

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPEMNT THROUGH BIDANI

Barangay Integrated Development Approach for Nutrition Improvement (BIDANI)
Network Program of State Universities and Colleges
Institute of Human Nutrition and Food
College of Human Ecology
University of the Philippines Los Baños

NUTRITION-IN-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: BIDANI BACKGROUNDER

The Barangay Integrated Development Approach for Nutrition Improvement (BIDANI) Network Program is an action research and public service program that has been advocating for nutrition-in-development approach in local government units (LGUs) in partnership with State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) for over four decades. It is currently based at the Institute of Human Nutrition and Food (IHNF), College of Human Ecology (CHE), University of the Philippines Los Baños.

BIDANI was conceptualized as the Nutrition Improvement Model (NIM) from 1978 to 1982. It was supported by the National Nutrition Council (NNC) and the German Freedom Hunger Program, among others. The acronym “BIDANI” was born in 1984 because the model, true to its name, espouses an integrated multi-disciplinary development approach to improve nutrition in communities. The BIDANI approach was adopted, further tested, and the program was expanded into a network of six regional SUCs in 1985. BIDANI, as a barangay-based integrated development program, centers on nutrition improvement as an entry point; indicator and measure of comprehensive development plans and programs; and the ultimate goal of development,.

With the bilateral funding assistance from the Netherlands government for 10 years (1990-2000), BIDANI expanded into a network of 46 SUCs, led by the seven regional SUCs, as a continuing public service program in barangays, municipalities and provinces around the country. The funding amounted to more than PhP 300 million for the main program, and another PhP 50 million for the micro-credit component, for which a non-government organization was created. The Philippine government, through the Department of Agriculture, provided PhP 30 million for two years (1997-1999).

The BIDANI Network Program is the academe’s unique continuing contribution to national development, in the midst of political leadership changes every three years. As a program, it continues and remains relevant as long as it plays an important role in local and national development.

BIDANI was institutionalized as a continuing public service program in UPLB and UP Visayas (UPV) through the Board of Regents’ (BOR) resolution approved on its 1144th meeting on 31 August 2000; together with the other key member SUCs, namely: Bicol University (BU), Central Luzon State University (CLSU), Central Mindanao State University (CMU), Visayas State University (VSU) and Isabela State University (ISU). In 2009, the Batangas State University joined the BIDANI Network Program.

BIDANI in Action

BIDANI is a comprehensive development strategy that espouses the importance of focusing on nutrition in all aspects and sectors of development through nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive development planning. It operationalizes community-based rural development interventions and projects planned and implemented by the people themselves according to their identified needs, problems, and goals. It attempts to attack malnutrition by looking at it through the development lens. BIDANI believes that poverty, food security, social deprivation, and underdevelopment are possible root causes of malnutrition, and thus, should be addressed accordingly. BIDANI as a strategy complements addressing malnutrition with a democratic consensus, motivating local people to participate in implementing government and non-government induced development programs, and building the capabilities of people for self-help and self-reliance through comprehensive development planning.

BIDANI advocates true development, thereby making BIDANI a participatory, holistic, and integrated approach to development. The ultimate end of the integrated program is the improvement of the people's general well-being.

Vision

A responsive network of academic institutions geared towards nutrition-in-development.

BIDANI's vision was conceptualized based on its uniqueness as a program. It is the longest-running extension program of UPLB. What makes it unique is its network of SUCs nationwide. The network of SUCs propagates nutrition as an objective, indicator, and outcome of development at the local level. The program believes that nutrition is a critical entry point and has a high prospect for sustainable development, and food and nutrition security. Thus, it justifies the role of BIDANI as an enabling mechanism in the implementation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) and as a complementary arm within the technical committee of the National Nutrition Council (NNC).

Mission

To promote nutrition-in-development through community and other stakeholders' participation in an integrated management system facilitated by State Universities and Colleges' extension programs.

