planning and policy formulation through regular monitoring of the weight of children 0-6 years old. This also provides a platform through which priority areas for implementation of key nutrition programs are determined. OPT has become a landmark program of the government

and has been used as a model instrument abroad as well. Countries like Indonesia, for instance, have emulated this program through its *Operasi Timbang*.

## LAKASS

***Lalakas ang Katawang Sapat sa Sustansiya***, more widely known as the LAKASS Program, was launched in 1989 and is ongoing in selected areas around the country. Funded by the Government of the Philippines (GoP), from the GoP-Japan Increased Food Production Programme, LAKASS covers 181 nutritionally depressed municipalities nationwide. The program aims to (a) improve the nutrition situation in all identified nutritionally depressed municipalities, and (b) provide effective and sustainable services for the community to improve their nutrition situation.

LAKASS has displayed effectiveness through the years and expanded operations to other depressed communities within targeted municipalities with the support of local chief executives. Community involvement in project identification, implementation and management is a proven component of this program. LAKASS provided a mechanism through which NNC has empowered and mobilized people at the grassroots level, enabling the local communities to build and sustain their capabilities to improve their nutrition situation.





## Multi-Media Visibility

NNC tapped into various forms of media to ensure that the relevant nutrition messages came across to as many of the population as possible. Television, radio and print media, and lately the Internet, are used to convey key messages on nutrition - causes of malnutrition, nutrition and related services made available to the public, and the best means of reducing and preventing it.

Campaigns to inform and educate came in various forms, teaching families about the benefits of the very fruits and vegetables they can find in their backyard to ensure their nutritional well-being. Nutri-education campaigns such as *"Ang Bayabas, Bow"* and *"Ang Kangkong, Bow"* in the '80s made it to AM radio and TV, allowing listeners and viewers to learn about nutritional values of highlighted fruits and vegetables as well as recipes they can use to make sure these are served to their families. Various radio and television plugs on key nutrition messages such as those on exclusive breastfeeding were aired on national commercial and government television stations (ABS-CBN, GMA 7, RPN 9, and IBC 13) as well as selected radio stations (DZMM, DZBB, DZRH, DZXL, DWWW and DZRB). NNC airs its own radio program *"One Nutrition, One Nation"* every Wednesday afternoon through the 25 *Nutriskwela* community radio stations.

The annual nationwide celebration of NNC's Nutrition Month is crucial to driving the agency's campaigns. In July 2013, with the theme *"Gutom at malnutrisyon, sama-sama nating wakasan,"* NNC culminated its month-long celebration with its first concert featuring Ryzza Mae Dizon, Nikki Gil, Noel Cabangon, Luis Manzano, Princess Velasco and starring Bamboo. Dubbed as the *"End Hunger Concert,"* this culmination of the 2013 Nutrition Month was held at the Music Hall, SM Mall of Asia.





## The Accolades that Matter

NNC has garnered well-deserved recognition and respect from local and international organizations since its birth in 1974. Numerous citations and awards now decorate the Nutrition Building, further strengthening the NNC Secretariat's resolve in combating malnutrition.

The agency's radio programs such as *"Radyo Mo sa Nutrisyon"* and *"Katumbas ay Biyaya"* have both been awarded Best Radio Public Service Program by the 21st Golden Dove Awards of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) and the 35th Catholic Mass Media Awards, respectively. In addition, *"Radyo Mo sa Nutrisyon"* was recently recognized for the second time as the Best Radio Public Service Program during the 22nd KBP-Golden Dove Awards held in April 2014. Meanwhile, the *"Buntis Congress,"* an annual event held in partnership with ABS-CBN-DZMM and the Midwives Foundation of the Philippines, is a 2013 IABC Philippine Quill Awardee for Corporate Social Responsibility and is a recipient of the 2014 Anvil Award of Merit (Public Relations Tools, Events and Activation) from the Public Relations Society of the Philippines.

NNC's television programs *"Busog Lusog"* and *"Why Not?"*, an educational infotainment program produced and televised in partnership with the ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc., have received four *AnakTV* Seal Awards. *"Why Not?"* is also recognized as a "Child-Friendly Program" by the Department of Education (DepED) and is a certified children's program for television by the National Council for Children's Television (NCCT) and the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB). It has also been included by the Entertainment Press Society, Inc. (ENPRESS) and the Golden Screen TV Awards as a finalist under the Outstanding Educational Program category in the 5th Golden Screen TV Awards.

