TANDA-NAN

A Community-Organizing Initiative to Develop Social Networks to Promote Agency among Older Adults

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Abstract

In the Philippines, poor older adults aged 60 and above are at risk of social isolation and experiencing loneliness due to having less economic opportunities, experiencing mobility issues, and the deaths of their peers. Reaching the age of sixty signifies the shift from "provider of resources" to "receiver of care" in the Filipino cultural context. This transition alters the social status and sense of agency of older adults which may result in loneliness and adverse perceptions of ageing. Living alone, having less active social involvement, and seeing friends less frequently were related to higher levels of loneliness among older Filipinos. Notably, having meager financial resources was also significantly associated with higher loneliness scores. Most programs targeted towards poor older adults are conditional welfare programs focused on charity rather than co-creation. Increasing older adults' sense of agency requires opportunities for them to be more socially involved, self-reliant, and financially-stable to combat loneliness and feelings of being a burden to others.

To increase older adults' access to such opportunities, we are proposing TANDA-NAN: a community-organizing initiative to develop networks of volunteers, civil society and non-governmental organizations, local government offices, academic institutions, and businesses that provide opportunities for social interaction, upskilling, income generation, and rewards redemption to older adults through a gamified system where older adults may participate in activities to earn points for redeeming services or commodities of their preference. Our consultations with older adults in the Manggahan Floodway housing resettlement site in Metro Manila highlighted their desire to be active participants in designing the system alongside other members of the community. At its core, TANDA-NAN is an enabling instrument which uses a co-knowledge generation approach in generating opportunities for the flourishing and healthy ageing of older adults. The pilot will focus on refining the TANDA-NAN approach, building the social network of older adult members and community partners, developing the system, and creating the enabling implementation tools together with older residents of Manggahan Residences for it to be replicable and implementable in communities across the Philippines, Asia, and beyond.

Keywords. Older Adults; Philippines; Loneliness; Flourishing; Healthy Ageing; Agency; Participatory

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[2] Erika is a determined and idealistic individual who strives to make a positive impact on the world despite acknowledging the challenges ahead. She has always harbored a deep desire to work in the government and serve the Filipino people. With this aspiration in mind, she recently joined the Department of Transportation, driven by the goal of enhancing public transportation services for commuters, including herself. She is taking her Master's in Social Development at the Ateneo de Manila University.

[3] Angel is a development practitioner who advocates alternative positive inquiry and change that is Highly Participatory + Value Driven + Tool-Based + Creatively Fun. Her previous work experience includes community organizing, grants management, teaching, as well as program development and management. She is currently working on her graduate thesis at the Ateneo de Manila University while engaging in a diverse set of consultancy projects with YGoal, a social enterprise focused on co-creating solutions with and for the youth sector.

[4] Daryll enjoys weaving interdisciplinary perspectives in research and problem solving. She takes delight in forming creative solutions from the knowledge she learned through the years over a variety of subjects: information science, archival and medical research, world history, video games research and design, mental health, and psychology. Her knowledge and experience not only allows her to connect with her clients as a psychosocial therapist, but also helps her adapt and provide different solutions for their concerns. She is currently working on her MA Psychology (Clinical) thesis at the University of the Philippines Diliman.

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Last but not the least, thank you to our families, significant others, and friends for being patient with us and supportive of our efforts for TANDA-NAN. We love you always.

TANDA-NAN
Project Proposal

1. Background and Summary

Having lost her husband to SARS-CoV-2 during the pandemic, Nanay ("Mother") Luz has been feeling lonelier despite her children and grandchildren living nearby. She spends most of her day at her son's home watching over her grandchildren while her son works as a construction laborer and her daughter-in-law makes a living providing house work in nearby villages during the day. Since Nanay Luz's husband used to sell "taho" or soy bean curd as an ambulant vendor to make ends meet, she now feels financially constrained relying on the meager pension of ₱500 (approximately €9) she receives monthly as an indigent senior citizen. The money her children make is not enough to sustain the needs of their intergenerational family. In addition, her physical and mental health are suffering from the loss of her husband who provided companionship and economic resources to their household.

Nanay Luz is only one of the 9.2 million Filipino older adults in the country. Like her, most older adults stay in the same households or live in the same compound as their extended families. In the Philippines, it is a deeply ingrained tradition for the family to take on the responsibility of caring for older adults while the latter, in turn, assist in caring for the grandchildren. This arrangement allows older adults' married children to take on jobs outside the home to support the entire family financially. However, this arrangement along with other challenges brought about by old age may decrease the sense of agency among older adults who used to make a living themselves and had the social networks and financial benefits that came along with it.

To increase older adults' sense of agency, there is a need to provide them with opportunities to be more socially involved, self-reliant, and financially-stable to combat loneliness and feelings of being a burden to others. TANDA-NAN (tanda: "older", "mark", and "remember" + tahanan "home") is a community-organizing initiative to develop social networks of volunteers, civil society and non-governmental organizations, local government offices, the academe, and businesses that provide opportunities for social interaction, upskilling, income generation, and rewards redemption to older adults through a gamified system where they may participate in activities to earn points for redeeming services or commodities of their preference.

2. Inception and Overview

Our consultations with older adults in a Manggahan Floodway housing resettlement site called Manggahan Residences in Pasig City, Metro Manila highlighted their desires: a sense of belonging among their contemporaries; to be stewards of the community; to provide economically for their intergenerational families; and to age healthily.[5]

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[5] A series of market sounding activities were conducted by the team. On July 3, 2023, an online consultation was conducted with a subject matter expert (n=1) who is also a board member of the

When not tending to their intergenerational families, most of the older adults had informal work in which they received daily allowances or payment. Most of the female older adults were security guards of sorts. They would man the village gates and public parking areas for proper compliance with housing and parking regulations. Apparently, such work is in high demand with at least two of the respondents repeatedly applying to guard the gates–with one of them being rejected thrice already. Village guards receive a daily allowance for their service. On the other hand, two male respondents shared that they plant fruits and vegetables on the adjacent disputed land and sell the harvest to their neighbors to supplement their children's earnings.

Recurring themes to promote agency emerged during our exchanges with older adults in Manggahan Residences: health and wellness, livelihood or economic pursuits, and social involvement. They likewise expressed enthusiasm in being active participants in designing the system for activities and rewards. While they shared that they do not mind the welfare approach currently being implemented by the government and other providers, they would prefer to be partners for a greater sense of dignity and ownership.

Our discussions with the older residents resulted in a framework highlighting the need to promote healthy ageing and flourishing[6] that entails (1) reinforcing positive views of ageing; (2) encouraging resilient coping; and (3) promoting high levels of agency among older adults.