The guiding principle behind the program's mission is to introduce BIDANI as a strategy to fulfill its vision through community advocacy and responsibility-sharing to accelerate nutrition improvement of Filipinos. The strategy is to improve governance by promoting participative and integrated development planning while ensuring that nutrition is integrated in the LGU plans and budget. To facilitate the local implementation of BIDANI, the program developed innovative strategies, as follows:

- *Barangay Integrated Development Approach:* BIDA is the development planning component of BIDANI, where the Barangay Development Councils are capacitated into Program Planning and Implementing Committees (PPIC), the expanded version of BDC in the BIDANI parlance. Through BIDA, barangays are able to effectively and efficiently plan their development programs, projects, and activities, all of which are documented in their respective Barangay Integrated Development Plans (BIDP).
- *Barangay Management Information System:* BMIS is the e-governance component of BIDANI. Through this, barangays are capacitated in integrating information and communications technology for development (ICT4D), particularly in terms of data management and governance. Through accurate data gathering, storage, retrieval, and processing, barangays are able to produce quality reports about their areas' socio-economic, agricultural, environmental, health and sanitation, and nutrition situation.
- *Participative Nutrition Enhancement Approach:* PNEA is the direct nutrition component of BIDANI. A participative strategy in preventing and combating malnutrition through the life cycle approach, and taking into utmost consideration the first 1000 days of life of a child, PNEA espouses capacity building and empowerment of local nutrition workers and leaders in nutrition program management towards achieving food security in the home and in the community.

The network shall capacitate the core team members of each SUC so that everyone affirms, and efforts will be exerted to ensure that nutrition will be integrated into all areas of concern, such as peace and order, livelihood, education, infrastructure development, social services, and tourism, among others. Nutrition considerations will be used in designing programs/projects and activities in all areas of concern. This means that nutrition will be the entry point, indicator, and ultimate goal of development.

With the implementation of the Republic Act 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, the LGUs in the Philippines at the provincial, municipal and barangay levels were given the autonomy for decision making, self-governance and management. They were also given a bigger share of the national budget.

An LGU which consists of various communities/stakeholders is the locus of BIDANI's operation. The LGU is mandated to ensure communities are orderly. A community is orderly when the families within it are orderly. Families should have access to their basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, and their general well-being is uplifted. Thus, different areas of a community's concerns are established to solve problems and meet people's needs and aspirations.

As a result of decades of action research, BIDANI establishes and creates innovations that enhance rather than duplicate efforts of the government, NGOs, people's organizations, and private agencies. It catalyzes action; inspires and sparks the flame for people participation; and links the community with existing resources (financial, human, material and technical). The trilogy of functions of universities (instruction, research and extension) are realized in the operationalization of BIDANI. The role of SUCs traditionally focuses on training and developing manpower. However, in carrying out its research and extension mandates, the academe can innovate alternative approaches. This is where BIDANI focuses: realizing the human ecological perspective of environmental integrity, food and nutrition security, development of human potential, and organizational development.

BIDANI BY THE NUMBERS

AREA COVERAGE	MEMBER UNIVERSITIES
795 barangays 7 cities 28 municipalities 10 provinces 7 regions	8 member SUCs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● University of the Philippines Los Baños (national network coordinator) ● Batangas State University ● Bicol University ● Central Luzon State University ● Central Mindanao University ● Isabela State University ● University of the Philippines Visayas ● Visayas State University

MILESTONES

In National Policy

- **NNC TechCom:** Recognizing the role and contributions of the academe in nutrition and development, BIDANI is a part of the Technical Committee of the National Nutrition Council (NNC TechCom). NNC is the Philippines' policy-making body on nutrition.
- **PPAN:** BIDANI is included and recognized as one of the enabling mechanisms of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition since 1993. The PNEA strategy of BIDANI enables the localized implementation of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programs espoused in the PPAN. Through this, BIDANI capacitates the Barangay Nutrition Committees towards having a better, integrated approach in implementing nutrition programs for the benefit of the children in the community.

