



Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the **Process Evaluation of the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens (SPISC) Program**, which aims to assess the program's implementation and effectiveness. The SPISC program, mandated under **Republic Act No. 9994 (Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010)**, provides a **monthly stipend of PHP 500** to indigent senior citizens to help meet their basic needs. Given the growing number of beneficiaries and operational challenges, this evaluation seeks to examine program processes, identify key implementation issues, and recommend improvements for better service delivery.

Objectives of the Study

- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the SPISC program, including beneficiary selection, cash assistance distribution, and monitoring mechanisms.
- Identify **key challenges and bottlenecks** in program implementation at the national, regional, and local levels.
- Assess the integration of **cross-cutting themes** such as governance, transparency, and gender considerations.
- Provide **policy recommendations** to improve the design, delivery, and sustainability of the program.



Executive Summary

Key Findings

1. Beneficiary Selection and Targeting

- The transition to **DSWD-led validation** improved targeting accuracy but also caused **delays in payouts**.
- Some **political interference** was observed at the LGU level in previous selection processes.
- A **lack of real-time beneficiary data integration** with other social protection programs (e.g., GSIS, SSS, PVAO) led to inefficiencies in cross-checking eligibility.

2. Cash Assistance Delivery and Monitoring

- **Delays in fund disbursement** were reported, particularly in **2018–2019**, affecting the financial stability of beneficiaries.
- LGUs previously handled fund distribution, but due to governance issues, this responsibility was transferred to **DSWD Field Offices** under the new Omnibus Guidelines.
- **Limited alternative payment modes** (e.g., ATM, electronic payments) resulted in logistical challenges and inefficiencies in cash distribution.

3. Governance and Oversight

- The lack of **regular Congressional reviews** as mandated by **RA 9994** led to outdated policies and gaps in program management.
- **Insufficient staffing** at DSWD field offices increased the burden on implementers, affecting validation efforts and overall service delivery.
- Some LGUs demonstrated **best practices** in handling payouts and beneficiary engagement, while others struggled with **politicization and inefficiencies**.

4. Program Impact and Beneficiary Experience

- While beneficiaries acknowledged that **PHP 500/month was a helpful support**, it remained **insufficient to cover food, medicine, and other basic needs**.
- Many pensioners had to **incur transportation costs or borrow money** while waiting for delayed payouts.
- Beneficiaries appreciated the **social recognition and dignity** that came with receiving the pension, despite economic limitations.



Executive Summary

Recommendations

1. Policy and Program Design

- Conduct a **Congressional review** to redefine the criteria for “indigent senior citizens” and consider increasing the **pension amount**.
- Strengthen **data integration** between DSWD, GSIS, SSS, and other agencies to **improve beneficiary verification**.
- Institutionalize **alternative payment mechanisms** (e.g., digital payments, ATM cards) to **reduce logistical bottlenecks**.

2. Governance and Program Management

- Allocate **more plantilla positions** at DSWD Field Offices to support **monitoring, validation, and program implementation**.
- Improve **grievance mechanisms** to address beneficiary concerns and minimize political interference in the selection process.
- Establish a **Project Management Office (PMO)** with dedicated staff to oversee program implementation and compliance.

3. Cash Assistance Delivery and Monitoring

- Implement a **real-time beneficiary tracking system** to **prevent payout delays** and improve fund distribution efficiency.
- Strengthen **collaboration with LGUs** while maintaining **DSWD oversight** to prevent mismanagement at the local level.
- Adopt **semi-annual payments** (as per the Omnibus Guidelines) to improve administrative efficiency and reduce delays.

4. Beneficiary Engagement and Social Protection Integration

- Enhance **awareness campaigns** to educate senior citizens on their rights and program benefits.
- Expand linkages with other social welfare programs to provide **holistic support** (e.g., free medicine, healthcare assistance).
- Encourage **community involvement** through local senior citizen associations to **strengthen advocacy efforts**.



Stakeholder's Assessment Workshop for Social Pension Program was held at Luzent Hotel in Quezon City last May 22-23, 2019. 40 participants are from DSWD Central Offices and Field Offices (Regional Directors, ARDO/A, Soc Pen Focal Persons) and consultants and staff of World Bank and ICI Asia.

Executive Summary

Conclusion

The **Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens (SPISC) Program** remains a crucial **social protection initiative** for vulnerable elderly populations in the Philippines. However, the evaluation highlights several **challenges in beneficiary selection, cash assistance delivery, governance, and program sustainability**. Moving forward, strategic reforms, **data-driven decision-making, and improved fund management** will be essential to ensure that the program remains **responsive, transparent, and impactful** for indigent senior citizens.