



# Assessment Of Maternal Nutrition Services Of Barangay 890 Towards An Enhanced Sustainable Health Program

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**Citation:** Mylene G. Dinglasan, et.al (2024), Assessment Of Maternal Nutrition Services Of Barangay 890 Towards An Enhanced Sustainable Health Program, Educational Administration: Theory and Practice, 30(8), 344 - 351,

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i8.7307

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

The goal of an institution's community service learning programs is to improve the growth and welfare of the community it serves. Providing resources to those in need and assisting them in raising their standard of living would rank among the finest accomplishments of a university. Philippine Christian University (PCU), as a private Higher Education Institution, created PCU-SERVES (Supports, Educates, Responds, Values, Empowers, Stewards) to support the sustainable growth of the urban poor in Metro Manila. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences through PCU-SERVES created a learning program called "Service with Heart". It is a set of learning opportunities and connections to the outside world for students in the Colleges of Arts, and Sciences. One of the activities was the "Maternal Health is the Family's Wealth" initiative for the women of Barangay 890 as part of the Service with a Heart project addressing the community's need for Health and Mental well-being focused on mothers' nutrition. Maternal nutrition plays a critical role in fetal growth and development also during the first 1000 days of the babies. The assessment of the maternal nutrition services provided to the mothers in Barangay 890 is the main objective of the study. A self-made survey questionnaire was used to assess the program. Results revealed that the respondents were very satisfied with the program in terms of process and services as assessed by the Barangay officials present during the conduct of the activity and by the mothers themselves. Additionally, Knowledge learned was highly acquired with an overall weighted mean of 3.85. An overall rating of 3.88, means that the knowledge gained was put into practice. Researchers proposed developing an enhanced sustainable program by concentrating on the metrics with the lowest weighted mean to improve the outcomes of maternal nutrition services offered to the community.

**Keywords:** Community Service, Maternal Nutrition, Sustainable Health Program

## Introduction

Schools around the world offer a wide range of contexts for their community service learning programs. Universities and Colleges in the Philippines are mostly focused on their fourfold function as Higher academic establishments (HEIs). Among these include production, community service, research, and instruction. The goal of an institution's community service learning programs is to improve the growth and welfare of the community it serves. Providing resources to those in need and assisting them in raising their standard of living would rank among the finest accomplishments of a university. Every community project that an organization takes on needs to reflect these fundamental principles. These principles ought to be the cornerstone of any college's community service projects.

Through the Office of External Affairs Community extension initiatives, Philippine Christian University (PCU) created PCU-SERVES (Supports, Educates, Responds, Values, Empowers, Stewards) to support the sustainable growth of the urban poor in Metro Manila. The university started SERVES as an initiative to better the lives of those living in urban poverty as well as people in general. A learning program called "Service with Heart" was created by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences through PCU-SERVES. Based on the university's three guiding principles—faith, character, and service. It is a set of learning opportunities and connections to the outside world for students in the Colleges of Arts, and Sciences. There are three stages to the project: 1. Social Sensitivity 2. Project Learning in Action, (PLA) and 3. Monitoring and assessment. Students from various majors will benefit from this project by being able to link what they learn on campus to what is going on outside.

One of the activities in PLA was the “Maternal Health is the Family's Wealth” initiative for the women of Barangay 890 as part of the Service with a Heart project addressing the community's need for Health and Mental well-being focused on mothers. In its first phase, mothers were taught the value of breastfeeding, how to produce more milk, when to breastfeed, and what foods are ideal for nursing mothers, where cooking lessons were conducted. Mothers were instructed on infant nutrition throughout the first 1000 days of life during the second phase. Having been initiated by the college almost three years ago, this project is past time for assessment, the need to assess the maternal nutrition services rendered to the community. By doing this, we allow ourselves the chance to assess our deeper influence and make adjustments for upcoming initiatives.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to assess the Maternal Nutrition services provided among mothers of Barangay 890 towards developing an enhanced sustainable Health Program.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following,

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - a. sex
  - b. age
  - c. educational attainment
  - d. marital status
  - e. occupational status
2. What is the level of satisfaction of the respondents in the implemented maternal nutrition services in terms of:
  - a. process and
  - b. services
3. To what extent do maternal nutrition services help in terms of
  - a. Knowledge
  - b. Attitudes
  - c. Skills
4. What were the challenges that affected program implementation?
5. What Sustainable Health Program can be proposed based on the results of the study?