3. **Project and Users' Journey**

At its core, TANDA-NAN is a community-organizing initiative to develop social networks of volunteers, civil society and non-governmental organizations, local government offices, the academe, and businesses across communities that provide opportunities for social interaction, upskilling, income generation, and rewards redemption to older adults through a gamified system where they may participate in activities to earn points for redeeming services or commodities of their preference. TANDA-NAN is an enabling instrument which uses a co-knowledge generation approach[7] in generating opportunities for the flourishing and healthy ageing of older adults.

In close partnership with the Alliance of People's Organizations Along Manggahan Floodway (APO AMF) and initially with the older residents of the Manggahan Residences housing resettlement site, TANDA-NAN will be designed to co-create[8] health and wellness, education and livelihood, and social involvement initiatives (clusters) to address the issue of loneliness and encourage flourishing in older adults. The reinforcement of positive views of ageing, encouragement of resilient coping, and promotion

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Community Organizers Multiversity. On July 8, 2023, interviews among a community organizer (n=1) and older members (n=9) of the Manggahan Residences were done on-site. A total of 11 stakeholders were consulted during the conceptualization stage.

[6] Ma. Rowena V. Mende, Flourishing later in life may lessen the economic burden of an aging population, Philippine Institute for Development Studies Policy Notes, No. 2022-09 (June 2022).

[7] Juan M. Moreno, Kaliat Ammu Sanyal, Firooz Firoozmans, Pauline Rutter and Marie K. Harder, "Reflective Practices in Community Development: a Grounded Analysis," Systemic Practice and Action Research (2020) 33:501-525, (2019).

[8] Emily Joan Darlington, Gemma Pearce, Teresa Vilaça, Julien Masson, Sandie Bernard, Zélia Anastácio, Paul Magee, Frants Christensen, Henriette Hansen, Graça S. Carvalho, "How can we promote co-creation in communities? The perspective of health promoting professionals in four European countries", *Health Education*, Vol. 122 No. 4, pp. 402-423. https://doi.org/10.1108/HE-02-2021-0033, (2021).

of high levels of agency among older adults, are geared towards contributing to healthy ageing and flourishing.

Health and Wellness Cluster: Participants actively participate in developing and accessing holistic health and wellness activities, and other supportive mechanisms for overall well-being. They are also encouraged to avail public health and social services provided by their respective local government units (LGU).

- Age-responsive health interventions: Conduct regular health check-ups for older adults in the community, including simple screenings for blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and other common health indicators. This will help identify any potential health issues and provide early intervention. Providing more thorough health check-ups to screen for other potential diseases will be considered.
- Health education workshops: Organize workshops on topics such as healthy lifestyle practices, disease prevention, nutrition, and medication management. These workshops will empower older adults with knowledge and skills to take control of their health and make informed decisions.
- Exercise and physical activity programs: Arrange group exercise sessions tailored to the abilities and needs of older adults, promoting mobility, strength, and overall physical well-being. This can include activities like gentle aerobics, Zumba, yoga, and walking.
- Chronic disease management support: Provide guidance and resources for managing chronic conditions commonly affecting older adults, such as diabetes, hypertension, and arthritis. This can include access to specialist consultations, medication assistance programs, and self-management workshops.

Education and Livelihood Cluster: Participants are equipped with competencies through upskilling activities to help them become self-reliant and empowered to engage in economic pursuits (income generation). To complement the activities under this cluster, a TANDA-HAN (tanda: "older", "mark", and "remember" + tindahan "store") store for the members to sell their products will be established online and in popular bazaars.

- Upskilling programs: Offer vocational training and skills development workshops tailored to the interests and capacities of older adults. This can include courses on entrepreneurship, cooking, gardening, and crafts.
- Digital literacy training: Provide training sessions on basic computer or mobile device skills, internet usage, and online communication platforms. This will empower older adults to navigate the digital world, access online resources, and stay connected with their families and communities.
- Networking and mentorship opportunities: Facilitate networking events and mentorship programs to foster social connections and provide guidance and support for older adults pursuing educational or entrepreneurial endeavors. Intergenerational activities where the younger and more technologically savvy generations can guide older adults to set up online businesses can also be explored.
- Entrepreneurship assistance: Providing technical assistance in registering their businesses, filing taxes, and applying for a cooperative, if desired by the community.

Social Involvement Cluster: Participants are provided with opportunities for interaction and social involvement while building their social capital through collaboration with a network of volunteers,

civil society and non-governmental organizations, local government offices, the academe, and businesses.

- ○ Socialization events: Organize regular social gatherings, such as community dinners, game nights, or cultural celebrations, where older adults can socialize, build relationships, and engage in meaningful interactions with their peers.
- ○ Intergenerational activities: Facilitate intergenerational programs that bring together older adults and younger community members, promoting mutual understanding, empathy, and shared experiences.
- ○ Volunteer opportunities: Connect older adults with local volunteering initiatives that match their skills and interests. This enables them to contribute to society, utilize their experience, and maintain a sense of purpose and fulfillment.
- ○ Peer support groups: Establish support groups where older adults can share their experiences, challenges, and successes, providing emotional support and practical advice to one another.

Key Activities for the TANDA-NAN pilot implementation include:

- ○ Community organizing
- ○ Consolidation, publication, and promotion of services available to older Filipino adults
- ○ Provision of activity monitoring and rewards redemption system
- ○ Provision of venue for activities and services
- ○ Hosting of activities, workshops, classes, training, etc.
- ○ Opportunities to volunteer
- ○ Opportunities to sponsor and Fund (grants, donations, rewards, etc.)

As a collaborative endeavor, the TANDA-NAN aims to bring together the following stakeholders as key partners for change and development:

- ○ Community leaders and People's Organizations (POs) as the primary stewards of the community [e.g., Alliance of People's Organizations Along Manggahan Floodway (APOAMF) and concerned *Barangay* (local village) Officials]
- ○ Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) working within the same area or same sector [e.g., Community Organizers Multiversity (COM) and Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE)]
- ○ Academe which can provide student volunteers given their extension function [e.g., National Service Training Program (NSTP) students] and faculty members who do research and community engagement (e.g., Ateneo Urban Action Hub)
- ○ National government agencies (NGAs) and local government units (LGUs) as the primary service providers, potential source of funding, and regulatory/oversight bodies [e.g., Office of the Senior Citizen Affairs (OSCA), Pasig City LGU, and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)]
- ○ International development organizations as potential funders through grants

- Private sector and their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm as potential partners for income-generating activities as well as donors
- Civil Society as pool of volunteers and providers (organizers and donors)

Calls for key partners will be published regularly. Prior to the call, consultations will be held with the members, partners, and RepresentAsian team as to the desired programs, projects, activities, rewards, and needed resources for the next cycle. Ways to improve systems and processes will be assessed concurrently.