On top of the agency's growing number of accolades, NNC's incumbent Executive Director, Assistant Secretary of Health Maria-Bernardita T. Flores has likewise reaped numerous awards over the years for her contributions to Philippine nutrition. She was hailed in June 1998 as Outstanding Alumna, Master of Professional Studies on Food and Nutrition Planning by the Institute of Human Nutrition and Food, College of Human Ecology,



University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna. She also received a Distinguished Alumna Award from the University in the same year. In February 2005, A/Sec. Flores won the Ten Leaders in Nutrition and Dietetics Award for Program Administration category from the Nutritionist-

Dietitians Association of the Philippines. She also won the Outstanding Professional/Home Economist Award - Government Service category from the College of Home Economics, UP Diliman in June 2008.





# Helping Hands

*“All these aspects of nutrition – food, water, jobs, health care, etc. – these are like the spokes of a wheel. Losing any one of these spokes and the wheel will not turn properly.”*

**Imelda Romualdez-Marcos**





## Beyond Boundaries

Probably the best testament to the efficacy of the multisectoral and multi-agency approach are the successes of programs and projects coordinated by NNC with its partner agencies and local government units. A multi-faceted gem, NNC pools resources from its partners in the form of programs and projects that address the different aspects of nutrition to prevent hunger and malnutrition.

The country's nutrition problems have been determined to be rooted in unemployment, low or no income, high food prices, physical inaccessibility, low food supply, inadequate road systems, poor water supply, and poor health. The creation of NNC was based not only on the realization of the need to deliver more concerted and organized efforts to arrest hunger and malnutrition. This also came with the realization that, with the growing number of agencies and organizations across sectors, nutrition action delivered to those who need it most has to address all identified roots of hunger and malnutrition. The dynamics of this interagency partnership has evolved over the years in attempts to create the perfect combination of services for those suffering from or are vulnerable to nutrition problems.

## Nutrition Action Plans

Philippine nutrition programs and plans of action over the years have been under constant review and scrutiny with the aim of improving their scientific quality and coherence, practicality, sustainability and efficacy. Interagency cooperation has showed much improvement, all in accordance with the nutrition plans of action developed over the years. The Philippine nutrition plans have successfully been integrated into the Philippine Development Plan, lodging nutrition further up the national priority ladder. With the help of NNC's inter-agency Technical Committee, the agency has successfully drawn active participation from members of the Council and its Governing Board.

## The Right Mix

NNC has been reorganized over time, changed policy and program directions, refined approaches and enhanced strategies to develop tailor-fitted approaches to the areas where malnutrition is evident. The agencies tied to NNC have gone through lengths, developing programs and supporting NNC's policy instruments to advance actions taken to improve the country's nutrition situation.



The ten agencies that make up NNC's Governing Board were selected on the premise of producing programs and policies that address the different aspects of nutrition that dictate the types of issues that may arise. For instance, cash-for-work projects have been delivered by DSWD to highly impoverished and calamity-stricken areas in the country, allowing target households access to income so they can afford to buy food and other basic needs. DepED has incorporated several information campaigns to educate children and parents on good nutrition choices and practices. DA has farm-to-market road construction projects that not only eases access to food supplies but also provide employment to members of households in the communities where these roads are built. DOLE, on the other hand, has made training and employment opportunities available for the marginalized poor with the aid of other partner agencies and organizations. Further still, DOH continues to promote universal health care for all.

Meanwhile, DOST has set up a Grants-in-Aid (GIA) Program alongside DOLE, DSWD and state universities and colleges, that provide financial grants and technical assistance for community-based projects that provide a means of livelihood for residents. The NEDA, on the other hand, being responsible for national development planning ensures that nutrition is included in the Philippine Development Agenda. The DTI protects the welfare of consumers through its price monitoring and ensuring the availability of

basic commodities. DILG is tasked to organize local nutrition committees as well as issue department circulars for the adoption of nutrition policies and programs by local governments.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) ensures that funds and other resources are appropriated and released in a timely manner for nutrition programs and projects under the PPAN through the NNC and its member agencies. The DBM also takes on an active role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the PPAN to ensure its efficient and effective financial management.

## Nutrition in Emergencies

In recent years, the Philippines has experienced a harrowing number of natural and human-induced calamities that added to the distress in the country's nutritional situation. Emergency and crisis situations, the aftermath of Typhoon Yolanda for example, often result in a heightened susceptibility to food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition. Evaluating effects, understanding coping mechanisms and detecting resilience of the affected population is necessary in order to accurately target, design and implement appropriate strategies that will not only protect but also promote and ensure good nutrition during these difficult times.



