

CALL FOR PROPOSAL

Qualitative Study on the Indirect Impacts of COVID-19 on Older Persons and Community Responses in the Philippines



1. Summary

The World Health Organization Philippines is seeking an institutional contractual partner to provide qualitative study on the indirect impacts of COVID-19 on older persons and community responses in the Philippines. This assistance will be carried out through an Agreement for Performance of Work (APW) contract.

The proposals are due by **4 July 2025**.

2. Background

As of 2019, the global population of adults aged 60 years and older exceeded one billion and is expected to double by 2050. In the Philippines, the ageing population is increasing rapidly, with corresponding implications for the health and social systems. Older individuals have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, not only due to heightened risk of severe illness and mortality, but also due to indirect impacts resulting from pandemic response measures such as lockdowns, mobility restrictions, and prolonged social isolation.

These measures have been associated with increased mental health challenges, including a twofold increase in depression among older people, as well as disruptions in access to health services, physical decline, and sleep disturbances. Ageism has further exacerbated these effects, deepening the marginalization of older adults in both urban and rural areas.

Understanding the lived experiences of older persons in the Philippines and examining the community responses to these challenges is critical to informing inclusive, equitable, and age-friendly recovery efforts and long-term planning.

The purpose of this study is to explore the indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on older persons in the Philippines by:

- Documenting the lived experiences of older individuals in relation to these indirect effects;
 1. Understanding the community-level responses designed to address or mitigate these impacts.
 2. Indirect impacts are defined as consequences not directly caused by COVID-19 infection itself but arising from associated restrictions, disruptions, and societal responses to the pandemic.

3. Timeline

The implementation timeline for the consultancy is from **15 July 2025 to 15 December 2025**.

4. Place of Assignment

Manila, Philippines

5. Scope of Work

The selected institution will undertake the following:

Output 1: Lived Experience Documentation

Deliverable 1.1: Conduct 5 to 6 semi-structured interviews with older individuals (aged 60+) representing diverse demographics, including gender, socioeconomic status, living arrangements (e.g., with family, alone, or in institutions), and urban/rural location.

Output 2: Community Response Analysis

Deliverable 2.1: Conduct a desk review of national and local-level responses and initiatives aimed at supporting older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines.

Deliverable 2.2: Facilitate one focus group discussion (FGD) with key informants involved in the design and/or implementation of these responses. Participants may include:

- Representatives from the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Local Government Units;
- NGOs, faith-based, and community-based organizations;
- Academic and research institutions; and
- International development partners.

Output 3: Analysis and Reporting

Deliverable 3.1: Conduct a thematic analysis of data using appropriate qualitative methods.

Deliverable 3.2: Produce a comprehensive final report in English, which:

- Summarizes key findings;
- Highlights local good practices and challenges;
- Provides actionable recommendations for improving future responses; and
- Includes anonymized narratives and case illustrations.

Methodology

The study will follow a qualitative design comprising:

- Semi-structured interviews with older adults;
- A desk review of secondary literature and policy/program documentation;
- A focus group discussion with relevant stakeholders; and
- The institution will be responsible for securing ethical clearance from a recognized Institutional Review Board (IRB) in the Philippines. Participation of individuals must be voluntary and based on informed consent, with strict confidentiality observed.

Deliverables:

- Inception Report: Study design, tools, work plan, ethical considerations;
- Transcripts and Thematic Summaries Raw and analyzed data from interviews and FGD;
- Draft Final Report: Preliminary findings and recommendations; and
- Final Report: Revised based on WHO and stakeholder feedback.

6. Qualifications and experience

The contractual partner must meet the following qualifications:

Education and Work Experience

Eligible academic institutions must meet the following criteria:

- A multidisciplinary team with demonstrated expertise in gerontology, sociology, psychology, and public health.
- Proven experience in conducting qualitative research, particularly in areas related to health, ageing, or social protection.
- Prior engagement in research involving older adult populations in the Philippines.

- Familiarity with the Philippine public health and social service systems, including relevant cultural, community, and policy contexts.
- Capability to implement ethical standards in research involving human subjects, including obtaining institutional ethics review board (ERB) clearance or equivalent.
- Documented track record of working collaboratively with government agencies, such as the Department of Health, and international organizations like WHO.

Language

- With excellent verbal and written communication skills in English.

