



## UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES INC.

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PRESS RELEASE

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### CUA URGES LGUS HELP FUND SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

The president of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines urged local government leaders to help fund the school feeding program in their respective areas.

This, after the World Food Programme found that only a little more than a quarter of Filipino schoolchildren are being covered by the program.

"I call on my fellow local leaders to help in funding the school feeding program. Tulungan natin ang mga pamilya sa ating mga pamayanan na matustusan ang nutritional needs ng mga anak nila," Quirino governor Dax Cua said.

The WFP's "State of School Feeding Worldwide 2022" report revealed that only an estimated 27 percent or 3.5 million students in the Philippines benefited from government-led school meal programs in 2022.

The figure, however, also represents a significant increase from the 16 percent recorded in 2021 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, where only 2.3 million students benefited from feeding programs.

Cua noted the role that local government units could play in supplementing the budget for feeding schoolchildren, especially after the Department of Education's school feeding program was cut by half in 2022. From P6 billion in 2021, the 2022 allocation for the program was P3.3 billion.

"Pwede nating punan ang pagkukulang sa pondo na ito para patuloy na magtagumpay ang programang ito. School feeding is a crucial intervention to ensure that children, especially those from poorer families, fulfill their nutritional requirements."

"Kung nakakain ng masustansiya ang mga bata, they can develop properly, at mabibigyan sila ng sapat na proteksyon laban sa sakit. Every LGU has an incentive in ensuring this happens to ensure a healthy community," Cua said.

The governor also said that Vice President and DepEd Sec. Sara Duterte had also solicited LGUs help in expanding the Implementation of the program.



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"Kung maaari daw sana, tulungan natin ang DepEd para gawing realidad na 'all schoolchildren, every day' ang school feeding program," he said.

The WFP considers school feeding "one of the largest and most widespread social safety nets in the world," and emphasized that school meals are a significant tool for the government to address malnutrition.

"We have been asking the national government for a greater role in nation-building. This is a great opportunity for us to pitch in and help in making a difference in the fight against malnutrition," the governor said.

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ULAP is the umbrella organization of all leagues of local government units and local government officials in country, serving as the focal representative and mouthpiece of the subnational government in all policy and program platforms to amplify our unified advocacy towards the strengthening of LGUs into able partners in nation-building.

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