In the Academe

- **Building and Strengthening a Network of Universities-in-Development:** In spite of the many challenges in empowering the Filipino people, in making their lives comfortable, and in realizing the vision of well-developed communities, BIDANI serves as the academe's contribution to the nation's development. The unique nutrition-in-development parlance of BIDANI enables state universities and colleges in implementing mechanisms that contribute to the development of communities. Research and extension, which are two of the three key functions of the academe, has been improved and retooled towards providing public service to the people, to communities, and to the nation.
- **Forging Partnerships with SUCs:** Memoranda of Agreement between UPLB and the universities implementing the BIDANI strategy have been forged within the last five years, namely: Central Luzon State University (CLSU), Central Mindanao University (CMU), Batangas State University (BatStateU), Visayas State University (VSU), Isabela State

University (ISU), and Bicol University (BU). These MOA formalize the partnership of the partner state universities in the BIDANI Network.

- **Continuous Capacity Building:** To further strengthen the BIDANI implementation of the network's member state universities, UPLB, the BIDANI Network Program's over-all national coordinator, continuously provides technical backstopping services to its partner SUCs through reinforcement trainings, training of trainers, and on-line technical assistance.

In the Grassroots

- **Nutrition Improvement, especially for Children:** 1,387 children 0-36 months old moderately or severely malnourished children were included in the Participative Domiciliary Nutrition Rehabilitation (PDNR), now the Participative Nutrition Enhancement Approach (PNEA). Six months after the implementation of PDNR, 17 percent of the children attained normal nutritional status, and 53 percent had improved nutritional status (e.g. severe to moderate or mild; moderate to mild). More families were also able to engage in food production activities and in utilizing the KALINGA supplementary mix.
- **Making Development Planning Better and More Inclusive:** BIDANI enables local government officials, both at the municipal and barangay levels, to develop direct and indirect interventions, mechanisms, and solutions to address the various concerns of their communities through BIDANI's three innovative strategies. Identifying development needs of the people in the community is of paramount importance to BIDA. Accurate data stored and processed through BMIS ensures precise targeting of beneficiaries and stakeholders for the local government units' development programs, projects, and activities, especially those concerning health and nutrition, including those implemented by the direct nutrition strategy, the PNEA.
- **Promoting Good Governance through Capacity Building:** By training municipal officials and by capacitating the Barangay Development Councils (BDC) to form into their barangay's Program Planning and Implementing Committee (PPIC), local governments involved in development planning are now more capable to identify and address the pressing needs of their communities towards attaining good governance. In particular, the capacities of local governments in terms of planning and management, project formulation, resource allocation, and linkages are improved and strengthened.
- **Development of the People, by the People, and for the People:** Implementing the BIDANI strategy entails the participation of community people in development planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The Program Planning and Implementing Committee (PPIC), an expanded version of the Barangay Development Council (BDC) in the BIDANI parlance, enables community members to actively participate in the barangay's development planning process. As a result, BIDANI research shows that 95%

of the PPICs trained are able to formulate and update their Barangay Integrated Development Plans.

- **Improving Nutrition Programs in Communities:** With sufficient funding and grants, BIDANI was able to help rehabilitate a multitude of children in its catchment areas nationwide through the then Participative Domiciliary Nutrition Rehabilitation (PDNR). Six months after the implementation of PDNR, out of 1,387 children in the network's catchment areas as of 1999, 17 percent of them were rehabilitated to normal nutritional status, and 53% had improved nutritional classification but are not yet fully recovered. Meanwhile, 12 months after the implementation of PDNR, 37 percent were rehabilitated to normal, and 45 percent had improved nutritional classification.

Now, with the new Participative Nutrition Enhancement Approach (PNEA), BIDANI focused on capacity building for nutrition frontliners in communities in order for them to strengthen the implementation and management of their nutrition programs. Barangay health workers, nutrition scholars, and the Barangay Nutrition Committees are now more equipped with knowledge in their baseline data collection. Their capacities have also been built and strengthened in the aspects of infant and young child feeding, counselling, nutrition education.

