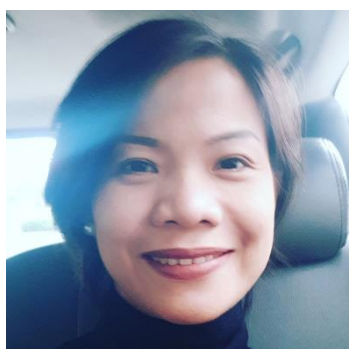


Climate Change in Health Agenda: Review of Health Sector Policies in the Philippines

Romelei Camiling

Only 0.5% of climate funding reaches the health sector, primarily for mitigation. Yet, vulnerable countries must brace for impact through adaptation measures. We examine how the Philippines integrates the climate change in health (CCinH) agenda through a review of policies retrieved from the Climate Change Commission and Department of Health (DOH) and a hand search of reviewed documents. Findings were validated through informants from the DOH. The DOH is part of national climate change governance bodies, with the Health Sector Strategy for Climate Change Adaptation 2010-2022 set in motion by the 2014-2016 National Climate Change Adaptation in Health Strategic Plan. After this, the CCinH was subsumed as one of six thematic areas of the National Environmental Health Action Plan 2017-2022, jointly led by the DOH and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The Philippine Health Sector Strategy 2023-2028 is about reforms related to Universal Health Care, with climate change interventions focused on health facilities. Recent issuances define CCinH governance structures within the DOH with the Health Promotion Bureau as the technical lead. Ongoing interventions align with energy conservation and environment-related national policies for hospitals, mostly on mitigation. There is little guidance on climate change adaptation measures at the primary care level. The findings present the initial move to incorporate CCinH but reveal a risk for mitigation-centric and watered-down, healthsector-specific actions for climate resilience. Stocktaking with key actors can inspire commitment toward a systemic health sector strategy aligned with the WHO quality criteria for Health National Action Plans.



Romelei Camiling-Alfonso is a public health physician committed to improving health systems through strategy dialogues that impact policy development, service delivery organisation, and advocacy. She provides technical assistance to the Philippine government focusing on climate-smart health facilities, and health facilities regulation reform and how it contributes to reorienting health systems towards primary care. She has been instrumental in convening and steering the Health Professionals Alliance Against COVID-19, leading efforts on unified clinical algorithms, maternal and child health policies, and primary care integration. She helped establish the Philippine Society of Public Health Physicians and served as an Alliance for Improving Health Outcomes board member. She has been a scholar at the

Asian Institute of Management Masters Innovation and Business programme and an alumna of the Emerging Voices for Global Health programme. She received her Master's in Public Health from the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, and her degree in medicine from the University of the Philippines, Manila.