The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) adopted the UN Cluster System in 2007. This system is put in place in order to minimize overlapping interventions in affected communities, thereby contributing to more long-term responses rather than quick fixes. It requires the participation of different sectors to address key needs that will help the people back on their feet. In the Health Cluster of the NDRRMC for instance, the NNC was recently designated chair of the Nutrition Cluster. As such, NNC leads the nutrition cluster to ensure that the nutritional status of affected populations will not worsen by facilitating strategic collaboration and ensuring comprehensiveness of the emergency management as well as resource mobilization and integration of cross-cutting nutrition concerns with other clusters.

## Hunger Mitigation

Considered as one of the most successful interagency programs, the **Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program** (AHMP) is an active government response preventing the increasing prevalence of hunger incidence in the Philippines by addressing hunger in a holistic manner from both supply and demand sides. On the supply side, measures are along producing more food and efficient delivery of food to whom and where it is needed. On the demand side, measures are along putting more money in poor people's pockets, promoting good nutrition and managing population levels.

Further to this, NNC was designated oversight of the Anti-Hunger Task Force composed of national agencies to implement AHMP programs. These agencies include Department of Agrarian Reform (Presidential Agrarian Reform Council); Department of Agriculture (Bureau of Animal Industry,

Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Bureau of Plant Industry, Coconut Industry Investment Fund, National Food Authority, National Irrigation Administration, Philippine Coconut Authority); Department of Budget and Management; Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Philippine Forest Corporation); Department of Education; Department of Health (Commission on Population, National Nutrition Council); Department of the Interior and Local Government (Philippine National Police); Department of Labor and Employment; Technical Education and Skills Development Authority; Department of Public Works and Highways; Department of Social Welfare and Development; Department of Transportation and Communication (Philippine Ports Authority); National Economic and Development Authority; Office of the President (Commission on Higher Education, National Anti-Poverty Commission, Metro Manila Development Authority); People's Credit and Finance Corporation; Armed Forces of the Philippines; and the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines/National Secretariat for Social Action.

A key component of this program, **Promote Good Nutrition** (PGN), is managed by NNC and aims to improve nutrition knowledge, attitudes and practices of Filipino families.

The AHMP owes much of its success to the hands-on support of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who closely monitored the progress made by implementing agencies and provided substantial financial support to NNC for the implementation particularly of the Promote Good Nutrition component and the monitoring and coordination of the program's components.

# Our Guiding Lights





*The multisectoral approach to nutrition action in the Philippines allowed for an arsenal of great minds from different sectors to create nutrition plans of action that address malnutrition in the country. The NNC Secretariat, Governing Board and Technical Committee have been breaking new ground in providing a workable framework for LGUs through the local nutrition committees across the nation to operationalize targets and actions that best suit their own nutrition situations. These three bodies shoulder the arduous task of shaping the blueprint for all nutrition action in the country that not only addresses the country's malnutrition problem but also results in improvement of lives of Filipinos.*

The accomplishments of the NNC were made possible through the efforts of many. However, there are those whose contributions stand out and needs to be recognized.

#### **Dr. Florentino S. Solon**

Known to NNC employees as “the idea man,” Dr. Florentino Solon has been described as a true nutrition champion right down to the bone. He inspired NNC staff to create and share their nutrition “dreams,” which later translated to actual programs and projects delivered to the communities. Dr. Solon was appointed Executive Director of NNC and the Nutrition Center of the Philippines (NCP) in 1974 and, through his “dreams,” projects such as the OPT and designing the *espada* for weighing preschool children, Barangay Nutrition Scholar, Green Banner award, malnutrition rehabilitation wards (*malwards*), nutri-huts for rural communities, nutri-village for entire communities, *Pabasa sa Nutrisyon* using the Nutri-Guide, Nutri-bus, and the “*Malunggay Kada Balay*” initiative, among others, were created and set into motion. He also led in the development of fortified food products - *nutripaks*, *nutri-gro biscuits*, *nutri-noodles* - that were later distributed in aid of communities where malnutrition manifested. The list of Dr. Solon's invaluable contributions to the national nutrition program goes on but, more importantly, he is recognized as the man who “never stopped thinking of how things in nutrition can be better.”





### Ms. Elsa M. Bayani

Joining NNC in April 1989, Ms. Elsa Bayani served as Executive Director of the agency for over 15 years. Taking up the reins in advocating for nutrition action, Ms. Bayani devoted herself to strengthen implementation and coordination efforts for programs such as LAKASS, PPAN, MELLPI, Give Me Five!, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS), salt iodization and food fortification programs. Her commitment to the agency and her strong belief in the agency's thrust in defeating the nutrition problems of the country won much respect from many leaders, allowing her to acquire additional funds to augment NNC's budget for special projects such as LAKASS.