THE WAY FORWARD

Nutrition-in-development has gone a long way, almost four decades since its inception, first as the Nutrition Improvement Model (NIM), and now as BIDANI. With its vast network of universities spanning more than 700 barangays across the Philippines, BIDANI continues to remain relevant in addressing the development planning needs at the local levels. It is still one of the academe's bastions of people-oriented, integrated development through transdisciplinary approaches towards attaining nutrition improvement.

However, there are still challenges in addressing malnutrition. Nutrition for children and pregnant women still remain a relevant concern for the government and the academe. Notwithstanding the limited resources, problems in nutrition still need to be addressed. Local leaders are still longing for an empowered citizenry through people-centered and integrated development planning. Sustaining these efforts is a daunting task.

Thus, by passing the BIDANI Bill into law, more state universities and colleges and local government units will be able to contribute towards combatting malnutrition in the Philippines, leading to more empowered localities, and more able-bodied Filipinos contributing to national development.

- **Institutionalization will enable BIDANI-implementing SUCs to implement stringent action towards nutrition improvement, contributing to national and global goals.**

Given the credibility of and assurance of government funding for SUCs, these institutions must use its mandate of extension or public service, with emphasis towards community health and nutrition as component, objective and indicator of development. Through the BIDANI Law, every SUC will have to integrate health and nutrition in every aspect of extension/public service, thereby facilitating the attainment of better health and nutrition outcomes. Attaining these goals will contribute to the achievement of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN), the Philippine Development Plan, Ambisyon Natin 2040 which will form part of the SUCs' vital contribution to the achievement of health-and-nutrition-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Sufficient funding will enable BIDANI to reach more areas and improve the nutritional status of more children.**

BIDANI in the past was able to reach a vast coverage of communities through the help of DA and international bilateral funding, with 70 percent of children in BIDANI communities achieving improved nutritional status at six months since the start of implementation (J.S. Eusebio, J.A. Kusin, & E.M. Balatibat, 2001). If BIDANI would again be sufficiently funded, the program will be able to achieve similar, if not higher improvement of nutritional status of children, especially along the first 1000 days of life, if it is given sufficient funding.

- **An enabling environment for BIDANI will further strengthen the country's drive towards achieving food and nutrition security.**

As the National Nutrition Council (NNC) articulates, “investing in nutrition is good governance.” Thus, programs that target food and nutrition security need to have sufficient resources and should be situated in an enabling policy and governance environment in order to achieve their ultimate goals. Programs like BIDANI, which addresses food and nutrition security through a transdisciplinary, integrated strategy involving the academe, local government units, and local communities, will be able to thrive further through proper allocation of resources, and through passing a law that institutionalizes the program, which brings more gravitas and demand for the field of nutrition-in-development.

It is through supporting research- and evidence-based endeavors like BIDANI can we empower localities towards a more participatory governance, freedom from hunger and food and nutrition insecurity, and achieving overall and holistic development. Therefore, having House Bill 1349, or *An Act Establishing the Barangay Integrated Development Approach for Nutrition Improvement (BIDANI) of the Rural Poor as a Linkage Program for All State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Community Colleges and Appropriating Funds Therefor* is a timely and relevant move towards food and nutrition security, national development, and ultimately, attainment of a comfortable life for all.

Signed:



AIMEE SHEREE A. BARRION, RND, PhD.

OIC Program Leader, UPLB BIDANI and the BIDANI Network Program



MILA R. ANDRES, PhD.

Program Leader, Isabela State University-BIDANI



EUGENIA G. BALTAZAR, PhD

Program Director, Central Luzon State University- BIDANI



VABERLIE P. MANDANE-GARCIA, PhD.

Program Leader, Batangas State University-BIDANI



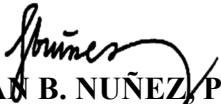
ROWENA F. ZOILO, MPA

Program Leader, Bicol University-BIDANI



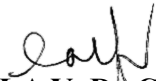
JOSEPHINE T. FIRMASE, MM, MCD

Coordinator, UPV COP-BIDANI



LILIA B. NUÑEZ, PhD

Program Leader, Visayas State University- BIDANI



ESTRELLA Y. DACILLO, PhD

Central Mindanao University-BIDANI