To be part of TANDA-NAN, older adults will register as members in the web-based system with the assistance of our team (RepresentAsian) and other volunteers. Their basic information will be collected to build a profile and corresponding activity log to monitor their participation and points earned. Aside from the digital system, they will be provided with physical booklets, if preferred, where their activities and points will be recorded. During the first week of the succeeding month, the members can redeem rewards depending on the number of points they earned the previous month.
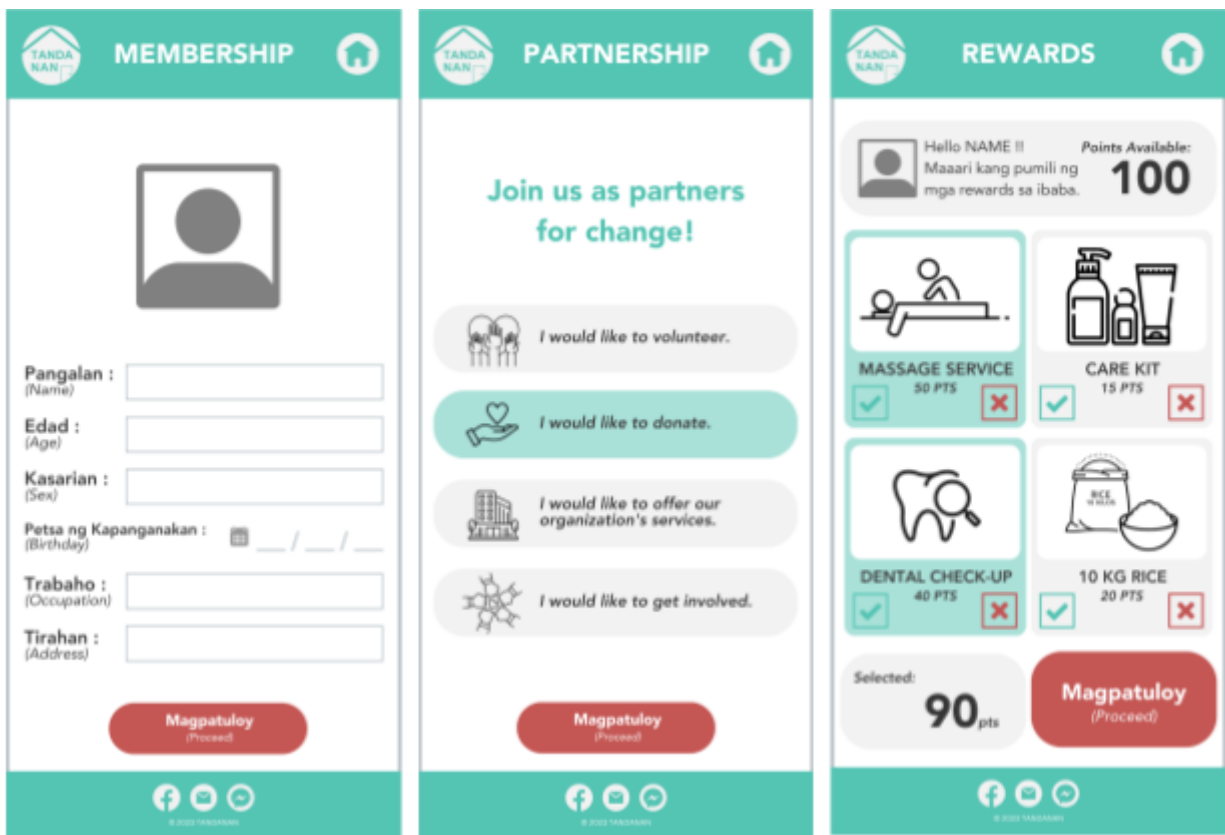

Figure 1. TANDA-NAN Mobile App (left to right): membership registration, partnership registration, and the reward redemption portal.

Using TANDA-NAN on a day when she is not on care duty for her grandchildren, Nanay Luz heads to the local Office for Senior Citizens' Affairs (OSCA) to join a weaving class held by an NGO together with other older adults in the community. Student volunteers guide them on how to create simple and intricate designs.

For participating in the weaving class, the student volunteer logs on the application and on Nanay Luz's TANDA-NAN booklet one (1) stamp equivalent to ten (10) points which Nanay Luz can accumulate throughout the month to redeem grocery packages, elder care products, and massage services in the succeeding month.

Because of the weaving class, ballroom dancing, health check, and ICT skills workshop; Nanay Luz has met new contemporaries, learned income-generating and life skills, and contributed to improving her health. Having discovered her love for crafts, Nanay Luz now has a Facebook account selling bags and face masks she has crafted. She still joins the zumba and TikTok dance classes regularly with her peers for fun.

4. Ways Forward and Implementation Plan

Before the nationwide rollout to the roughly 9.2 million older adults in the Philippines, a pilot implementation of TANDA-NAN will be conducted in the Manggahan Residences, a resettlement site of urban poor, informal settler families displaced by the construction of the Manggahan Floodway in Pasig City, Metro Manila, Philippines. This site was chosen for the high levels of community organizing in the area, as demonstrated by the existence of the Alliance of People's Organizations Along Manggahan Floodway (APO AMF), a federation of People's Organizations, advocating for the housing needs of its community members. As of 2020, there are an estimated 105 older adults or senior citizens aged 60 and above in the Manggahan Residences. Unfortunately, at least seven (7) older adults in the community passed away due to SARS-CoV-2.

Given the co-creation approach of TANDA-NAN, the first three (3) years will focus on refining the TANDA-NAN approach, building the social network of older adult members and community partners, co-developing the entire system, and creating the enabling implementation tools together with the older residents of Manggahan Residences for them to be acceptable, scalable, and sustainable. The goal is to capacitate the community in implementing the project for it to be a staple in the lives of older adults and the wider community across the country, continent, and overseas.

The project implementation of TANDA-NAN will run for two and a half (2.5) years after which, it will be rolled out to at least three (3) more housing resettlement sites with older adults. The proposed project involves the following phases which are named after the stages of building a home ("tahanan") as a reflection of the proposed project's vision of offering older adults a venue to flourish:

Phase 0 : The Blueprint (preliminaries: community organizing, consultations with stakeholders, and enlistment of pilot beneficiaries)

Phase 1 : Building the Foundation (consolidation of programs and services; and project roll-out of the three clusters: Health and Wellness, Livelihood, and Social Involvement)

Phase 2 : Construction (project implementation)

Phase 3 : The Handover (implementation of the gamified reward redemption system and project turn-over)

Regular participatory monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to ensure that activities and deliverables are met. This will also serve as an opportunity for constant reflection for those involved in the project.