### **Literature Review - Foreign**

Evaluation of maternal nutrition services is essential for understanding their effects on mother and child health. A study in Osun State found that pregnant women attending antenatal clinics with better nutritional knowledge have better diets and health outcomes for themselves and their babies (Akinola, Akinyemi, Oguntade, & Meka, 2022). This shows that maternal nutrition services need instruction to be effective. These services can help pregnant women make healthy diet choices by educating them about nutrition. Informed decisions during pregnancy and postpartum can improve child health. Workshops, booklets, and personalized counseling are educational components. These elements empower women to manage their nutrition and close the knowledge gap. Educational interventions reduce nutrition-related problems, making them cost-effective over time. This strategy is healthy for mother and child and economically beneficial.

Successful community outreach programs improve maternal health and family planning. A community outreach program in Tigray, Ethiopia, improved maternal health and family

planning uptake through focused teaching and assistance (Bang, Chae, Lee, Yu, & Kim, 2018). Community-based solutions in maternal nutrition programs may improve health outcomes by boosting accessibility and involvement. Even rural and underserved populations receive assistance through community-based solutions. Community leaders and local resources help these programs establish community trust, essential for success. The customized educational content addresses local eating patterns and challenges. Home visits, community gatherings, and mobile clinics help expand maternal nutrition services. Programs can also adapt to community cultures, making them more effective. The success of Tigray suggests replication in comparable locations worldwide.

Systematic studies of mother and child health care have shown that coverage is crucial to health outcomes. Gebremedhin, Dawson, and Hayen (2022) observed that various programs exist, but their efficacy depends on coverage and service quality. Providing comprehensive and high-quality maternal nutrition programs can improve mother and child health. Coverage includes service depth and quality as well as audience size. Comprehensive coverage includes education and practical help for maternal nutrition. Evidence-based techniques, qualified staff, and sufficient resources define high-quality services. Continuous monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure programs accomplish their aims. Effective coverage ensures no mother or child gets overlooked, especially in low-resource situations. To improve results, governments and organizations must invest in both breadth and depth of maternal nutrition services, according to the review.

Prenatal nutrition improves mother, neonatal, and child health, especially in low- and middle-income nations. Lassi et al. (2020) found that supplements and education improved birth outcomes and reduced mother and infant issues. This study supports targeted dietary interventions in maternal nutrition programs to maximize health benefits. Regional nutritional inadequacies can be addressed with customized interventions. Anemia and neural tube abnormalities can be prevented with iron and folic acid. Informing pregnant women about these supplements' benefits can boost adherence. Dietary counseling can help women satisfy their nutritional needs by using local food sources. Education and supplementation improve maternal and newborn health. Healthcare professionals, governments, and communities should collaborate on these initiatives. A holistic approach that covers urgent nutritional needs and long-term health is recommended by Lassi et al. (2020).

Nutritional health literacy is needed for maternal nutrition programs. A Czech study indicated that pregnant women with higher nutritional literacy had better eating habits and health outcomes (Papežová et al., 2023). Maternal nutrition initiatives should promote nutritional literacy to help pregnant women make good choices. Nutritional literacy encompasses knowledge of balanced diets, nutrient-rich foods, and food labels. This entails identifying nutritional deficiencies and recognizing when to seek medical care. Interactive seminars, educational materials, and individual counseling increase nutritional literacy. These efforts promote nutritional literacy to help women and their families eat healthily. Empowerment makes women more likely to eat healthily, improving their health. As educated moms teach their children and communities, nutritional literacy can spread.

