

# **RA 8425 and NAPC: A Review and Assessment**

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# Outline of the Presentation

- Objectives of the study
- Context of the study
- Assessment framework and methodology
- SWOT analysis
- Enabling and constraining factors
- Recommendations

# General and Specific Objectives

- General: review and assess the Philippine Government's social reform agenda (SRA) and poverty alleviation program as translated in the implementation of RA 8425
- Specific:
  - identify the contributions of RA 8425 on poverty reduction
  - determine and assess the congruency of NAPC's present mandate, operational structure, and resources vis-a-vis the implementation of the SRA
  - identify the enabling and hindering factors for NAPC as the lead agency in the country's fight against poverty
  - evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of RA 8425 and the SRA, recommend policy and program directions, and propose possible amendments to the law

# Context

- Poverty incidence remained high despite economic growth: an urgent concern
- “Forecast” for 2009 poverty incidence is still about a third of the population
- Poverty is multi-dimensional; adequate response typically integrated, convergent or holistic packages
- Key element – coordination and collaboration
- “Poverty governance is a complex web of interactions and relationships in the implementation of a multi-dimensional solution at the ground level”
- What is wrong with the governance of poverty reduction?

# Assessment Framework (SWOT)

- The simple framework of the assessment will lay out the following:
  - Strengths and/or positive outcome contributions of RA 8425 and NAPC in Poverty Reduction
  - Weaknesses and/or negative outcome contributions of RA 8425 and NAPC
  - “External” and contextual factors affecting NAPC’s success or failure in poverty alleviation (Opportunities and Threats)

# Methodology

- Literature and document review
- Focus group discussions with RKCG members in selected regions
- Key informant interviews
- SWOT analysis

# Strengths and Positive Contribution

- Institutionalized mechanism for poverty coordination and monitoring (mandated by law; difficult to abolish)
- Formulation of a feasible poverty framework and agenda (NAAA, KALAHI)
- Venue for high level participation of the basic sectors in policy formulation
- Institutionalized capacity building support for NGOs and LGUs in microfinance (funding from the PDTF)

# Strengths and Positive Contribution

- Venues for inter-agency convergence through the NKCG and RKCG
- Promotion of the Community Based Monitoring System (CBMS) as a tool for local government decision-making
- Basic sector advocacies translated into legislation and policies
- Evidence of best practices and convergence at local levels (Kalahi Prototype Projects)

# **Weaknesses: Human Resources**

- Quick turnover of key officials – 9 persons appointed Lead Convenor in 10 years
- Quick turnover of staff
- Institutional memory hampered and operations (coordination and monitoring processes) not regularized
- Capacity of basic sectors to effectively participate in the policy making process

# Weaknesses: Structure and Process

- Changing rules in terms of the election and appointment of sectoral council members and representatives
- The nature of NAPC as a coordinating agency is dependent on President's full support e.g. calling of en banc meetings, resource allocation
- The weakest planning link: macroeconomic growth and poverty nexus – need for an overarching poverty framework and strategy adequately integrated in the development plan
- Duplication of roles of NAPC with NEDA, PCUP, NCIP, PCW (formerly NCRFW), NCC, etc.
- Lack of regional presence hinders NAPC's role in convening RKCG and facilitating convergence at local levels

# Weaknesses: Financial Resources

- Meager budget of NAPC itself; PDTF resources also small
- Missing role of NAPC in overseeing resource allocation for poverty reduction; not a member of the ICC
- Low interest of donors to fund NAPC programs and projects because of quick turnover of officials and staff
- Weakness in resource mobilization for the basic sectors; accessing private and civil society resources
- No carrot and stick to be able to perform its oversight functions among national agencies and LGUs

# Opportunities

- Huge and popular mandate of the Aquino administration – harnessing multi-stakeholder participation in the fight against poverty and governance reforms
- Explicit anti-poverty thrust - possible strong political support for enhancing NAPC's role including resource allocation
- Possibilities of strong economic growth – more available resources and more focused on the chronic poor and specific areas
- Donor interest has been renewed e.g. MCC grants, WB and ADB Loans

# Risks and Threats

- Continuing peace and conflict problems – dependent of resumption of negotiations
- Among myriads of concerns, will NAPC have the President's full support?
- Non-sustainable leadership
- Looming budget deficit – resources for NAPC and poverty programs compete with other government programs and initiatives
- Occurrence of disasters and global economic uncertainties may erase gains

# Enabling Factors

- Institutionalized participatory and convergent mechanisms at national and regional levels
- Full support of the President (including access to resources)
- Cooperative agencies at the national and regional levels
- Empowered basic sector representatives
- Committed and technically competent Secretariat (leadership and staff)

# Constraining Factors

- Quick turnover of key officials and staff
- Capacity of basic sectors to effectively participate in the policy making process
- Politics in the election and appointment of sectoral council members and representatives
- Lack of regional presence
- Lack of appreciation from various stakeholders that poverty is a concern of all (“sectoral view of poverty”; macro link of poverty, etc.)

# Recommendations

## Clearly identify the focus areas of NAPC:

- **Coordination** –inventory key poverty related policies and programs, streamline them (eradicating duplications in terms of programs), converge and integrate them (in a framework and over-all strategy and in cases of policies and directives) and direct them to proper targets (geographical areas for programs; sectors for policies)
- **Monitoring** – monitor and evaluate key poverty programs and policies and decide whether to continue (or stop), modify (redesign) and expand
- Enhancing **participation** by the basic sectors and LGUs– ascertain key needs and issues of the basic sectors & LGUs and match them with programs and policies of key national agencies

# Recommendations

- Provide organizational stability
  - Lead Covenantor and Usecs committed to serve on a longer term
  - Finalize organizational structure with plantilla positions; fill in with competent staff
- Enhance coordination and monitoring role
  - Full presidential support
  - Incentives and disincentives for national agencies and LGUs in their performance
  - Stronger monitoring and evaluation capacity through networks with academe and research institutes

# Recommendations

- Enhance key mandates through structural changes
  - an IRR to rationalize and integrate all A.O.s and M.C.s issued
  - should have both national and regional presence
  - refinements in basic sector representation and selection
  - M& E and Resource Mobilization unit
  - rationalization of overlaps with other agencies (MOA and delineation of roles – NEDA-NAPC model)

# Recommendations

- Increase budget of the agency itself (e.g. poverty alleviation fund – to be used by RKCG convergent programs; incentives for LGUs)
- Increase “access or authority” of NAPC to the resources of agencies implementing poverty programs
- Increase NAPC’s access to official development assistance through a “poverty-related program donors forum”; asserting leadership within the Philippine Development Forum
- Increase NAPC’s capacity to mobilize resources from the private and civil society sectors (Public-Private Partnerships for Poverty Reduction)

**Maraming Salamat Po!**