Competencies

- Building and promoting partnerships across the organization and beyond;
- Moving forward in a changing environment;
- Ensuring the effective use of resources;
- Fostering Integration and teamwork; and
- Communication in a credible and effective way.

7. Contract Time

The work to be done under this Agreement for Performance of Work (APW) shall be completed as set out in the Terms of Reference. The contract will be completed in not more than five (5) months from the commencement of the work, or otherwise as agreed in writing among the Owner and the Contractor. The work shall be done in strict compliance with the Contract, Specifications, Schedules, and all other Contract documents and all Instructions. Failure to do so shall be at the Contractor's risk and account. Submission of bid by the Contractor shall constitute acknowledgement by the Contractor that it is aware of and concurs with all of the requirements or conditions incorporated in the Call for Proposal and the other documents.

As time is an essential element for this Contract, for failure to complete all work within the stipulated time as set out in the Terms of Reference, the Owner shall charge the Contractor liquidated damages. This shall be in the amount the sum of 0.5% of the total contract amount per day (Saturdays, Sundays and holidays are included) but not to exceed on total of 10% (ten percent) of the contract amount. These liquidated damages shall be for the added cost incurred by the Owner for such delay and for the inconvenience caused to the users of the Work. It is understood that this is not a penalty but a fixed sum representing the liquidated damages for each calendar day of the delay. Delay shall be counted from the agreed completion date, considering further time extensions approved by the Owner, to the date of completion of work.

8. Other Requirements

The contractor shall have no direct or indirect involvement or interest, in any form, in milk substitute manufacturing, promotions, or sales, in arms dealing, drugs, alcohol industry, breastmilk substitute industry, tobacco industry or human trafficking. The contractor and personnel involved in this work shall have no conflicts of interest in relation to the work being undertaken.

9. Ethical and Professional Standards

WHO prides itself on a workforce that adheres to the highest ethical and professional standards and that is committed to put the WHO Values Charter into practice.

WHO has zero tolerance towards sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), sexual harassment and other types of abusive conduct (i.e., discrimination, abuse of authority and harassment). All members of the WHO workforce have a role to play in promoting a safe and respectful workplace and should report to WHO any actual or suspected cases of SEA, sexual harassment, and other

types of abusive conduct. To ensure that individuals with a substantiated history of SEA, sexual harassment or other types of abusive conduct are not hired by the Organization, WHO will conduct a background verification of final candidates.

10. Management of Conflict of Interest

Any interest by an entity (organization/company), expert, or member of the project team that may affect or reasonably be perceived to (1) affect the expert's objectivity and independence in providing advice to WHO related to the conduct of a project, and/or (2) create an unfair competitive advantage for the expert or persons or institutions with whom the expert has financial or interests (such as adult children or siblings, close professional colleagues, administrative unit or department).

World Health Organization (WHO) conflict of interest rules is designed to identify and avoid potentially compromising situations from arising thereby protecting the credibility of the Organization and its normative work. If not identified and appropriately managed such situations could undermine or discount the value of the expert's contribution, and as a consequence, the work in which the expert is involved. Robust management of conflicts of interest not only protects the integrity of WHO and its technical/normative standard-setting processes but also protects the concerned expert and the public interest in general.

11. Confidentiality Statement

All the inputs, results, products and reports of this APW/Consultancy and all related documents about the project are to be treated as confidential and must not be handed over to third parties. The DOH and WHO have exclusive ownership of all documents and reserves the right to further disseminate any relevant information outside the agreed project's scope.

The contractual partner will also provide disclaimer on the reports: This document has been produced with the assistance of the World Health Organization. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the author, and does not necessarily reflect the opinions, recommendations, or advice of the World Health Organization.

12. Submission of Requirements

Interested institution should submit electronic copies of the following:

- Cover letter.
- Proposal with financial details and proposed timeline; and
- Company profile and qualifications of team members if institution.

Address all cover letter and proposals to:

Dr Rui Paulo de Jesus

WHO Representative to the Philippines

Ground Floor, Building 3, Department of Health San Lazaro Compound

Rizal Avenue, Sta Cruz, Manila

Please submit the electronic copy of the cover letter and proposals with the title “**Qualitative Study on the Indirect Impacts of COVID-19 on Older Persons and Community Responses in the Philippines**” to WPPHLPURCUREMENT@who.int. Only shortlisted proposals will be contacted by WHO Philippines.

Deadline of submission of application is on **4 July 2025**.