Cultural and socioeconomic factors affect maternal nutrition service performance. Culturally sensitive and community-specific programs achieve better. Bang et al. (2018) found that culturally focused outreach enhanced maternal health outcomes. Culturally relevant maternal nutrition program design and execution are essential. Cultural sensitivity is respecting local traditions, beliefs, and diets. In program planning and implementation, community leaders and people participate. These projects also depend on money and education. Customized interventions can help overcome access and compliance issues. Lower-income families can access these programs with free or cheap dietary supplements and information. Cultural and socioeconomic factors influence maternal nutrition initiatives' success and equity.

Program implementation evaluation is crucial for identifying accomplishments and challenges. Process evaluation helps understand and improve program implementation, according to Gebremedhin, Dawson, and Hayen (2022). Process assessments can help maternal nutrition programs meet health goals and target group needs. Process evaluation assesses implementation service delivery, participant involvement, and resource use. It reveals achievements and failures and their causes. This data is crucial for program modifications.

Evaluation may show intervention failures including insufficient staff training or low participant commitment. Programs remain active and responsive to community needs by monitoring and reviewing. Effective and efficient services are guaranteed.

Also crucial is maternal nutrition program durability. Dietary interventions require ongoing support and modification, according to Lassi et al. (2020). Maternal nutrition programs must adapt to community needs and resources to survive. Program sustainability entails continuous advantages after initial financing ceases. Building local capability needs community health worker education and local group engagement. Continuous evaluation adapts the program to new opportunities and challenges. Diets may change due to food availability or economic constraints. Adaptability and responsiveness support maternal nutrition. A self-sufficient mother-child health system is desired.

A complete program evaluation needs quantitative and qualitative data. The program was reviewed by Akinola et al. (2022) using focus groups, key informant interviews, and surveys. Using these tools, one can evaluate program performance and offer improvements. Quantitative data like survey results show the program's impact. This can include birth outcomes, nutritional status, and participant satisfaction. Qualitative data, however, reveal individuals' perspectives. This can indicate participation hurdles, unmet needs, and improvement opportunities. Evaluators can analyze the program's strengths and faults using both sorts of data. A holistic approach ensures a complete examination with actionable insights. It also conveys the complexity of the program and the community effect.

Maternal nutrition programs can engage and educate communities through service-learning. Papežová et al. (2023) emphasized the advantages of service-learning for students and community members, boosting knowledge and abilities.

Educational programs like "Service with a Heart" can improve maternal nutrition services by connecting academic learning to community needs, improving health outcomes. Students learn by doing community initiatives while improving their academic skills in service-learning—students and the community benefit from this approach.

Students learn about social determinants of health and acquire practical experience. The community benefits from student resources and support. Community gardens, nutrition workshops, and health screenings are service-learning programs. Communities can meet acute health needs and build capacity by integrating these projects into maternal nutrition programs. This collaboration improves maternal nutrition services' durability and efficacy.

### **Literature Review- Local**

To understand how maternal nutrition programs affect community health, especially in small contexts, they must be evaluated. A review of community outreach services at Emilio Aguinaldo College-Cavite by Alagon and Reyes-Chua (2019) showed that structured programs improve maternal and child health. Their research underlined community-specific initiatives and advised a five-year development plan to sustain and strengthen them. These stresses targeted and continuous maternal nutrition programs.

Community efforts have improved mother-child health. Dayao, Santos, Beluan, and Gregorio (2024) found that focused interventions enhanced health in a Meycauayan City community outreach program. The study found that maternal nutrition treatments need continued monitoring. Regular outreach and assistance are needed to improve health outcomes. Research shows that frequent monitoring and follow-up improve maternal nutrition programs.

Community involvement programs are well-tested. Tomas found in 2022 that education and nursing students' community engagement improves community health. According to the study, practical experiences improve student skills and benefit the community. Educational institutions benefit community health programs. These coordinated efforts can improve maternal nutrition by using educational institutions' resources and knowledge.