Timeline of Activities

Year 1 (Phase 0: The Blueprint and Phase 1: Building the Foundation)	
June to July	Project Conceptualization and Initial Market Sounding
July	Completion of Project Proposal
August - September	Survey Needs Assessment
October - December	Application for Funding
November - December	Enlistment, On-Boarding and Training (Capacity Building) of Volunteers and Partners + consolidation of programs and services
Year 2 (Phase 1: Building the Foundation)	
January - February	Enrollment of 20 Members (for Pilot Testing based on Survey Needs Assessment)
March - May	Initial roll out of Cluster 1 (Health and Wellness)
June - August	Initial roll out of Cluster 2 (Education and Livelihood Opportunities)
September - November	Initial roll out of Cluster 3 (Social Involvement)
December	Launch of TANDA-HAN + Evaluation and Recalibration
Year 3 (Phase 2: Construction + Phase 3: The Handover)	
January - May	Initial Project Implementation (simultaneous for 3 clusters for all enrolled members)
June	Pilot testing of gamified reward redemption system
July	Evaluation and Recalibration
July - December	Full Project Implementation (simultaneous for 3 clusters for all enrolled members with reward redemption system)

Considering the initial membership base of 20 older adults from Manggahan Residences with whom RepresentAsian will be holding workshops with regularly as well as the partners who will also be key actors in the project, the indicative cost for the 2.5-year pilot run of the TANDA-NAN will be € 4,693. This is based on the following indicative cost breakdown:

Year 1 (Phase 0: The Blueprint and Phase 1: Building the Foundation)	
Project Conceptualization and Initial Market Sounding	N/A

Completion of Project Proposal	N/A
Survey Needs Assessment [2 sessions] - Food and drinks (29 persons): € 110 - Procurement of collapsible tents, chairs, tables, fans, other equipment: € 1,000 - Transport costs: € 50 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: €30	€ 1,190
Application for Funding	N/A
Enlistment, On-Boarding and Training (Capacity Building) of Volunteers and Partners + consolidation of programs and services [2 sessions] - Food and drinks (10 persons): € 38 - Transport costs: € 50 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 30	€ 118
Year 2 (Phase 1: Building the Foundation)	
Enrollment of 20 Members (for Pilot Testing based on Survey Needs Assessment) [2 sessions] - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 133 - Transport costs: € 50 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 30	€ 213
Initial roll out of Cluster 1 (Health and Wellness) [1 session] - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 67 - Transport costs: € 25 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 15	€ 107
Initial roll out of Cluster 2 (Education and Livelihood Opportunities) [1 session] - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 67 - Transport costs: € 25 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 15	€ 107
Initial roll out of Cluster 3 (Social Involvement) [1 session] - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 67 - Transport costs: € 25 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 15	€ 107
Launch of TANDA-HAN + Evaluation and Recalibration [2 sessions] - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 133 - Transport costs: € 50 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 30 - Rental and related expenses in bazaars: € 317	€ 530
Year 3 (Phase 2: Construction + Phase 3: The Handover)	
Initial Project Implementation (simultaneous for 3 clusters for all enrolled members) - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 67 - Transport costs: € 25 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 15	€ 107
Pilot testing of gamified reward redemption system	€ 2,107

- Food and drinks (35 persons): € 67 - Transport costs: € 25 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 15 - Development of TANDA-NAN web-based application: € 2,000	
Evaluation and Recalibration	N/A
Full Project Implementation (simultaneous for 3 clusters for all enrolled members with reward redemption system) - Food and drinks (35 persons): € 67 - Transport costs: € 25 - Communications, printing, and other administrative expenses: € 15	€ 107
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>€ 4,693</u>

Aside from the applications and calls for funding, a listing on an online shopping platform such as Shopee for TANDA-NAN which will be called TANDA-HAN will be established. Shoppers can purchase goods sold by TANDA-NAN members and any fund-raising merchandise. Profits on goods sold by members go entirely to them, while fund-raising merchandise profits are cycled into the project. Outright donations through e-wallets will also be available through Shopee for the convenience of supporters.

Research

TANDA-NAN is a project formulated based on a combination of extensive literature review, consultations with subject matter experts, and insightful focus group discussions with the target beneficiaries. The following section provides an overview of the unique context of Filipino older adults.

1. **The Problem**

Loneliness is "a situation experienced by the individual as one where there is an unpleasant or inadmissible lack of (quality of) certain relationships."[9] It is a growing public health problem worldwide affecting people's mental and physical health, notably becoming a risk factor among older adults aged 60 and over.[10] It is significantly linked to depression and can contribute to several adverse health outcomes such as hypertension, stroke, heart disease, cognitive decline, dementia, and depression among the elderly.[11] These health consequences can lead to increased hospitalization expenses for families, reduced savings, financial distress, and decreased productivity due to caregiving responsibilities, ultimately hindering social mobility and economic growth.[12] [13] Addressing loneliness is vital for achieving Sustainable Development Goal Nos. 1 (No Poverty) and 3 (Good Health and Well-Being).

Geriartic Care in the Philippines

In the Philippines, reaching the age of 60 is widely recognized as the threshold of old age, with "senior citizen," "older people," and "elderly" as the official terms used to refer to this age group.[14] Filipino culture places a strong emphasis on revering and honoring older family members. This reverence is demonstrated not only through the use of formal language and gestures of respect but also by the prevalent practice of extended living arrangements, where grandparents reside with their children and grandchildren under the same roof. In line with Philippine cultural norms and laws, the care of elderly relatives is considered the responsibility of their offspring, and placing a family member in a nursing or retirement home is generally viewed negatively.[15] [16] Consequently, such facilities are rare in the Philippines.[17]

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[9] Jenny de Jong Gierveld, "A Review of Loneliness: Concept and Definitions, Determinants and Consequences," Reviews in Clinical Gerontology 8, no. 1 (February 1998): 73–80, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0959259898008090.

[10] Lena Dahlberg et al., "A Systematic Review of Longitudinal Risk Factors for Loneliness in Older Adults," Aging & Mental Health 26, no. 2 (February 10, 2021): 1–25, https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2021.1876638.

[11] Conor O Luanaigh and Brian A Lawlor, "Loneliness and the Health of Older People," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 23, no. 12 (2008): 1213–21.

[12] Carlos Dobkin et al., "The Economic Consequences of Hospital Admissions," *American Economic Review* 108, no. 2 (February 2018): 308–52, .

[13] Bo Tang et al., "Economic Implications of Health Care Burden for Elderly Population," *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing* 59 (January 2022): 004695802211215, .

[14] Philippine Statistics Authority, "Older People/ Elderly/ Senior Citizens | Philippine Statistics Authority," psa.gov.ph, n.d., .

[15] Article XV (Family Code) Section 4 of the Philippine Constitution states that "the family has the duty to care for its elderly members but the State may also do so through programs of social security."

[16] Aurora De Leon, "The Quality of Life of the Filipino Elderly in Selected Cities and Provinces," 2014, https://tsaofoundation.org/.

[17] BusinessMirror, "The Truth about Nursing Homes in the Philippines - BusinessMirror," BusinessMirror, July 25, 2022, https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/07/26/nursing-homes-in-the-philippines/.

