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**NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND SOIL-TRANSMITTED
HELMINTHIASES AMONG SCHOOLCHILDREN IN SELECTED
RURAL VILLAGES IN THE PHILIPPINES**

by

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ABSTRACT

Background: This paper presents the anthropometric and iron status, dietary intake and prevalence of soil-transmitted helminthiases (STH) among schoolchildren (6-12 y) in selected villages in the provinces of Batangas and Cebu in the Philippines. The data presented in this paper were collated from 3 studies of the Nutrition Center of the Philippines. Data were available from 2,856 children for anthropometry; 2,798 for iron status; 1,373 for dietary intake; and, 1,155 for prevalence of STH.

Methods: Anthropometric status was determined by comparing the children's weight-for-age, height-for-age and weight-for-height z-scores with the International Reference Standards. Iron status was assessed using hemoglobin level as indicator. Dietary intake was compared against the age-specific Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intakes (RENI). Infection with STH was determined using the Kato-Katz technique.

Results: Thirty three percent of the children were underweight, 35% were stunted and 4% were wasted. The prevalence of anemia was 40% (27% mild anemia and 13% moderate anemia). The energy, protein, iron, vitamin A and vitamin C intake were below the RENI per day. One out of 2 schoolchildren had STH, with 38% infected with *Ascaris lumbricoides*, 24% with *Trichuris trichiura* and 10% with hookworm.

Conclusion: Schoolchildren in rural villages in the Philippines suffer from protein-energy malnutrition, anemia, inadequate food intake and infection with STH.