Local studies show that community health programs need culturally appropriate treatments. Alagon and Reyes-Chua (2019) found that initiatives that understood local culture engaged the community and improved health results. Cultural awareness and community interaction are

crucial for creating and delivering maternal nutrition interventions. Customizing programs to community culture and society improves efficacy and sustainability. Program designers should consult with the community to learn their requirements and preferences.

Assessing and adapting sustainable health efforts to community needs is crucial. Dayao et al. (2024) stressed the necessity of regular assessments and feedback in their Meycauayan City community outreach program research. Continuous evaluation has improved program efficacy by identifying shortcomings and improving them. This emphasizes the need for constant evaluation and program adaptability to meet community requirements. Results imply that consistent assessment and feedback could improve maternal nutrition services' long-term viability and effectiveness.

Education is essential to maternal nutrition programs. Tomas (2022) found that knowledge encourages healthy behavior, hence educational efforts improve health. Community-focused educational programs were emphasized throughout the study. An effective maternal nutrition program should incorporate education. Nutrition and health education help women make healthy choices for themselves and their kids.

School-community health partnerships increase maternal nutrition programs. According to Alagon and Reyes-Chua (2019), educational institutions provide critical resources and expertise, enhancing community health program outcomes.

This partnership benefits the community and gives students experience. The statistics suggest such partnerships boost health program efficacy and sustainability. Community health programs can enhance maternal nutrition with education and competence.

Local leaders and stakeholders must participate in effective community outreach. In their research on Meycauayan City's community outreach program, Dayao et al. (2024) stressed local leaders' importance. Local leaders improved program outcomes by building community trust and engagement. Effective maternal nutrition services require stakeholder engagement. Local leaders and stakeholders can boost program credibility and adoption.

Effective maternal nutrition programs require regular monitoring and assessment. A study by Tomas (2022) found that frequent monitoring helps discover areas for improvement and implement program changes. Continuous surveillance ensures program goals and community requirements are met. The statistics suggest regular monitoring and assessment can improve maternal nutrition programs.

This improves and matches the program to community needs. Long-term health improvements necessitate the sustainability of maternal nutrition programs. Alagon and Reyes-Chua (2019) emphasized sustainable planning in their community outreach service review.

Sustainable program benefits require strategic planning and dedication. To succeed, maternal nutrition initiatives need a strategy. The findings suggest that long-term goals and ongoing funding can sustain and strengthen maternal nutrition programs.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Research Design**

This study used the mixed method research design. The application of mixed methods gave the researchers a wider view of the study. Specifically, this research paper used the explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research design, as this is the most straightforward of the mixed methods designs.

The quantitative aspect of the research focused on the collection and analysis of numerical data. Survey questionnaires were distributed to all respondents to assess their level of satisfaction with the process and services provided, as well as the knowledge they have acquired and to what extent they practice their learnings.

The qualitative portion of the study focused on group discussion that was facilitated by the researchers and guided by the questions developed from the result of the quantitative data.

### Participants of the Study

Purposive sampling was applied in this study. It is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are selected because they have the characteristics needed for the sample. In other words, samples are selected “on purpose”. This was because we specifically needed pregnant women of Barangay 890 and Barangay officials to be the participants in the study. With the assistance of the Barangay chairwomen, 10 resident beneficiaries were randomly chosen, but only 7 were able to complete the program.

### Research Instrument

To gather information and data, the researchers developed a survey questionnaire that focused on answering the research problem statements. It includes items that were directed at measuring the level of satisfaction of the participants in terms of the process of how the study was conducted, and how services were delivered. It also includes questions that intend to measure the level of acquisition of the knowledge imparted and to what extent they practice this knowledge.