### Dr. Dulce Laurel-Bocobo

Albeit spending less than two years as Executive Director of NNC, Dr. Dulce Laurel-Bocobo's rich expertise honed during her tenure in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was truly a gem to behold. A published author of several reference books on food and nutrition, Dr. Bocobo was among the major movers of the paradigm shift that led the Philippine government to view nutrition as a valuable input to, rather than a product of, national development. She led the NNC in adopting the Nutrition Policy statement of 1988, directing the agency to flesh out the Nutrition-in-Development approach that requires direct interventions

to address hunger and malnutrition, and long-term strategies to prevent these from threatening the nutritional well-being of Filipinos across the nation.

### Dr. Rodolfo F. Florentino

Assuming the Chairmanship of NNC's Technical Committee while having been appointed as Director of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) in 1984, Dr. Rodolfo Florentino was a valuable contributor in the development of key initiatives such as Nutrition Surveillance, and Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Mapping System (FIVIMS). He likewise chaired and participated in the monitoring and evaluation of PPAN and represented NNC in various meetings called by the agency and its network of agencies and international partners including UNICEF, WHO and FAO. He continued being a valuable resource to NNC as a consultant for a range of initiatives even after his retirement from FNRI in 1997 and assumed the post of Chairman-President of the Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines, one of the most active non-government organizations in nutrition during the early years of NNC.

### Nutrition Action Officers

The nutrition action officers in the country are the little NNC Secretariats at the local level. They may be serving as NAOs by designation or hired

full-time but they help coordinate the local nutrition program. They ensure that nutrition committees are organized and functional, nutrition action plans are formulated, adopted by the *sanggunian* or local legislative council and integrated into the local development plan and local annual investment plan, a budget for nutrition is provided, and that the nutrition action plan is implemented, monitored and evaluated. The NNC is sincerely grateful to all the nutrition action officers in the country.

### **CODHEND**

The Council of Deans and Heads of Schools of Nutrition and Dietetics (CODHEND) is a member of NNC's Technical Committee, providing an academic perspective to nutrition action for the agency. Prof. Milagros Querubin shared that CODHEND *"maintains a critical analysis of NNC initiatives to ensure that plans and programs that utilize people's money are based on proven scientific data and are truly responsive to national interest and serving the underserved Filipino families."* Among their most significant contributions include a major publication in nutrition entitled *"Nutrition in the Philippines - the Past for Its Template, Red for its Color"* written by Professor Emeritus Cecilia A. Florencio, former Dean of the College of Home Economics of UP Diliman, former Chair of CODHEND, and former member of the NNC Governing Board. This publication was an offshoot of a review that Dr. Florencio conducted on the 1999-2004 Medium Term Plan of Action for Nutrition for the NNC.

### **Rep. Imelda Romualdez-Marcos**

Former First Lady and incumbent Second District Representative of Ilocos Norte Honorable Imelda Romualdez-Marcos is among the most instrumental in the creation of NNC in 1974. Furthering her advocacy

on improving the nutritional well-being of Filipinos, she founded the Nutrition Center of the Philippines (NCP) that same year and paved the way for international organizations like USAID, UNICEF, WHO and FAO of the United Nations to provide much-needed aid assistance in delivering nutrition services to barangays. She took bold steps to have the agency build mechanisms to allow for nutrition action to be delivered nationwide, through which NNC received wide recognition globally.

### **Assistant Secretary Maria-Bernardita T. Flores**

Currently the longest serving NNC employee, Assistant Secretary of Health and concurrent Executive Director Maria-Bernardita T. Flores joined the agency in November 1975 literally right after stepping out of the university. To say that *"ASec. Bernie,"* as she is fondly called by peers and fellow employees, *"has contributed plenty to the agency"* is quite the understatement. From streamlining processes in administration and finance, regional operations and the technical service to creating the Management Audit and Improvement Program (MAIP), ASec. Bernie is indeed making waves at firing up improvements right in her own backyard. She has ensured that NNC acquires the annual budget it requires for its operations and initiatives, successfully getting approval for a PhP420.973 Million budget in 2008 - more than twice the budget the agency received the year before. She actively participates in nutrition information and education campaigns through NNC's Saturday radio programs *"Katumbas ay Biyaya"* on DZRH and *"Radyo Mo sa Nutrisyon"* on DZXL. Proudly, she shares that the agency is currently working on its ISO certification and has been actively developing its social media integration. The list goes on as far as her contributions are concerned and the legacy she will leave NNC with will surely be one for the books.

