

**51<sup>st</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY  
(CFS51)**

*Agenda Item 10: Monitoring CFS Policy Recommendations on Price Volatility  
and Food Security and Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition*

High-Level Session of the Committee on World Food Security

*To be delivered by the DA Senior Undersecretary Domingo F. Panganiban*

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Plenary Room, FAO HQ, Rome, Italy

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you for the invitation to speak in this panel session.

In December 2019, the Philippine Government instituted the Enhanced Partnership Against Poverty and Hunger Program or EPAHP as one of its key strategies in addressing critical concerns on hunger mitigation, food and nutrition insecurity, and poverty alleviation. This program involved various partners, in addition to the Department of Social Welfare and Development or DSWD, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Agrarian Reform.

The EPAHP, a massive national endeavor that involves vigorous public investments in infrastructure, job creation, and emergency assistance services, is premised on a combination of both short and long-term initiatives designed to deliver social welfare benefits to millions of underprivileged Filipino families in cities, towns, and the countryside.

It was a timely program that also addressed the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts on incomes, food security, and nutrition while

strengthening

resilience,

The Philippines notes that this program aligns with our obligations under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and several CFS policy recommendations on Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition, such as the following:

- establishment of an inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination mechanism, including the agriculture sector, to ensure that social protection is integrated with broader food security and nutrition programming;
- the provision of essential assistance in the short-term while simultaneously protecting or building productive assets and infrastructure that support livelihoods and human development in the long term; and,
- fostering integrated programs that directly support agricultural livelihoods for the poor, particularly smallholder farmers and small-scale food producers.

We have made progress in addressing hunger and food security, as seen in the reduced score of 14.8 on the Global Hunger Index in 2022 from 19 in 2020.

I want to highlight some key strategic measures the Philippines is undertaking to address hunger and food security. These include:

- The provision of institutional feeding programs;
- Credit assistance to support food production, processing, and marketing;
- Capacity Building, skills training, and productivity improvement of community-based and rural-based organizations;
- Linking community-based organizations to markets; and,
- A full and intensified implementation of the national program on population and family.

The Philippine Department of Agriculture's contribution for the first half of this year alone speaks to our commitment to increasing sustainable domestic food production, encouraging rural enterprise, and widening the access of the poorest of our poor to adequate nutrition and social welfare services. These include the provision of the following:

- loans to finance enterprises of impoverished rice farmers nationwide;

- farm inputs such as high-quality fingerlings and broodstock distributed to aquaculture farmers and community organizations;
- fertilizers and high-yielding corn seeds distributed to farmers;
- poultry, hogs, and high-quality cattle dispersed to livestock and poultry raisers throughout the islands;
- irrigation networks and farm-to-market roads built, repaired, and maintained;
- mechanized farming units delivered to rural organizations across our islands; and,
- motorized vessels and handline boats distributed to fisher communities throughout the country's coastal areas.

The Department of Agriculture has also established some 7,000 KADIWA stores nationwide to date - these are stores that offer basic necessities like food products at lower prices than regular markets and stores. More KADIWA stores are being planned to be put up to continuously provide safe, nutritious food at affordable prices to impoverished sectors and create a direct link between farmers and the community.

Furthermore, the government is investing in human capital by providing entrepreneurial training and development projects to rural communities, guiding over a million farmers on modern irrigation services and technology demonstrations that benefit school gardens and community vegetable gardens.

Thousands of farmers and agrarian reform beneficiaries are also being trained in proper water resource management and sustainable agriculture under the EPAHP initiative.

The government is also providing billions of pesos in free crop insurance to give farmers relief from natural disasters, crop diseases, and pest infestations and to empower them to open up to new technologies and innovations.

President Marcos also approved emergency cash transfers for low-income families facing elevated food costs.

The efforts of the Filipino farmers and fisherfolk, through their industry, hard work, and some public support, have resulted in increased production that led to a significant expansion in employment opportunities in rural areas, with almost a million new jobs created in fishing, aquaculture, agriculture, and forestry across the country this year.

In line with CFS Policy Recommendations, the FAO also provided support in leveraging the national social protection system to address the immediate impacts of the pandemic and other shocks while concurrently strengthening the resilience of individuals, households, communities, and institutions to future shocks through multi-purpose cash distribution and through assistance provided in helping recipients open bank accounts and pay-out cards for those who did not have one.

The World Food Programme is also supporting the government's expanded program against poverty and hunger through its expertise in school feeding programs, which include home-grown school feeding and promotion of a country-wide production and distribution of iron-fortified rice, forecast-based financing, and scaling up partnerships with the business sector.

There is further room to utilize the CFS Policy Recommendations to improve the design and strengthen our national social protection program. The DSWD is developing two new social technologies, taking into account the CFS Policy Recommendations. These are:

- Building on Social Protection for Anticipatory Action and Response in Emergencies and Disasters or B-SPARED program, to help build the resilience of households through timely and effective responses to risks and shock; and,

- the Walang Gutom or Zero Hunger 2027: The Philippine Food Stamp Program, to decrease the incidence of involuntary hunger experienced by low-income households through the provision of monetary-based assistance in the form of an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card that will be loaded with food credits amounting to about \$50 to purchase a select list of food commodities from partner merchant stores, such as the Department of Agriculture's Kadiwa on wheels.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., who is concurrently the Agriculture Secretary, took office in June 2022 on a commitment to create a society in which no parent has to worry about hunger in the family due to a lack of opportunities to earn an income.

The Philippines welcomes further partners to support our national social protection program to achieve zero hunger, alleviate poverty, and achieve our food security and nutrition goals.

Thank you.