

## HAPAG-ASA, an Integrated Nutrition Program

### (Brief Background)

The Pondo ng Pinoy Community Foundation, headed by Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales of Manila with twelve other Diocesan Bishops, launched the **HAPAG-ASA, an Integrated Nutrition Program** for the poor and malnourished children. According to the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) study 3 out of 10 children, ages 0 to 5 years, are suffering from chronic malnutrition and are underweight, under height and stunted in growth.

2005 to 2006 marked the first batch of 120,000 children enrolled in the program, from which some 76,000 were saved from malnutrition and health-related illnesses. For this year, another batch of 120,000 children is again targeted. Right now, some 50,000 children are enrolled nationwide under the supplemental feeding.

The Hapag-Asa Program is the flagship program of Pondo ng Pinoy. It is a medically supervised nutrition program that aims to alleviate extreme hunger among poor Filipino children and to improve their overall health condition. It has two major components: **supplemental feeding program** and **education classes** with topics on Spiritual/Values formation, Health and Nutrition, Natural Family Planning (NFP) methods, and livelihood/skills training.

Under this program, each malnourished child is fed with Vitameal, a scientifically prepared lentil-rice mix, power packed with carbohydrates, protein, fats & 25 vitamins and minerals, to be mixed with local ingredients (rice, chicken, potatoes, etc.) to make each meal appealing and palatable.

Children who are between 6 months to 12 years old (considered as the critical stages of development) and are suffering from moderate to severe malnutrition are eligible for enrollment in the program. A batch of enrolled children will be fed once a day, five days a week for six months. Vitameal-enriched meals come in the form of viand and rice or heavy snacks (like soup or spaghetti) served on designated feeding sites.

For the parents, an education program in the form of classes/seminars is simultaneously implemented. These classes will provide the parents basic knowledge and skills that will improve their capabilities and expand their opportunities (e.g. income-generation) thus improving the quality of their lives and ensuring the continuity of the well being of their children after completing the 6-month feeding program.

The program is being implemented in the 12 dioceses of Pondo ng Pinoy: Archdiocese of Manila and the Dioceses of Kalookan, Pasig, Novaliches, Cubao, Daet, Parañaque, San Pablo, Antipolo, Imus, Puerto Princesa, and Malolos; and in 20 other Dioceses (not a member of the Pondo ng Pinoy) in the provinces. But this is not solely a Church matter; other sectors like non-government organizations (NGOs), foundations and local government units (LGUs) have also been inspired to take on the cause and adopted the program.

Everyone is invited to be part of the HAPAG-ASA program by becoming an implementor or donor. For further inquiries regarding implementation mechanics and donation procedures, please contact HAPAG-ASA Secretariat @ Assisi Development Foundation c/o Juliane Reyes, RND (B-lan) or Magine Garin, RND through phone (6321001 to 03) or email (hapagasa@gmail.com).

Ref.: [http://www.rcam.org/hapag\\_asa\\_an\\_integrated\\_nutrition\\_program.htm](http://www.rcam.org/hapag_asa_an_integrated_nutrition_program.htm)