## Results

**Table 1** Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Parameters	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Type of Respondents	Barangay Official	4	<b>36.36</b>
	Mother	7	<b>63.64</b>
Sex	Male	3	<b>27.27</b>
	Female	8	<b>72.73</b>
Age	12-16	1	<b>9.09</b>
	17-21	1	<b>9.09</b>
	22-26	1	<b>9.09</b>
	27-31	2	<b>18.18</b>
	32-36	3	<b>27.27</b>
	37 and above	3	<b>27.27</b>
Educational Attainment	No schooling completed	0	0.00
	Elementary school graduate	1	<b>9.09</b>
	Some high school, no diploma	3	<b>27.27</b>
	High school graduate	4	<b>36.36</b>
	Some college credit, no degree	1	<b>9.09</b>
	Trade/technical/vocational training	1	<b>9.09</b>
	Associate degree	0	0.00
	Bachelor's degree	1	<b>9.09</b>
	Master's degree	0	0.00
	Professional degree	0	0.00
	Doctorate degree	0	0.00
Marital Status	Single, never married	8	<b>72.73</b>
	Married or domestic partnership	2	<b>18.18</b>
	Widowed	0	0.00
	Divorced	0	0.00
	Separated	1	<b>9.09</b>
Occupational Status	Employed for wages	4	<b>36.36</b>
	Self-employed	0	0.00
	Out of work	1	<b>9.09</b>
	A homemaker	2	<b>18.18</b>
	A student	1	<b>9.09</b>
	Retired	0	0.00
	Unable to work	3	<b>27.27</b>

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents: a total of 11 respondents consisting of 4 *barangay officials* with 1 *female* and 3 *male*; and 7 *mothers*. In terms of age, the table reveals the ranges of 12 to 16 years old, 17 to 21 years old, and 22 to 26 years old all with a



frequency of 1 or 9.09 percent, from the range of 27 to 31 years old a frequency of 3 or 18.18 percent, from the range of 32 to 36 a frequency of 3 or 27.27 percent, and the range of 37 years old and above a frequency of 3 or 27.27 percent.

In addition, the table shows the respondents' Educational Attainment with the greatest percentage being *High school graduates* with a frequency of 4 or 36.36 percent, *Some high school, no diploma* with a frequency of 3 or 27.27 percent. *Elementary school graduates, Some college credit, no degree, Trade/technical/vocational training*, and *Bachelor's degree* ranking equally with a frequency of 1 or 9.09 percent.

In terms of the Marital Status of the respondents, the greatest percentage being *Single, never married* with a frequency of 8 or 72.73 percent, followed by *Married or domestic partnership* with a frequency of 2 or 18.18 percent, and the lowest percentage being *Separated* with a frequency of 1 or 9.09 percent.

The table shows the Occupational Status of the respondents, the greatest percentage being *Employed* for wages with a frequency of 4 (or 36.36 percent), followed by *Unable to work* with a frequency of 3 (or 27.27 percent), *A homemaker* with a frequency of 2 (or 18.18 percent) and the lowest percentage being *Out of work and Retired* both with a frequency of 1 (or 9.09 percent).

**Table 2.1** Level of Satisfaction of the Respondents in the Process

	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
A.1	Coordination with Barangay Officials	<b>3.82</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
A.2	Dissemination of Schedule of Activities	<b>3.82</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
A.3	Explanation of the purpose of the Project	<b>3.63</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
A.4	Implementation of the Project	<b>3.82</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
A.5	Conduct Monitoring of the Project	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>		<b>3.82</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

Table 2.1 reveals the level of satisfaction of the respondents in terms of the process, it could be gleaned from the results that the overall weighted mean was 3.82, and was verbally interpreted as very satisfactory. Additionally, indicator 5, which conducts monitoring of the project has the highest weighted mean of 4. This is followed by indicators 1.2 and 4 which have received a rating of t 3.82 and were interpreted as very satisfactory. On the contrary, indicator, 3, the Explanation of the purpose of the Project, has the least weighted mean, 3.63 but is still interpreted as very satisfactory.

