

CREATING A NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 491, June 25, 1974

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WHEREAS malnutrition is seriously affecting millions of our people;

WHEREAS, malnutrition retards mental and physical development of our children, weakens their resistance to infections resulting in unnecessary loss of human lives through high infant and child mortality rates;

WHEREAS, studies indicate that infants and young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers are most vulnerable to malnutrition;

WHEREAS, there is a multiplicity of government agencies engaged in various aspects of nutrition activities;

WHEREAS, there are various food programs in the country such as the Green Revolution, Masagana 99, Palayan ng Bayan, Masaganang Maisan and others which are aimed at providing for food sufficiency;

WHEREAS, there is a close interlinking relationship between food, education and nutrition;

WHEREAS, Executive Order 285, series of 1971, vested in the National Food and Agriculture Council the responsibility to coordinate all nutrition programs in the country;

WHEREAS, coordination has proven to be of great value in integrating the food and nutrition efforts of the various agencies;

WHEREAS, one of the objectives of the New Society is to bring about social, economic, and political reforms to eventually improve the quality of life of every Filipino;

WHEREAS, the nutrition program, being concerned with human resource development, is a vital and integral part of social reform and economic development;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution do hereby adopt, approve and make as part of the law of the land, the following:

SECTION 1. Title.—This decree shall be known as the Nutrition Act of the Philippines.

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.—The Government of the Philippines hereby declares that nutrition is now a priority of the government to be implemented by all branches of the government in an integrated fashion.

SEC. 3. Philippine Food and Nutrition Program.—An Integrated Four-Year Program involving the government and private sector shall be drafted by the National Council is hereby created. The program shall be approved by the President to be implemented by all concerned.

SEC. 4. Creation of a National Nutrition Council.—There is hereby created an agency under the Office of the President, the National Nutrition Council, hereinafter referred to as the council, to be composed of the following officials;

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.

In the event that any cabinet member cannot attend Council meetings, he shall be represented by an Undersecretary or Assistant Secretary.

SEC. 5. Functions and Powers.—The Council shall have the following functions and powers:

- To formulate an integrated national program on nutrition.
- To supervise, coordinate and evaluate the implementation of the integrated Philippine Food and Nutrition Program to be implemented by all agencies and instrumentalities of both the government and the private sector concerned with improving the nutrition of our people.
- To coordinate and integrate policies and programs of all agencies and instrumentalities of the government charged with the prosecution of existing law, policies, rules and regulations concerning nutrition.
- To coordinate the release of public funds for nutrition purposes in accordance with the approved projects and programs.
- To coordinate all requests for loans and grants by the government agencies involved in the nutrition program.
- To call on any department, bureau, office, agency and other instrumentalities of the government for assistance in the form of personnel, facilities and resources as the need arises.

SEC. 6. Officers of the Council.—The Chairman-Coordinator of the National Food and Agriculture Council shall be the Chairman of the Council. He shall maintain a close link of the nutrition program with the food programs of the government. In his absence, the Secretary of Health shall be the Acting Chairman.

An Executive Director shall be appointed by the Council. He shall implement the policies, programs, projects and decisions of the Council.

One or more Deputy Executive Directors may be appointed by the Council and shall assist the Executive Director in the performance of his duties or take charge of special project assigned by the Executive Director.

A Management Committee shall be formed, the members of which shall be a representative appointed by each of the members of the Council, which representatives should be the head of the nutrition unit or project of his office. The Executive Director, or in his absence, a Deputy Executive Director, shall be Chairman of the Management Committee. This Committee shall perform such functions as may be assigned to it by the Council.

The Council shall hire such other personnel as may be necessary for the performance of its basic functions. All positions, except the technical and professional staff and such other positions as the Council may declare to be highly technical, policy determining, or primarily confidential, shall be subject to Civil Service rules and regulations and the Wages and Position Classification Office:

Provided that, all personnel shall be entitled to the benefits and privileges normally accorded to government

employees, such as retirement, GSIS Insurance, leave and similar matters:

Provided further, that in the appointment and promotion of employees, merit and efficiency shall serve as basis, and no political test or qualification shall be prescribed and considered for such appointments and promotions.

SEC. 7. Nutrition Month.—The month of July shall be designated as NUTRITION MONTH, for the purpose of creating greater awareness among our people on the importance of nutrition. Activities thereto shall be approved and coordinated by the Council. This Nutrition Month of July shall be in lieu of the previously declared Nutrition Week in March.

SEC. 8. Donations—The Council shall be authorized to received donations, grants, or gifts in whatever form and from whatever sources: Provided that, said grants, gifts or donations shall be administered, obligated and disbursed in accordance with the terms of the grant or donations and in such manner as a majority of the council may in its discretion determine.

SEC. 9. Appropriations.—For the first fiscal year, 1974— 1975, P3.4 million pesos shall be appropriated from NFAC funds already stipulated for nutrition programs. Provided that, The sum of ten million pesos is hereby appropriated as operating funds of the National Nutrition Council starting fiscal year 1975-1976. Provided further, That said amount may be increased or decreased in the succeeding years by the Council in accordance with its financial position. This appropriation shall be included in the Annual General Appropriation Act beginning in Fiscal Year 1975-1976.

SEC. 10. All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. This Decree shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 25th day of June, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy-four.

(Sgd.)

FERDINAND E. MARCOS

President of the Philippines

By the President:

(Sgd.)

RONALDO B. ZAMORA

Assistant Executive Secretary

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