No Child Hungry: Partnerships in Improving Food and Nutrition Security in the Philippines Through School and Community Action

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Conference on

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A. Introduction

1. Customary to start with dire situation of malnutrition in children and women; and why not?

2. Alarming situation in the Philippines
   • Four million children underweight; 3 out of 10 under fives
   • Stunted 3 out of 10; Philippines ranks 9th in the world
   • 1 of 8 hungry; 7 of 10 insufficient food
   • Brain development before 2 years and by 5 years crucial for Intelligence
   • While infant and child mortality have dropped, neo-natal death (<28 days) still high; poor babies 2x more likely to die than better off
   • Health and nutritional status of mother before and during pregnancy
     o Depleted status from child bearing too often, too early, too late, importance of family planning - right to choose when and how many children to have for their own wellbeing
     o Women sacrifice own wellbeing - need not be

B. Today heralds breakthroughs; partnerships can make a difference

1. School system has largest number of groups for action and making a difference at grassroots level
   • Trained teachers
   • Space for gardens
   • Students
   • Parents; family
   • Community
   • LGU

2. Bio-intensive gardening - as an entry point to integrated school nutrition program
   • Deep dry bed plots - store moisture; special tree species nearby fertilize
- No chemical pesticides or fertilizer; green manuring
- Low cost and eco-friendly
- Adaptive to local conditions; indigenous vegetables
- Year round harvest

3. Social mobilization: trained teachers pass on cultivation knowledge to students- to parents and families; to communities, LGU support
- Improved home nutrition; avoid junk food
- Income generation
- Farming as good livelihood; vs OFW or urban informal settler residence
- Women’s roles important;
- Major cultivators and business people
- Day care: Healthy Kids program

- Results
  - Initially Cavite: 27 pilot schools influencing > 300 schools in Cavite
  - Scaling up to schools in Region 4A Calabarzon through 58 Lighthouse Schools
  - Nationwide rollout - DepEd Central - institutionalized through budget, targeting 220 Lighthouse Schools - to Sept 2018
    - Current participant/administrators and teachers as trainers
  - Evidence that Integrated approach improved nutritional status maximizing the growth spurt - less wasting; stunting needs longer term measures

- Crucial elements
  - Ownership by family, hh, community and local government is crucial.
  - Leadership in the school system; servant leadership

C. Addressing larger issues
1. Climate change challenges
   - Climate smart agriculture
   - Improved upland rice technology
2. Communities of practice; Farmer Field Life School;
   - Hh food and nutrition security
   - Resilient livelihoods; greater assets and self-generating hh; Improved production
3. Poverty reduction and improved family well-being
4. Farming as a productive and satisfying way of life
   - Entrepreneurship, esp women
   - Children completing high school and college

D. Role of IIRR
1. Working in 3 countries of SEA and 5 countries in Africa; over
2. Modes
   - Partnerships
• Teamwork
• Excellence
• Values: character, competence, commitment, creativity

3. Credo - believe in people 1930s

Go to the people
Live among them
Learn from them
Plan with them
Work with them
Start with what they know
Build on what they have
Teach by showing
Learn by doing
Not a showcase but a pattern
Not odds and ends but a system
Not a piecemeal but an integrated approach
Not to conform but to transform
Not relief but release

E. Congratulations
  1. Showing it can be done
  2. Those who live the problem must be part of the solution supported by partner networks represented here today
  3. Let us together work toward the day very soon that

    NO CHILD SHOULD EVER BE HUNGRY AGAIN!