**Table 2.2** Level of Satisfaction of the Respondents in Terms of Services

	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
B.1	The services were provided at the right time	<b>3.73</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
B.2	Polite Faculty and Staff	<b>3.91</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
B.3	Sociable Faculty and Staff	<b>3.91</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
B.4	Accommodating Faculty and Staff	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
B.5	Pleased with the information shared	<b>3.91</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>		<b>3.90</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

It can be seen in table 2.2, the Level of Satisfaction of the respondents in terms of Service. Indicator 4, stating that Faculty and staff were accommodating has the highest weighted mean of 4.0 which was interpreted as very satisfactory. Indicators 2,3 and 5 shared a weighted mean of 3.91 and also were verbally interpreted as very satisfactory. Among the indicators, number 1, that the services were provided at the right time got the least weighted mean of 3.73, but still interpreted as very satisfactory.

**Table 3.1** Level of Maternal Nutrition in terms of Knowledge Acquired

	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
C.1	Importance of breastfeeding on babies	<b>4.00</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>
C.2	How to increase breastmilk supply	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>
C.3	Importance of prenatal care	<b>3.75</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>

C.4	Right food and nutritional needs when breastfeeding	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>
C.5	When to breastfeed	<b>3.75</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>		<b>3.85</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>

As evidenced by the results in Table 3.1, it could be concluded that mothers highly acquired knowledge of breastfeeding. Its importance to babies got the highest weighted mean, 4.0. All the indicators got a verbal interpretation of Highly acquired. An implication is that all of the mothers highly acquired knowledge from the program as evidenced by the overall weighted mean of 3.85, which is interpreted as Highly acquired.

**Table 3.2** Level of Maternal Nutrition in Terms of Practice

	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
D.1	I practice proper breastfeeding	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly practiced</b>
D.2	I do stuff I learned to increase my breastmilk supply	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly practiced</b>
D.3	I visit the health center for my maternal and prenatal care	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly practiced</b>
D.4	I eat the right food needed when breastfeeding	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly practiced</b>
D.5	I breastfeed my baby at the right time	<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly practiced</b>
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>		<b>3.88</b>	<b>Highly practiced</b>

Table 3.2 presents the level of Maternal nutrition in terms of practice. It is evident that all the mothers in Barangay 890 highly practiced what knowledge they acquired in the program, garnering an overall weighted mean of 3.88.

### Discussion

It's critical to evaluate and modify sustainable health initiatives in response to community requirements. Dayao et al. (2024) emphasized in their research on the Meycauayan City community outreach program the importance of routine evaluations and feedback. By finding and fixing flaws in programs, ongoing evaluation has increased their efficacy. This highlights the necessity of ongoing assessment and program flexibility to satisfy community needs. The findings suggest that regular evaluation and feedback could increase the long-term sustainability and efficacy of maternal nutrition services. Organizations can better understand how and why outcomes are accomplished by using process evaluation, which offers insights into program delivery, protocol adherence, and effectiveness-influencing factors.

Assessment of the maternal nutrition services rendered to the mothers of Barangay 890 revealed that the respondents were very satisfied with the program in terms of process and services as assessed by the Barangay officials present during the conduct of the activity and by the mothers themselves. Additionally, Knowledge learned was highly acquired with an overall weighted mean of 3.85. An overall rating of 3.88, means that the knowledge gained was put into practice.

Partnerships for school-community health improve initiatives for maternal nutrition. Alagon and Reyes-Chua (2019) assert that educational institutions contribute vital resources and expertise that improve the results of community health programs. Students gain experience and the community benefits from this cooperation. According to the data, these kinds of collaborations improve the sustainability and performance of health programs. Programs for community health can improve maternal nutrition by providing knowledge and skills.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Organizations can better understand how and why outcomes are accomplished by using process and services evaluation, which offers insights into program delivery, protocol adherence, and effectiveness-influencing factors. The results of this study revealed that the participants were highly satisfied with the process and services provided to them. The results simplified the process of determining if the project is sustainable and worth continuing. As far as the Level of Maternal Nutrition in terms of knowledge acquired, according to the mothers' knowledge was highly acquired and they were able to practice what they learned in the program. Every time



we interact with our community, we should take some time to think back, compile our lessons learned, and extract as much information as we can for upcoming initiatives. Researchers recommended addressing those indicators with the least weighted mean to deliver better results of maternal nutrition services to the community.

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