## Chairpersons of the NNC Governing Board



**Arturo R. Tanco Jr.**  
1974-1984



**Salvador H. Escudero III**  
1984-1986; 1996-1998



**Ramon V. Mitra Jr.**  
1986-1987



**Mita Pardo de Tavera**  
1987-1988



**Carlos G. Dominguez**  
1988-1989



**Senen C. Bacani**  
1990-1992



**Roberto S. Sebastian**  
1992-1996



**William D. Dar**  
1998-1999



**Edgardo J. Angara**  
1999-2001



**Domingo F. Panganiban**  
2001; 2005-2006



**Leonardo Q. Montemayor**  
2001-2002



**Luis P. Lorenzo Jr.**  
2002-2004



**Arthur C. Yap**  
2004-2005



**Francisco T. Duque III**  
2005-2009



**Enrique T. Ona**  
2010-present



## NNC Executive Directors



**Dr. Florentino S. Solon**

16 July 1974 - 31 December 1979



**Dr. Delfina B. Aguillon**

1 January 1980 - 31 March 1986



**Dr. Josefina A. Salvaña**

1 April 1986 - 24 August 1987



**Dr. Dulce Laurel-Bocobo**

25 August 1987 - 28 February 1989



**Elsa M. Bayani**

1 April 1989 - 14 August 1996;  
9 July 1998 - 15 June 2006



**Asuncion L. Macalalag**

Acting Executive Director  
15 August 1996 - 08 July 1998



**A/Sec. of Health Maria-Bernardita T. Flores**

16 June 2006-present

## NNC Governing Board Members

### **Enrique T. Ona**

Chair, NNC Governing Board  
Secretary of Health

### **Proceso J. Alcala**

Vice-Chair, NNC Governing Board  
Secretary of Agriculture

### **Manuel A. Roxas II**

Vice-Chair, NNC Governing Board  
Secretary of the Interior and Local Government

### **Florencio B. Abad**

Secretary of Budget and Management

### **Bro. Armin A. Luistro, FSC**

Secretary of Education

### **Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz**

Secretary of Labor and Employment

### **Corazon Juliano-Soliman**

Secretary of Social Welfare and Development

### **Mario G. Montejo**

Secretary of Science and Technology

### **Arsenio M. Balisacan**

Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning  
Director-General, National Economic and Development  
Authority

### **Gregory L. Domingo**

Secretary of Trade and Industry

### **Maria Bernardita T. Flores, CESO II**

Assistant Secretary of Health  
Executive Director IV and Council Secretary

# We Look to the Future



Armed with a better understanding of lessons from the past, NNC is committed to advancing its delivery of nutrition policies and programs that will reduce if not entirely eliminate malnutrition and consequently improve the nutritional well-being and lives of Filipinos across the country. A stronger, more aggressive NNC is envisioned... an agency making full use of its authority and capability to address not only malnutrition but also its roots through a synergistic engagement with sectors outside the “traditional” nutrition community in government and the private sector as well, and maximally using the resources.

NNC’s accomplishments, policy framework and plans for nutrition action will undergo constant review and scrutiny through which the agency hopes to continue gathering more insights on how to deliver more effective policies and programs to the people. Over time, the agency has evolved in order to meet the challenges of the nutrition community - validating scientific evidence upon which nutrition programs and policy formulation are founded; redesigning programs and activating mechanisms based on operational data; and constantly assessing the impact of these policies, programs and mechanisms based on studies conducted here and abroad.

The dynamics of NNC’s working relations with its partner agencies as well as the local government, especially at the grassroots level, can still see further improvement. Creating the right mix of interventions that address the actual nutrition situation in barangays is a tall order, tough to achieve but not at all impossible. Many LGUs have been successful in attaining and sustaining this - Limasawa, Southern Leyte is one such example. In order for other LGUs to replicate this level of success in their nutrition programs, NNC has to establish itself better at the local level to enable community

leaders to learn about all conceivable factors that affect their nutritional status, how these factors interrelate and how they impact on their health and their lives as a whole. It is important, therefore, to empower leaders at the barangay level through legislation, partner with the private sector and mobilize more nutrition volunteers, among others.