While societal and cultural norms have assured older adults of their care in their twilight years, changes brought upon by longer life spans, increased labor participation among females, and the restrictions during the pandemic have made older adults in the Philippines more lonely. Living alone, having less active social involvement, and seeing friends less frequently were related to higher levels of loneliness in a pre-pandemic study on older Filipinos aged 60 and over.[18] Around 5% of older Filipinos lived alone with poor older adults reporting higher rates at 9%. Further, 1 in 10 older Filipinos reported the need for more companionship and only 35% attended social activities at least once a month.[19] While 90% of older Filipinos have a social media account, only 6% have regular access to the internet. Notably, poorer subjective financial well-being (e.g., the perception of considerable difficulty in making ends meet) was also significantly associated with higher loneliness scores.[20]

Mental Health and Loneliness

In the Philippines, older adults are at risk of social isolation and loneliness due to having less economic opportunities, mobility issues, and deaths of peers.[21] The COVID-19 pandemic further increased the vulnerability of older adults to loneliness due to their high transmission and mortality risk for the virus. Despite comprising barely 8% of the Philippine population, a third of all cases were attributed to older Filipinos due to their likeliness to possess comorbidities increasing their transmission and mortality risk.[22] Older Filipinos are 8.15 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than other age groups.[23]

Aside from emotional and social loneliness, older adults also face existential loneliness and loss of meaning. Existential loneliness among older adults may arise from limitations in body and space due to physical impairments and decreased mobility, which were exacerbated during the pandemic. These limitations were felt more strongly in the Philippines due to the strict and prolonged period of lockdown. [24] Older adults then experience a strong feeling of frustration directed towards themselves as they start to feel constrained by their physical and environmental limitations. To avoid overburdening others, they would rather seek inner peace by withdrawing and self-isolating. [25] However, the loss of loved ones,

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[18] Emiko Takagi, Grace T. Cruz, and Yasuhiko Saito, "Older Adults' Loneliness and Social Relationships in the Philippines: Comparison between Rural and Urban Contexts," Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health 34, no. 6-7 (June 15, 2022): 101053952211068, https://doi.org/10.1177/10105395221106861.

[19] Lydia Poole et al., "Experience of Depression in Older Adults with and without a Physical Long-Term Condition: Findings from a Qualitative Interview Study," BMJ Open 12, no. 2 (February 24, 2022): e056566, https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-056566.

[20] Takagi

[21] Nimfa B. Ogena, "Activities, Social Isolation, and Information Technology," in Ageing and Health in the Philippines, ed. Grace T. Cruz, Christian Joy P. Cruz, and Yasuhiko Saito (Jakarta: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), 2019), 129–48, https://www.eria.org/uploads/media/Books/2019-Dec-ERIA-Ageing-And-Health-In-The-Philippines.pdf.

[22] Robert D. Buenaventura, Jacqueline B. Ho, and Maria I. Lapid, "COVID-19 and Mental Health of Older Adults in the Philippines: A Perspective from a Developing Country," International Psychogeriatrics 32, no. 10 (April 30, 2020): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.1017/s1041610220000757.

[23] Michael Arieh Medina, "Age as a Risk Factor of COVID-19 Mortality in the Philippines," SSRN Electronic Journal, 2020, https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3579145.

[24] Al Jazeera, "Manila Lockdown: One of the Longest COVID Lockdowns in the World," www.aljazeera.com, October 19, 2021, https://www.aljazeera.com/program/witness/2021/10/19/manila-lockdown-one-of-the-longest-covid-lockdowns-in-the-world.

[25] Helena Larsson, Margareta Rämgård, and Ingrid Bolmsjö, "Older Persons' Existential Loneliness, as Interpreted by Their Significant Others - an Interview Study," BMC Geriatrics 17, no. 1 (July 10, 2017), https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-017-0533-1.

difficulty maintaining relationships, and self-isolation further intensifies their disconnection from the outside world, cutting them off from a system of support for healthy ageing. Losing a sense of belongingness in a community also leads to stagnation, feelings of emptiness, and loneliness.[26]

When combined with risk factors such as loss of control, social isolation, lack of physical activity, physical illnesses and limitations, the recurrent experience of helplessness, guilt, worthlessness, and sadness may put older adults more at risk of clinical depression. [27] [28] In the Philippines, mental health care, especially for older adults is still lacking, and it was only very recently when the country established its first Mental Health Act (RA 11036). This legislation seeks to establish access to comprehensive mental health services while protecting the rights of people with mental disorders as well as their families.[29] The allotted budget for mental health is also relatively modest, but with a gradual increase in recent years. [30] However, implementation of the MH Act and its programs has been progressing at a slow pace, with less than half (45%) of the allocated funding being utilized in 2019. There is also a shortage of mental health staff, as there is only one psychiatrist for every 100,000 Filipinos. [31]

Government Programs for the Elderly

There are a total of 9.2 million Filipino senior citizens (older adults) in the country.[32] Most of these older adults stay in the same households or live in the same compound with their families. The Philippine government provides a monthly social pension of ₱500 (approximately €9) for indigent older adults,[33] which is not enough to sustain their food and healthcare needs.[34] In their position paper addressed to the Philippine government, the Aksyon sa Pensyon (AkaP) Coalition also argues for increasing monthly pensions to account for the inflation rate and increasing costs of essential goods and services. For older persons employed in regular and formal work, the benefits received from contributory pensions are still too low, with thirty-two percent of retirees receiving less than ₱2,000 (approximately €33) per month and about half of the retirees receiving less than ₱3,000 (approximately €49).[35]

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[26] Lydia Poole et al., "Experience of Depression in Older Adults with and without a Physical Long-Term Condition: Findings from a Qualitative Interview Study," BMJ Open 12, no. 2 (February 24, 2022): e056566, https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-056566.

[27] Poole et al

[28] National Institute on Aging, "Depression and Older Adults," National Institute on Aging, 2021, https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/depression-and-older-adults.

[29] John Lally, John Tully, and Rene Samaniego, "Mental Health Services in the Philippines," BJPsych International 16, no. 03 (January 14, 2019): 62–64, https://doi.org/10.1192/bji.2018.34.

[30] Macon Ramos-Araneta, "Senator Eyes Stronger Mental Health Program," Manila Standard, March 30, 2023, https://manilastandard.net/news/national/314318636/senator-eyes-stronger-mental-health-program.html.

[31] Christia Marie Ramos, "Hontiveros Flags P23 Allocation per Filipino in Need of Mental Health Drugs," INQUIRER.net, October 29, 2020, https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1353927/hontiveros-flags-p23-allocation-per-filipino-in-need-of-mental-health-drugs.

[32] Philippine Statistics Authority, "Philippine Statistics Authority | Republic of the Philippines," psa.gov.ph, August 12, 2022, https://psa.gov.ph/population-and-housing/node/167965.

[33] Under the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 or RA 9994, the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens (SPISC) Program provides a monthly stipend of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) to augment the daily subsistence and other medical needs of indigent senior citizens who meet the eligibility criteria.