Meanwhile, members of the NNC Secretariat are looking forward to more opportunities for staff improvement, thereby allowing them to contribute to higher goals. This elevated level of empowerment translates to a greater sense of personal achievement, and a sense of ownership in the agency’s advocacies for nutrition. The employees of the NNC Secretariat has formed its Employees Association called NNCEA. The Secretariat looks forward to the continuing development of its members through their association. For the past forty years, NNC employees have proven that the successes and setbacks in achieving the nutrition goals serve as stepping stones for NNC to move forward with a clearer picture of what lies ahead.



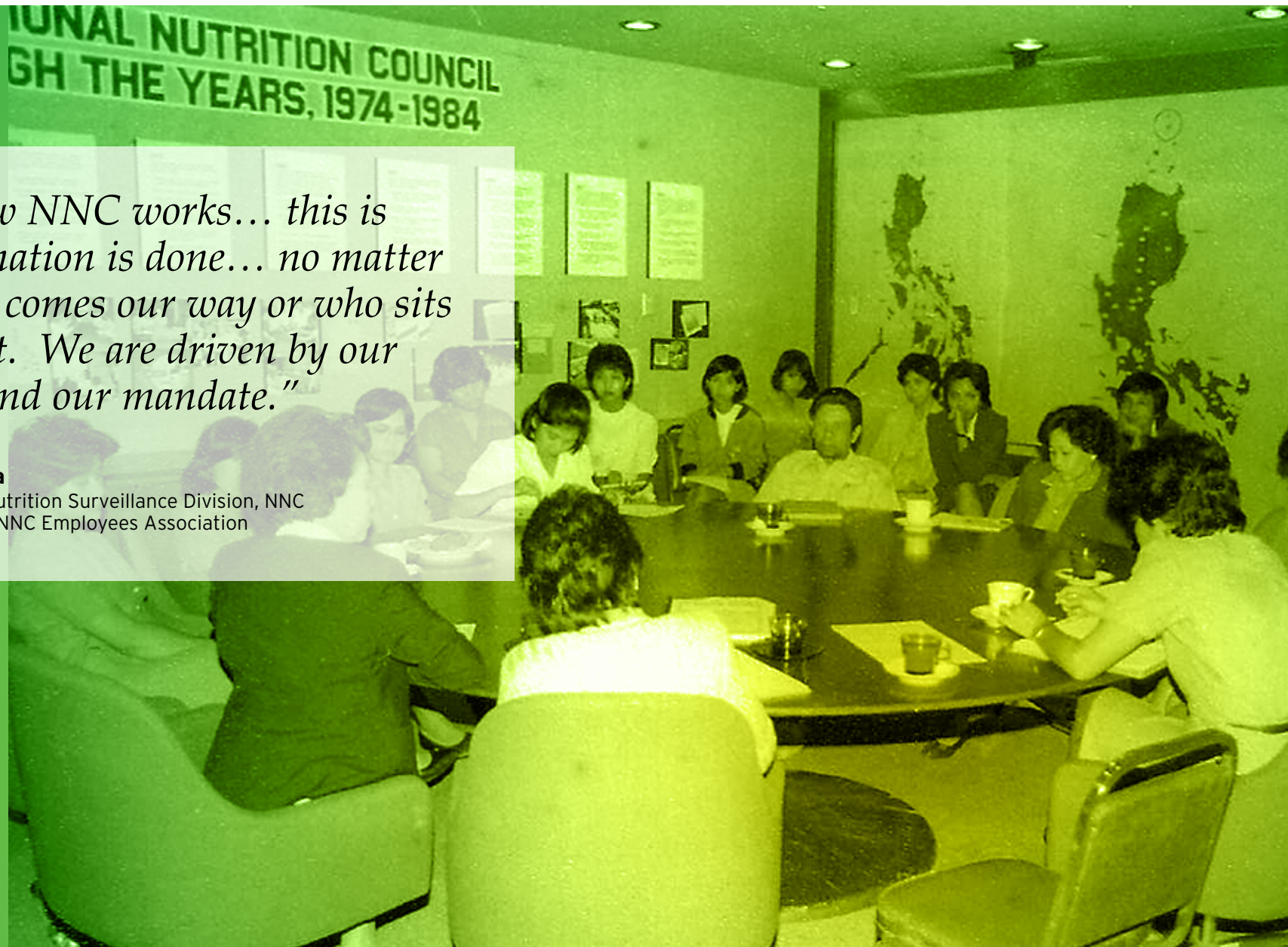


# The White Knights of NNC

*"This is how NNC works... this is how coordination is done... no matter what storm comes our way or who sits as President. We are driven by our principles and our mandate."*

**Ellen Ruth F. Abella**

Nutrition Officer IV, Nutrition Surveillance Division, NNC  
Vice-President of the NNC Employees Association



*Forty years since its inception in 1974, NNC has had the privilege of retaining the services of true nutrition champions. Their invaluable contributions, unwavering work ethic, indefatigable passion and steadfast commitment to the agency's mission have driven NNC closer to achieving its nutrition goals for the country. These esteemed white knights of nutrition know that the work is never done, that their strategies and approaches can still see further improvement, but the devoted warriors that they are will continue pushing forward until the country's nutrition goals are achieved.*













### **Nutrition Policy and Planning Division**

Julius Cesar P. Alejandro, Maria Lourdes A. Vega, Wilma D. Cruz, Rachel L. Basconcillo, Jane Christine B. Guballa, Margarita DC. Enriquez, Strawberry C. Francia, Dianne Kristine P. Cornejo, Lalaine M. Carlos  
(Not in photo: Marivic S. Samson, Armando P. Manglicmot, Rea S. Bagagunio)

### **Nutrition Surveillance Division**

Alipio P. Salipot Jr., Hygeia Ceres Catalina B. Gawie, May Jennifer E. Zabala, Karen Kay Mejos, Jeline Marie M. Corpuz, Jasmine Anne F. Tandingan, Ellen Ruth F. Abella, Jomarie L. Tongol, Frederick Christian S. Tan, Maru Azulea Tinio, Alona E. Teo  
(Not in photo: Ma. Cynthia B. Vengco)

### **Office of the Executive Director**

Fema H. Abiog, A/Sec. of Health  
Bernardita T. Flores, Lorna L. Rodriguez



### **Nutrition Information and Education Division**

Ana Maria B. Rosaldo, Jovita B. Raval, Marilou R. Enteria, Ma. Katrina A. Demetrio, Ma. Cecilia Rosario V. Sta. Ana, Katherine DC. Villanueva, Teodora C. Castor, Merlin M. Gabriel, Mariles H. Buban, Daniel G. Salunga, Ralph P. Calucag







#### **Administrative Division**

*Maybelle T. Aspeli, Serapio D. Camarines, Agrifina M. De Villa, Constancia G. Garcia, Imelda M. Catapang, Cynthia V. Tabangay, Jinky B. Benitez, Normelinda N. Cortez, Josephine T. Santos, Chona M. Fernandez, Danilo G. Balacuit, Siegfredo B. Hojas Jr., Amado F. Ferreras, Rolando A. Calub*  
*(Not in photo: Arnel T. Dimaano, Jennilyn C. Vinluan, Rubelyn U. Mangi)*



#### **Region 1**

*Standing: Ethelreina A. Balisnomo, Marcelino N. Aaron, Esperanza F. Manganti*  
*Sitting: Rose Lulu P. Pagaduan, NPC Ma. Eileen B. Blanco, Ma. Teresa G. Lomboy*

#### **Financial and Management Division**

*Chrizy Joyce Z. Sace, Rosanna S. Quillope, Ma. Leslie Angelie M. Carreon, Mirasol B. Carbon, Ma. Celerina S. Ampe, Andrea L. Cardinoza, Jennifer S. Palileo*





### **Region 2**

*Arrian Nika C. Dumaliang, Ma. Gisela M. Lonzaga, Franklin T. Mariano, NPC Rhodora G. Maestre, Leendon C. Vilgera and Katrina Mildred P. Langcay  
(Not in photo: Mark Magas)*



### **Cordillera Administrative Region**

*Kendall A. Gatan, Brett Howard U. Sugando, Rosalia F. Pablo, NPC Rita D. Papey, Bella M. Basalong, Mario M. Salamat*



### **Region 3**

*Standing: Rose Anne M. Cuyco, Joie B. Sicat, Raissa Leona S. Tan  
Sitting: Dulce E. Santos, NPC Florinda V. Panlilio, Angelita M. Pasos  
(Not in photo: Karlo M. Dimalanta)*





#### **NCR**

*Standing: Noemee Belle G. Serreon, Joseph O. Rodriguez, Princess Jean M. Algonos, Charmie B. Galo*  
*Sitting: Maricar N. Mendoza, NPC Milagros Elisa V. Federizo, Emerenciana L. Francia*



#### **CALABARZON**

*Lourdes B. Bulante, Arlene R. Robles, Marciano S. Cruz, NPC Carina Z. Santiago, Mary Mei B Javier, Ma. Rochell L. Pascual*  
*(Not in photo: Hannah Christina P. Clemente, Reynaldo B. del Rosario)*