[34] Rogie Royce Carandang et al., "Unmet Needs and Coping Mechanisms among Community-Dwelling Senior Citizens in the Philippines: A Qualitative Study," International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 16, no. 19 (October 4, 2019): 3745, https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16193745.

[35] Aksyon sa Pensyon (AkaP) Coalition, "Aksyon Sa Pensyon (AkaP) Coalition and Various Organizations in the Philippines Call for a Universal Social Pension of One Thousand Pesos for All Senior Citizens,"

Many older adults in the Philippines strongly desire to continue working, but the lack of employment prohibits them from doing so. This desire is especially pronounced among adults in urban poor communities such as the Manggahan Residences where older adults are forced to become income earners and primary caregivers at the same time due to socioeconomic lags within the household.[36] Poor housing conditions and an age-unfriendly environment also hinder the delivery of government support and access to available work options.[37] As such, when older adults are no longer able to work or find employment, they rely heavily on their families for financial support. This 'overreliance' may then trigger a sense of being a burden to their family as well as loss of agency.[38] Faced with food insecurity, older adults in urban poor communities voluntarily skip meals and reduce their portions to give way to those who they perceive need nourishment more (i.e., children, sick members, and income earners).[39]

Considering the interplay between the unmet needs of older adults in terms of financial security, psychological and physical well-being, companionship, and loneliness, as well as their increasing number,[40] several policies and programs have been established by various government agencies and Non-Government Agencies (NGOs).

One of the main legislation of the government that aims to address the needs of Filipino older adults is Republic Act 9994, also known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010. Provisions from this law include discounts (20%) and tax incentives on a variety of services (such as health care, domestic transportation, hotels, restaurants, leisure activities, funeral and burial services); mandatory PhilHealth coverage (health insurance); pension and other benefits for retired employees (GSIS for the public sector and the SSS for the private sector); a monthly stipend for older adults in need; and other incentives based on the local government they belong to, such as free livelihood training, free birthday cake and a cash grant for those who reach 100 years old. The Office for Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA), which is headed by an appointed older adult, was also established in every city and municipality in the country to serve as the liaison for older adults to ensure they fully benefit from the government's programs and services [41].

RA 9994 also encourages collaboration between the private sector and government organizations like the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which is the primary agency "mandated to develop, implement, and coordinate social protection and poverty-reduction solutions for and with the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged," in order to address the needs of older adults. As of May 2022, there are more than 100 private social welfare and development agencies (SWDAs) serving older adults across the nation that are duly registered, granted operating licenses, or accredited by the DSWD. These organizations implement programs and services through resource allocation, residential and

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2021, https://cose.org.ph/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Position-paper-on-Universal-Social-Pension_AkaP-Coalition.pdf.

[36] Maria Carinnes P. Alejandria-Gonzales, "Food Insecurity and Resilience: Experiences of Hunger and Poverty among Older Adults in Manila," in *Aging in the Global South: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Maria Carinnes P. Alejandria-Gonzales, Subharati Ghosh, and Nicolas Sacco (Lexington Books, 2018).

[37] Alejandria-Gonzales, "Food Insecurity and Resilience"

[38] Carandang, et al. "Unmet Needs and Coping Mechanisms among Community-Dwelling Senior Citizens in the Philippines: A Qualitative Study."

[39] Alejandria-Gonzales, "Food Insecurity and Resilience"

[40] Philippine Daily Inquirer, "PopCom: PH Has Little Time to Address Aging Population," INQUIRER.net, August 18, 2022, .

[41] Celia M. Reyes, Arkin A. Arboneda, and Ronina D. Asis, Silver Linings for the Elderly in the Philippines: Policies and Programs for the Senior Citizens, Philippine Institute for Development Studies, Discussion Paper Series No. 2019-09, September 2019 (Updated June 2020).

non-residential care, and various community projects that may focus on health, education, livelihood, and capacity building among others.[42]

However, most of these private SWDAs' programs and services do not cater solely to older adults, but rather to a variety of beneficiaries (e.g., youth, women, children, and people with disabilities), which may result in a diversion of funds and effort. The majority of them are also located in major city centers such as the National Capital Region (NCR), which may pose access issues for those living on the outskirts. This is also true for government programs and services for older adults. A significant proportion (32.1%) of older adults are still unable to access social protection programs, with females being the most vulnerable. Questions about equitable allocation and social pension eligibility must also be addressed. One area is the monthly stipend of Php500 for indigent beneficiaries, which barely covers the basic needs of an older adult. It should be noted that these are not released on a monthly basis either. There is also a call to increase public awareness of the government's programs and services so that poor and disadvantaged older adults may have an opportunity to avail them.[43]

The Coalition of Services for the Elderly, Inc. (COSE) is a well-known non-governmental organization (NGO) in the Philippines that advocates for the rights of Filipino older adults, particularly the most vulnerable (e.g. urban poor). According to COSE, it is critical to develop the competencies of older adults so that they can participate actively in interventions designed for and with them. Enhancing their collective engagement is also a strategy for amplifying their voices in issues affecting them, such as their representation in the development process of community and local government programs, access to health care, and concerns about the implementation of social pension programs.[44]

2. Problem Statement

How might we address loneliness, promote healthy ageing, and co-create opportunities for older adults to be more self-reliant, financially stable, and socially involved?

3. Framework

The proposed project is built upon the principles of healthy ageing and flourishing and is aligned with the vision of a world where individuals "live longer, healthier lives".[45] It draws inspiration from existing international frameworks such as the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021-2030 and the WHO Active Ageing Policy Framework.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines healthy ageing as "the process of developing and maintaining functional ability that enables well-being in older age."[46] In essence, by preserving their functional ability, older adults can retain the capacity to meet their basic needs, engage in learning and decision-making, maintain mobility, foster relationships, and contribute to society. The UN Decade of

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[42] DSWD, Nationwide Directory of Private Social Welfare and Development Agencies (SWDAs) with VALID Registration, Registration and License/License to Operate and/or Accreditation issued by DSWD, as of May 20, 2022.
https://www.dswd.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Private-SWDA-with-valid-RLA-as-of-May-20-2022.pdf
[43] Celia M. Reyes et al., September 2019 (Updated June 2020).
[44] COSE, Sailing Beyond the Sunset, COSE's Journey Towards Dignified Aging in the Philippines, 2019.
[45] World Health Organization, "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021-2030," September 1, 2021.
[46] World Health Organisation, "Healthy Ageing and Functional Ability," www.who.int, October 26, 2020, .

Healthy Ageing Plan of Action identifies four key areas for action, including: (1) transforming attitudes and behaviors towards age and ageing; (2) developing age-friendly communities that enhance the capabilities of older individuals; (3) providing person-centered, integrated care and primary health services that are responsive to the needs of older people; and (4) ensuring access to long-term care for older individuals when necessary.[47]

Conversely, the concept of flourishing is applicable to individuals of all ages. Flourishing entails living within an optimal range of human functioning characterized by qualities such as goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience.[48] In positive psychology, flourishing occurs when people consistently experience positive emotions, exhibit positive psychological functioning, and engage in positive social functioning.[49] It is considered crucial for extending health spans, as individuals who flourish generally feel good and function well.[50][51] Increased levels of flourishing lead to heightened positive emotions, greater enthusiasm for life, and active and productive contributions to the world.[52] Research conducted among community-dwelling older adults in the Philippines demonstrates that adopting a positive view of ageing is pivotal in achieving flourishing. Other important factors include maintaining a sense of control or agency, developing resilient coping strategies, attaining financial stability, and preparing for retirement.[53]

Promoting healthy ageing and flourishing addresses loneliness and co-creates opportunities for older adults to achieve the kind of life they have reason to value. In order to do so, this project will address three primary action areas: (1) promoting positive attitudes towards ageing, (2) fostering resilient coping skills, and (3) enhancing levels of agency among older adults. These objectives will be achieved through the provision of age-responsive health services, the creation of upskilling and livelihood opportunities, and the facilitation of social involvement opportunities.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the crucial role of adopting a positive view of ageing in both healthy ageing and flourishing. Such a perspective is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction, lower levels of anxiety and depression, improved physical and mental health, and engagement in preventive health behaviors.[54] In the Philippines, perceptions of older adults can vary, ranging from positive ("being old is a gift")[55] to negative ("being a burden")[56], depending on their quality of life. Older adults in urban poor communities may not view aging positively if they feel they are not contributing to their households. However, a study has shown that positive views of ageing can compensate for limited

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[47] World Health Organization, "The 2030 Agenda"

[48] Barbara L. Fredrickson and Marcial F. Losada, "Positive Affect and the Complex Dynamics of Human Flourishing.," *American Psychologist* 60, no. 7 (2005): 678–86, .

[49] Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, "Flourishing, Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing: How Can They Be Increased?" (Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, n.d.), .

[50] Corey L.M. Keyes and Shane J. Lopez, "Toward a Science of Mental Health: Positive Directions in Diagnosis and Interventions," in *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, ed. C.R. Snyder and S.J. Lopez (Oxford University Pres, 2002), 45–59.

[51] Marie J. C. Forgeard et al., "Doing the Right Thing: Measuring Well-Being for Public Policy," *International Journal of Wellbeing* 1, no. 1 (January 30, 2011): 79–106, .

[52] Corey L. M. Keyes, "Promoting and Protecting Mental Health as Flourishing: A Complementary Strategy for Improving National Mental Health.," *American Psychologist* 62, no. 2 (2007): 95–108, .

[53] Mende, "Flourishing Later in Life"

[54] Becca R. Levy, Martin D. Slade, and Stanislav V. Kasl, "Longitudinal Benefit of Positive Self-Perceptions of Aging on Functional Health," *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences* 57, no. 5 (September 1, 2002): P409–17, .

[55] Mende

[56] Alejandria-Gonzales, "Food Insecurity and Resilience"

resources.[57] Therefore, age-responsive health interventions that promote preventive care and empower older adults with knowledge about their well-being, as well as upskilling programs that provide opportunities for personal growth and learning, challenging the notion that older adults are less capable or relevant can be valuable.

Enhancing resilience has been linked to positive mental health, better quality of life, increased physical activity, improved pain tolerance, and better physical and rehabilitative outcomes.[58] The adoption of a resilient coping style, encompassing problem-focused, emotion-focused, and resilient coping techniques, empowers older adults to select appropriate strategies when facing challenging situations.[59] Promoting resilient coping can be achieved by offering diverse avenues to deal with stressful life events. Health education workshops and chronic disease management support, can contribute to resilient coping by providing older adults with the knowledge, skills, and resources to effectively manage and adapt to health-related situations. Peer support groups and socialization events can also promote resilient coping by providing emotional support, a sense of belonging, and opportunities for sharing experiences and strategies for coping.

Lastly, high levels of agency, autonomy, or a sense of control significantly impact an older adult's quality of life, although quantifying its benefits may be challenging. At the individual level, agency can be enhanced by enabling older adults to have the capabilities and opportunities to make choices and lead fulfilling lives. Upskilling programs and financial literacy workshops can contribute to high levels of agency by providing older adults with opportunities to enhance their skills, knowledge, and financial independence, enabling them to make choices and lead fulfilling lives. Additionally, volunteer opportunities and intergenerational activities can promote agency by allowing older adults to actively engage in their communities and utilize their skills and experiences in meaningful ways.

To foster agency at the collective level, the co-creation approach can be adopted to initiate a participatory process which will entail close collaboration with the community throughout the project's planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages. This approach involves advocating for co-creative processes, eliciting the knowledge and expertise of community members through consultations and working collaboratively with them at every step of the project development process.[60] Moving beyond mere participation, this approach recognizes that both the community and the NGO or academic institution involved are equal partners, benefiting and learning mutually from the partnership. This approach helps alleviate any sense of indebtedness on the part of the community and empowers them to exercise choice in selecting their partners and activities.

Overall, learning about underlying principles, process initiation, implementation and facilitation of co-creation were areas identified to be included within a co-creation training programme. This can be applied through the framework of enabling change, advocating for co-creative processes, mediating through partnership, communication, leadership, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and research, ethical values, and knowledge of co-creative processes.