#### **MIMAROPA**

*Ferdinand C. Ocampo, Donnah May S. Guevarra, NPC Carina Z. Santiago, Sheila Marie A. Vergara, Lhon Ryan B. Cordero*  
*(Not in photo: Grazelle Marren A. Bonacua, Allan T. Dolor)*





#### Region 5

Mareim D. Barcenas,  
Emelyn A. Vidar,  
Marlyn L. Beldad,  
NPC Arlene R. Reario,  
Marilyn C. Valeza,  
Jessie B. Llorca



#### Region 7

Standing: Lucy C. Arellano, Eula Althea R. Mayol,  
Nasudi G. Soluta, Michele L. Nedruda  
Sitting: Eduardo B. Baguio, NPC Parolita A.  
Mission, Susan Y. Orpilla

#### Region 6

Standing: Andres T. Nieves Jr., Sheryl C. Sedantes,  
Gerald Randolph C. Supremo,  
Sitting: Melinda T. Jamelo, NPC Nona B. Tad-y,  
Karen Joy C. Sargado



#### Region 8

Standing: Romeo F. Armeje, Jr., Christopher L. Abueme  
Sitting: Elinore Aline O. Grande, Clytie A. Sta. Cruz, NPC Catalino P.  
Dotollo, Jr., Rina A. Ladrera



#### **Region 9**

*Standing: Felimon J. Modillas, Jr., Gabriel C. Tubigon, Abner E. Mojica*

*Sitting: Nimfa D. Ekong, NPC Maria Del Pilar Pamela R. Tarroza, Zhalimar A. Jakaria*



#### **Region 11**

*Standing: Easter Sunshine S. Catedral, Adonis B. Genobatin, Marcel Paul B. Maglaqui, Fe Caren C. Quiban*

*Sitting: Retsebeth M. Laquihon, NPC Maria Teresa L. Ungson, Ma. Liza L. Salvador*



#### **Region 10**

*Standing: Generie D. Bantog, Sherill Faith B. Pineda*

*Sitting: Hermie B. Tan Jr., NPC Marissa DM. Navales, Helen G. Alferez*





### Region 12

Standing: Fatima E. Pedroso, Roselle M. Rentoza, Risa Joy D. Bautista, Maricel B. Rodriguez, Ma. Lani C. Sondia  
Sitting: Gladys Mae S. Fernandez, NPC Arceli M. Latonio, Romeo S. Sogo

### CARAGA

Nancy C. Sarabosing, Keith Lester Y. Loren, Rowena C. Gomez, OIC-NPC Minerva P. Molon, Retsebeth M. Laquihon, Leah Vina P. Vargas, Mariecar S. Ometer



### Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

Nasima Sharief, Nor-ain Hasim, Eloisa Usman, Maleja M. Daud-Jaamil, Hannah Farinah M. Lidasan, OIC-NPC Kadil Jojo M. Sinolinding Jr., Jessen T. Masukat, Abdulrakman Abedin



# Acknowledgments

*This book “Forty Years –Nurturing The Filipino Towards A Stronger Nation” published by the National Nutrition Council, covering the period 1974 to 2014, was made possible by the collective efforts and contributions of the following:*

**Mr. Daniel G. Salunga**

Nutrition Officer II, Nutrition Information and Education Division

**Ms. Marilou R. Enteria**

Nutrition Officer IV, Nutrition Information and Education Division

**Ms. Jovita B. Raval**

Nutrition Officer V and Chief, Nutrition Information and Education Division

**Interview Respondents:**

**Hon. Imelda Romualdez-Marcos**

Representative, Second District, Ilocos Norte

**Prof. Milagros P. Querubin**

Chairperson, Council of Deans and Heads of Schools of Nutrition  
and Dietetics (CODHEND)

Member, NNC Technical Committee

**Dr. Rodolfo F. Florentino**

Chairman-President, Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines  
Former NNC Technical Committee Chairperson

**Dr. Florentino S. Solon**

NNC Executive Director, 1974 to 1979

**Dr. Dulce Laurel-Bocobo**

NNC Executive Director, 1987 to 1989

**Ms. Elsa M. Bayani**

NNC Executive Director, 1989 to 1996, 1998 to 2006

**Ms. Maria Lourdes A. Vega**

Nutrition Officer V and Chief, Nutrition Policy and Planning Division

**Ms. Ellen Ruth F. Abella**

Nutrition Officer IV, Nutrition Surveillance Division  
Vice-President, NNC Employees Association

**Assistant Secretary of Health Maria-Bernardita T. Flores, CESO II**

NNC Executive Director IV