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[57] Catrinel Craciun, Paul Gellert, and Uwe Flick, "Aging in Precarious Circumstances: Do Positive Views on Aging Make a Difference?," *The Gerontologist* 57, no. 3 (June 1, 2017): 517–28, .
[58] Musich S, Wang SS, Schaeffer JA, Kraemer S, Wicker E, Yeh CS. The association of increasing resilience with positive health outcomes among older adults. *Geriatr Nurs.* 2022;44:97–104. doi: 10.1016/j.gerinurse.2022.01.007.
[59] Mende
[60] Lena Dahlberg et al., "A Systematic Review of Longitudinal Risk Factors for Loneliness in Older Adults," *Aging & Mental Health* 26, no. 2 (February 10, 2021): 1–25, .
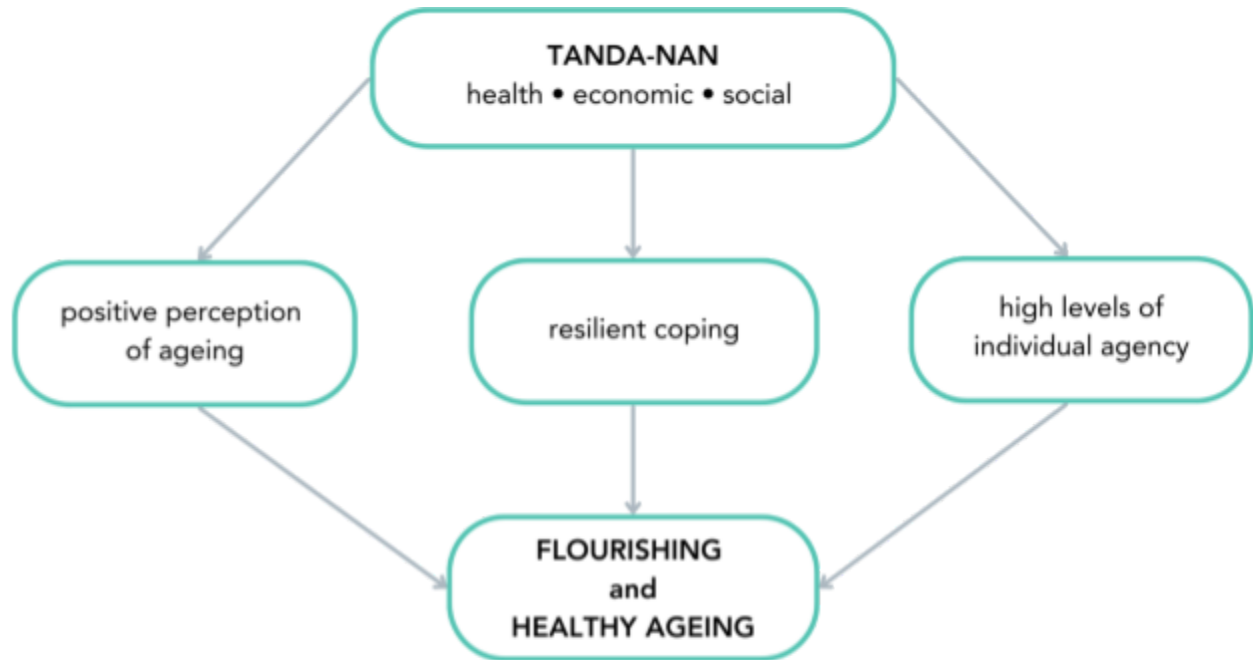
Figure 2. TANDA-NAN Conceptual Framework.

In view of these three action areas and as a result of the initial market sounding activity with the community, three activity clusters are conceptualized for this proposed Project, Cluster 1 - Health and Wellness, Cluster 2 - Education and Livelihood and Cluster 3 - Social Involvement.

By implementing activities across these three clusters, the proposed project addresses the action areas outlined earlier and promotes healthy ageing and flourishing among older adults in urban poor communities. It creates an enabling environment that reinforces positive views of ageing, enhances resilience, and fosters high levels of agency, ultimately supporting older adults in leading fulfilling lives and maintaining their overall well-being.

4. Field Survey: Results of Market Sounding

On July 8, 2023, the team conducted a rapid Market Sounding to gauge the pulse of the target beneficiaries (members) on the proposed project. Informal conversations or storytelling, also known as "pakikipagkwentuhan" in Filipino Psychology[61] were conducted with a random sample of older adults. This activity was made possible with the assistance of the partner NGO, CO Multiversity, through APO AMF. The respondents also provided informed consent. They were also given the opportunity to express their views on the needs of other older adults in their community.

[61] Rogelia Pe-pua and Elizabeth Protacio-Marcelino, "Sikolohiyang Pilipino (Filipino psychology): A legacy of Virgilio G. Enriquez," Asian Journal of Social Psychology, Blackwell Publishers Ltd with the Asian Association of Social Psychology and the Japanese Group Dynamics Association, (2000) 3: 49-71.

They were able to share what they liked about the proposed project, what they thought it lacked, what they learned from it (via the storyboard), and what they longed for (what should be included) by using the 4L's Retrospective tool commonly used in Design Thinking.[62]

The idea of acquiring competencies (e.g., learning new skills, crafts, etc.) that will translate into economic opportunities, allowing them to earn for themselves and their loved ones was **LIKED** by the majority of the older adults. They also believe that the ICT component will be beneficial, with digital literacy providing a platform for potential business ventures (e.g., online selling of their products) as well as a way to connect with family and friends who live far away. They also stated that the social component of the proposed project can help with the effective marketing of their products (collective selling) while fostering a sense of belongingness.

Not all of the older adults who took part in the conversations own mobile phones or other electronic devices. They believe this is one of the things the proposed project **LACKED**. They also mentioned a lack of space (possible venue) for some of the activities (e.g., Zumba, gardening), which may have an impact on its long-term viability. When considering potential programs and activities, time constraints and the physical capability of the older adults should also be kept in mind.

Some of them stated that they **LEARNED** the potential of technology, such as using mobile phones to search for recipes for food items they can sell. Meanwhile, the activities that will allow them to bond and earn are a recurring theme of what they **LONG for**. This could be accomplished by forming a cooperative or a senior citizen club.

The feedback received from older adults during the rapid market sounding corresponds to some of their expressed needs for holistic healthcare (on-site check-ups, diagnostic exams, free or subsidized medicines and vitamins), as well as work/livelihood opportunities. They also expressed their willingness to participate in the proposed project, which they also see as a way to forget about pressing concerns.

Prior to the conversations (market sounding) with the community's older adults, a consultative meeting was held on July 3, 2023 with Professor Mary Racelis, one of CO Multiversity's Board of Directors. As a subject matter expert in the field of community organizing and development, Prof Racelis provided valuable insights on the approach and framework of the proposed project. She also stressed the significance of involving the intended beneficiaries as active participants in the entire process. Prof Racelis sees the value in the proposed project as a member of the older adults sector herself, and she looks forward to how their NGO can collaborate with the team to achieve the goals of TANDA-NAN "with and for" Filipino older adults.

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[62] Ellen Gottesdieber, The 4L's: A Retrospective Technique, (June 24, 2010), https://www.ebgconsulting.com/blog/the-4ls-a-retrospective-technique/.

Figure 3. Older adults in the community shared their stories during the market sounding conducted by the team. They also expressed their willingness to be part of the proposed project as they see it as an opportunity to form social bonds with fellow older adults, while pursuing economic opportunities and taking care of their well-being.

Conclusion

Loneliness is a complex problem in the Filipino context. It is not merely an issue of emotional and physical loneliness, but also heavily social and existential. Rather than focus on one aspect of loneliness, TANDA-NAN aims to provide a holistic solution for Filipino older adults, incorporating health, economic, and social strategies and solutions to reinforce positive views of ageing, enhance resilience, and foster high levels of agency. Supported by scientific research and discussions with target beneficiaries and experts, TANDA-NAN provides a solution that is relevant and meaningful for its participants. Their involvement in the project not only creates awareness but also increases their interest and willingness to participate. Lastly, TANDA-NAN is envisioned to be a collaborative effort between multiple stakeholders coming from the public and private sectors, such as the academe, non-governmental offices and agencies, local government units, international organizations, and volunteer groups. This collaboration cultivates trust and understanding between the participants, fostering collective action and sustained impact.

Team RepresentAsian

Angel, Daryll, Chris, Erika

Erika, Chris, Angel, Daryll